



Grade 6

**Think Smart
for Smarter Balanced Assessments**

Benchmark Assessments



**Assessing the California
Common Core State Standards**

SESSION 1

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

A Flood of the Future

George gazed out the window as the trees outside were pushed around in the punishing storm. The sky was a dark steel gray, making early afternoon seem like night. A few blocks away, the towering floodwall curved around the city; the wall, 20 stories high, had been built in 2032—only three years ago. It looked as polished and sturdy as ever.

Still, George worried that the wall would buckle under the force of the raging waters. Doddsville was located miles from the shore, but other settlements closer to the ocean lay in ruins. The storm had been raging since Monday, March 10.

George thought about the rising waters. “That wall isn’t holding; I just know it!” he said to himself.

That morning, George’s mom had tried to reassure him, “We’re on the tenth floor, Georgie, and the city planners reinforced the first three floors years ago.”

George knew his mom was right, but he was still worried. He stood watching the trees as they swung back and forth.

The door to George’s pod-apartment zipped open. It could only be Dad because Mom, Dad, and George were the only people who could use the eye scanner to enter the pod. Dad never came home from work early, so George instantly assumed the worst.

Dad was still perfectly dry—with watertight hover bubbles, levitating garages, and mid-air walkways connected to your office pod, who needed to worry about getting wet?—but he wore a worried expression.

Looking from Mom to George and back, Dad said, “It looks like this is the big one that everyone has been predicting. There is no way the floodwall is going to hold; we’ve got to pack for Borkon immediately!”

Before Dad even finished his last sentence, the window that George had just been using to watch the storm beeped, shimmered momentarily, and transformed into a screen. The message on the middle of the screen read, “THE FUTURE IS NOW.” Underneath the default message, however, flashed three neon purple words that set into motion the irreversible process George and his classmates had practiced in countless drills at school:

Evacuate to Borkon

The color drained from George's face as he remembered that he was told he would not see this message in his lifetime—and neither would his children's children.

"Try to stay calm, Georgie," Mom said, her voice shaky and strange. "Remember that we are completely prepared for this."

George rushed to his room and used an eye scanner—different from the one on the door—to open a safe at the back of his closet. Inside was a remote-controlled piece of luggage containing everything he would need on Planet Borkon. Mom and Dad did the same.

Back in the front hall, the door to their pod-apartment was already open.

"The future really is now," thought George as he glanced over his shoulder at his home for the last time.

- 1** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement **best** expresses the theme of the text?

- (A)** You can't prepare for the future.
- (B)** Change can occur at any time.
- (C)** Family is the most important thing.
- (D)** Organization is the key to success.

Part B: Which detail from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "Dad was still perfectly dry—with watertight hover bubbles, levitating garages, and mid-air walkways connected to your office pod, who needed to worry about getting wet?—but he wore a worried expression."
- (B)** "'Try to stay calm, George,' Mom said, her voice shaky and strange. 'Remember that we are completely prepared for this.'"
- (C)** "Inside was a remote-controlled piece of luggage containing everything he would need on Planet Borkon."
- (D)** "'The future really is now,' thought George as he glanced over his shoulder at his home for the last time."

2 **Part A:** Which statement **best** explains the purpose of the details included in the first paragraph?

- (A)** to establish the theme of the story
- (B)** to foreshadow the resolution of the story
- (C)** to introduce the futuristic setting of the story
- (D)** to develop the main character as a frightened young boy

Part B: Underline the sentence in the paragraph that **best** supports your answer in part A.

George gazed out the window as the trees outside were pushed around in the punishing storm. The sky was a dark steel gray, making early afternoon seem like night. A few blocks away, the towering floodwall curved around the city; the wall, 20 stories high, had been built in 2032—only three years ago. It looked as polished and sturdy as ever.

- 3** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read the sentence from the text.

George gazed out the window as the trees outside were pushed around in the punishing storm.

What mood does the author create by using personification in this sentence?

- ☐ **A** a feeling of danger and fear
- ☐ **B** a feeling of conflict and control
- ☐ **C** a feeling of doubt and uncertainty
- ☐ **D** a feeling of suspense and excitement

Part B: Which other sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- ☐ **A** "The door to George's pod-apartment zipped open."
- ☐ **B** "It could only be Dad because Mom, Dad, and George were the only people who could use the eye scanner to enter the pod."
- ☐ **C** "Dad was still perfectly dry—with watertight hover bubbles, levitating garages, and mid-air walkways connected to your office pod, who needed to worry about getting wet?—but he wore a worried expression."
- ☐ **D** "The color drained from George's face as he remembered that he was told he would not see this message in his lifetime."

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 4 The author uses details to reveal each character’s feelings about the events in the text. Draw a line from each character to the description that **best** explains how he or she feels. Not all descriptions will be used.

Character

Description

Mom

George

Dad

is confident the floodwall will hold

is shocked by the message on the screen

is excited about the upcoming trip

is anxious to leave the city

is fearful but attempting to stay calm

- 5 What is the author’s message about the future? Use details from the text to support your answer.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Return of the Native Wolf

When Horace Axtell was little, his grandmother would take him fishing or berry gathering in the Idaho mountains. Sometimes she would tell him stories about their Nez Percé ancestors. It was on one of those trips that he heard his first wolf howl.

“My grandmother was hard of hearing, but she heard it, too,” Axtell says. “She explained what kind of animal the wolf was and how much it meant to our people.” Years later, Axtell spotted his first wolf—the last he would see for many years.

The Wolf’s History

The gray wolf once roamed freely across North America, 250,000 strong, but it was hunted to near extinction. In 1974, the U.S. government listed it as an endangered species. People hoped wolves from Canada would gradually repopulate the lower 48 states. Twenty years later, the government decided to speed up the process. It charged the states with “reintroducing” the wolf. This process involved capturing Canadian wolves and releasing them into local areas.

In Idaho, farmers and ranchers feared what would happen to their livestock if wolves once again roamed wild, so the state refused to participate in the process. Then something unusual happened. The Nez Percé tribe, itself a sovereign nation, claimed the job. It would be the first time a Native American tribe partnered with the U.S. government to manage a federal program. And it was a resounding success—for both the wolf and the Nez Percé.

Conflicting Images

To many Americans, wolves are dangerous animals. Europeans who first settled the country feared wolves, and children were raised on fairy tales about bad wolves. Even today, wolves are often still misrepresented as evil and violent creatures.

In the New World, the image of the wolf as a snarling beast served an important purpose. Settlers often overhunted deer, elk, and other wild animals. This overhunting created shortages of the animals. Rather than taking responsibility for their actions, the settlers often blamed these shortages on wolves. They also held wolves responsible for livestock losses—often unfairly.

Wolf hunting became a profession. Hunters would kill the wolves for their pelts, collecting money for every pelt they sold. By the 1970s, fewer than 1,000 wolves remained on less than 3 percent of their former range.

Before settlers arrived, the Nez Percé had coexisted with wolves for thousands of years. They revered the animal for its hunting and kinship skills. The tribe watched wolf packs hunt cooperatively and copied their actions. The wolf became a powerful symbol for the Nez Percé culture that believes people are connected to all living things.

The Nez Percé Step Up

Managing Idaho's wolf recovery was risky for the Nez Percé. The program had many powerful opponents. But it was something they could not walk away from, explained one tribal council member. That has always been the spirit of the Nez Percé: to stay connected with nature.

So, in 1995, the tribe got to work, focusing on the following efforts:

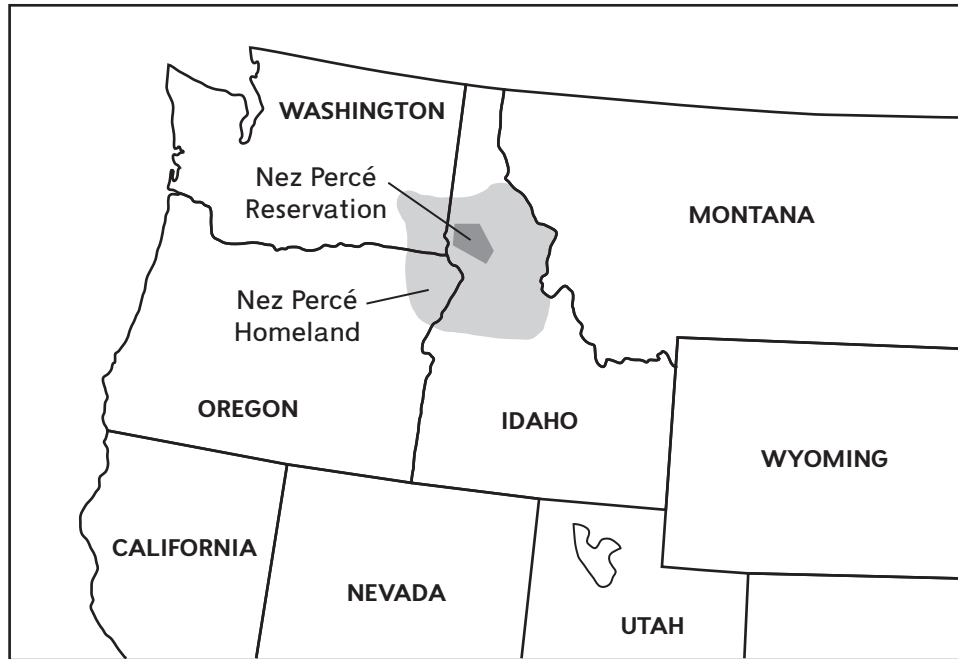
- tagging and releasing 15 Canadian wolves into central Idaho (20 more would be reintroduced the following year).
- monitoring new populations. By 2000, there were 191 wolves in 18 packs in Idaho.
- developing an education and outreach program with ranchers. Nez Percé staffers taught methods of driving wolves away from livestock and lent out special watchdogs. A cooperating environmental group paid ranchers for every animal lost to wolves.

In 2011, the gray wolf was removed from the endangered species list in Idaho and other states. Environmental groups fear what will happen to wolves without federal protection, and some are suing in court to stop this decision. Without the protection, wolves' habitats and wolves themselves are still in danger. But in Idaho, wolves have some protection thanks to the goodwill created by the Nez Percé. Attitudes among ranchers in Idaho have changed, and people are working together.

Building Respect

Because of their work, the Nez Percé are also "recovering." Both the tribe and the wolves were chased from their homes. Both also suffered from prejudice and were driven to the brink of extinction. In helping bring back the wolf, the Nez Percé have furthered their own survival. Their work has also turned a spotlight on their own proud history.

In 1805, the Nez Percé helped feed and shelter members of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Fifty years later, the government took all but seven million acres of Nez Percé land. When gold was discovered in the area, the Nez Percé were confined to only 760,000 acres. The famed Chief Joseph led a fierce battle against this injustice. But the Nez Percé were finally defeated.



Today, only about 3,400 members remain in the Nez Percé tribe. Most live on a reservation in central Idaho. And they still fight—to reclaim hunting and fishing rights, to buy back land, and to regain respect. In the future, they plan to play a bigger role in wildlife management and restoring natural habitats. This will help rebuild their tribe and continue to strengthen their connection to nature. Their work with the wolves was just the start of a larger fight for nature and for the future of the Nez Percé tribe.

- 6** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement **best** describes the author's view of the Nez Percé tribe?

- (A)** The author pities the Nez Percé tribe for the struggle it has gone through.
- (B)** The author respects the Nez Percé tribe and values the work it has done.
- (C)** The author admires the Nez Percé tribe because of its connection to animals.
- (D)** The author believes the success of the Nez Percé tribe's gray wolf program has been ignored.

Part B: Which detail from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "It would be the first time a Native American tribe partnered with the U.S. government to manage a federal program. And it was a resounding success—for both the wolf and the Nez Percé."
- (B)** "The wolf became a powerful symbol for the Nez Percé culture that believes people are connected to all living things."
- (C)** "Nez Percé staffers taught methods of driving wolves away from livestock and lent out special watchdogs. A cooperating environmental group paid ranchers for every animal lost to wolves."
- (D)** "Fifty years later, the government took all but seven million acres of Nez Percé land. When gold was discovered in the area, the Nez Percé were confined to only 760,000 acres."

- 7** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement **best** summarizes the central idea of the text?

- (A)** The Nez Percé tribe has a strong connection with animals, particularly the gray wolf.
- (B)** The Nez Percé tribe has worked hard to restore the gray wolf to Idaho and to rebuild their tribe.
- (C)** Early European settlers contributed to the dwindling numbers of both the gray wolf and the Nez Percé tribe.
- (D)** Programs involving the Nez Percé and the state of Idaho helped reintroduce the gray wolf to the United States.

Part B: Which sentences from the text **best** support your answer in part A? Select **two** options.

- (A)** ““She explained what kind of animal the wolf was and how much it meant to our people.””
- (B)** “People hoped wolves from Canada would gradually repopulate the lower 48 states.”
- (C)** “By the 1970s, fewer than 1,000 wolves remained on less than 3 percent of their former range.”
- (D)** “Nez Percé staffers taught methods of driving wolves away from livestock and lent out special watchdogs.”
- (E)** “When gold was discovered in the area, the Nez Percé were confined to only 760,000 acres.”
- (F)** “And they still fight—to reclaim hunting and fishing rights, to buy back land, and to regain respect.”

- 8** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: How does the map **best** contribute to the reader's understanding of the text?

- (A)** It shows readers the area where the Nez Percé tribe currently lives.
- (B)** It shows readers how the Nez Percé tribe has recovered in recent years.
- (C)** It shows readers how much land the Nez Percé tribe has lost over time.
- (D)** It shows readers the changes in population of the Nez Percé tribe in Idaho.

Part B: Which detail from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "In helping bring back the wolf, the Nez Percé have furthered their own survival."
- (B)** "When gold was discovered in the area, the Nez Percé were confined to only 760,000 acres."
- (C)** "Today, only about 3,400 members remain in the Nez Percé tribe."
- (D)** "And they still fight—to reclaim hunting and fishing rights, to buy back land, and to regain respect."

- 9 The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read the paragraph from the text.

Before settlers arrived, the Nez Percé had coexisted with wolves for thousands of years. They revered the animal for its hunting and kinship skills. The tribe watched wolf packs hunt cooperatively and copied their actions. The wolf became a powerful symbol for the Nez Percé culture that believes people are connected to all living things.

What does revered mean in the paragraph?

- Ⓐ looked at
- Ⓑ trained
- Ⓒ lived near
- Ⓓ admired

Part B: Which detail from the paragraph **best** supports your answer in part A?

- Ⓐ “kinship skills”
- Ⓑ “hunt cooperatively”
- Ⓒ “copied their actions”
- Ⓓ “connected to all living things”

- 10** Which sentence **best** explains how early American settlers impacted the wolf population?
- (A) They created stories about wolves to scare children.
 - (B) They blamed wolves for the loss of livestock and wild animals.
 - (C) They spread the word about their dangerous encounters with wolves.
 - (D) They urged hunters to kill wolves so they could become rich by selling their pelts.

- 11** The author introduces several problems and describes how people attempted to solve them. Draw a line from each problem to the solution that addresses it.

Problem	Solution
The gray wolf once roamed freely across North America, 250,000 strong, but it was hunted to near extinction.	The Nez Percé tribe, itself a sovereign nation, claimed the job.
Today, only about 3,400 members remain in the Nez Percé tribe.	And they still fight—to reclaim hunting and fishing rights, to buy back land, and to regain respect.
Idaho refused to participate in reintroduction because farmers and ranchers feared the wolves would harm their livestock.	The government charged the states with “reintroducing” the wolf by capturing Canadian wolves and releasing them locally.

- 12** Draw a line to match each section heading with the sentence that **best** describes the main idea of the section.

The Wolf's History

The Nez Percé's work with the gray wolf helped spur a rebirth of the tribe.

Conflicting Images

Partly through the efforts of the Nez Percé, the gray wolf population was able to rebound.

The Nez Percé Step Up

Throughout history, many Americans have seen wolves as dangerous creatures and have treated them poorly.

Building Respect

To help combat the possible extinction of the gray wolf, the U.S. government developed a reintroduction program.

- 13** Read the sentences from the text.

And still they fight—to reclaim hunting and fishing rights, to buy back land, and to regain respect. In the future, they plan to play a bigger role in wildlife management and restoring natural habitats.

What does the prefix *re-* in the underlined words **most likely** mean?

- ☐ **A** again
- ☐ **B** make
- ☐ **C** start
- ☐ **D** work

Read the directions. Then answer the questions.

- 14** A student is writing a research report about the fairness of the Roman Republic model of government. He found a credible, or trustworthy, source. Read **Source 1** and complete the task that follows.

Source 1

The Romans were ruled by the Etruscans for many years. In 509 B.C.E., the Romans overthrew them and took control. The Romans then created their own government called the Roman Republic. A republic style of government gives all people the power to elect their leaders. The Roman Republic did not use this model faithfully or fairly.

The student found information in additional sources. Choose **three** pieces of information that **best** support the student's argument that the Roman Republic model was an unfair form of government.

- (A)** The wealthy class ruled the early Roman Republic.
- (B)** Only males voted to elect the Senate representatives.
- (C)** Roman citizens voted to elect the members of the Senate.
- (D)** Many other countries have copied the Roman form of government.
- (E)** Romans who could not afford land had no say in the government.

- 15** A student made a plan for research. Read the plan and the directions that follow.

Research Report Plan

Topic: Oregon spotted frog

Audience: sixth grade students

Purpose: to inform

Research Question: How did the Oregon spotted frog get its name?

A student is writing a research report about Oregon spotted frogs. The student found a source for the research report. Read the source and underline the **three** sentences containing the **most** credible information.

The Oregon spotted frog is an endangered species that lives in the Pacific Northwest. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it is named for the black spots that cover its head, back, sides, and legs. These spots become larger and darker as it gets older. A popular frog blog shows that the spots get darker and become an ugly reddish brown color. Research studies have shown that the body color changes with age, too. As the book *Frogs of the World* explains, young Oregon spotted frogs are usually brown or olive green, while adults are closer to red. Look at any online photos and you will see that the red is beautiful and makes the frogs look like they are on fire. Oregon spotted frogs are interesting to study but hard to find in the world.

- 16** A student is writing a research report for class about the Civil War. The student must use sources that are credible and relevant to the topic. Which source would **most likely** be the **best** source for the student to use in the report?
- (A)** www.thecivilwar.org
Find research articles about Civil War battles and the people involved.
 - (B)** www.moreaboutcivilwar.com
Purchase our videos about the Civil War and see the battles in action.
 - (C)** www.ilovecivilwar.net
Read my blog to learn about my favorite battles and the weapons used.
 - (D)** www.civilwargames.com
Play a fictional character in the Civil War and see how the war affected his or her life.

- 17** A student has made a plan for research. Read the plan and the directions that follow.

Research Report Plan

Topic: Simple Machines

Audience: sixth grade class

Purpose: to inform

Question: How are simple machines used to create mechanical advantages?

The student needs to find a credible source with relevant information. Which of these is **most likely** the **best** source for the information needed to answer the research question?

- (A)** *Simple Machines: Pulleys, Planes, and More*—a book about how to make simple machines
- (B)** *May the Force Be with You*—a book about how forces and motion are related
- (C)** *MOVE! Making Objects Go Fast*—a book about how to make objects move quickly using different machines
- (D)** *Simple Machines: Making Life Easier*—a book about the many ways pulleys, planes, and levers help perform everyday tasks

- 18** A student is writing a narrative for class about a minor traffic accident. Read the draft of the narrative and complete the task that follows.

In the blink of an eye, it happened. My mom put on her signal to switch lanes on our neighborhood street. I saw the black car beside us and figured my mom saw it too, but apparently she didn't. Before I knew it, she was getting into the new lane as the driver of the black car swerved to avoid the accident. Unfortunately, there wasn't enough room for the car to move completely out of the way and our van clipped its front bumper. My mom pulled over to the side of the street and got out to make sure the other driver was okay. By the sound of his voice, I could tell that he was he angry!

My mom tried to keep calm while the other driver continued to yell at her. Minutes later, a police car pulled up to the scene of the accident and a serious-looking officer got out of the car. The officer listened very carefully as both my mom and the driver of the black car explained what happened.

Write an ending to the narrative using dialogue that might have logically occurred between the driver of the black car and the narrator's mom.

- 19** A student is writing an argumentative essay for class about curfews. She wants to revise the draft to improve the relationship between paragraphs two and three. Read the draft of the essay and complete the task that follows.

Parents and city council members argue that putting a curfew in place will help keep kids safe at night. With an 8 p.m. curfew, kids will be safely inside when it is dark. This will help reduce traffic accidents. It will also reduce the chance that kids will encounter strangers on the street.

Kids can encounter strangers when they are walking home from school or playing outside during the day. Instead of a curfew, kids argue that parents should let kids stay outside but require them to be with a larger group of kids. Larger groups are easier to see, which will help prevent traffic accidents. It will also discourage strangers from approaching kids.

Choose the transition sentence that would **best** improve the link between the two paragraphs.

- (A)** There are a lot of dangerous situations that kids face during the day.
- (B)** Even though kids are safer being inside when it's dark, they are not safe during the day.
- (C)** However, traffic accidents and strangers are not dangers that kids only encounter at night.
- (D)** Instead of considering safety at night, parents and city council members should consider safety during the day.

- 20** A student is writing a report about the chemicals found in soda. The student wants to revise the draft to maintain the focus. Read the draft of the report and complete the task that follows.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has to approve the chemicals in soda. It does this to make sure that soda is safe to drink. It bases its decisions on how much of each chemical is in the soda. Some are not safe in large amounts. For example, the chemical 4-methylimidazole is used to color soda brown. A few might even cause cancer if someone drinks too much. A 2007 study showed that 4-methylimidazole causes cancer in mice.

One sentence in the paragraph is out of order. Revise the text by choosing the sentence that should be moved.

- (A)** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has to approve the chemicals in soda.
- (B)** It bases its decisions on how much of each chemical is in the soda.
- (C)** For example, the chemical 4-methylimidazole is used to color soda brown.
- (D)** A 2007 study showed that 4-methylimidazole causes cancer in mice.



SESSION 2

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Swamp Thing

Harry sat at the picnic table with his bunkmates and drew a tree with markers in seven shades of green as water dripped from his head onto the paper and smudged the ink. Unwrapping the towel from around his neck, Harry rubbed his head dry. This was his favorite time of day at Camp Marshwillow. Feeling relaxed after a swim in the lake, he usually sat in the shade with his group, drawing or making crafts.

"Hey, Harry, look!" said his friend Justin. "Do you recognize this?"

The others craned their necks to look at Justin's drawing: a boy with his hair standing straight up and his mouth open in a big, round O.

"That's you, last night!"

"Ha, ha." Harry shook his head. It was tradition at Camp Marshwillow for the counselors to frighten the new campers by telling ghost stories. Last night, when one of the counselors was reciting his tale of terror, Justin had grabbed Harry's shoulder and startled him into a scream. Harry shrugged, knowing that the whole incident would soon be forgotten.

"Have you got any more scary tales for us tonight, Sayeed?" Harry asked one of their counselors.

"No more stories," said Walt, another friend of Harry's. "We need to try to find our own adventure."

"Yeah!" said Justin. "We want to check out the marsh. At *night*."

All of the boys around the table *oohed* and *ahhed* their agreement at the possibility of exploring the unknown territory.

"It's about time!" said Walt. "We've been here almost two weeks, and we haven't even seen the main attraction."

"The marsh is the main attraction?" asked Jon, the other counselor.

"It's legendary," said Justin. "The weird, flickering lights, the creatures bubbling up out of the swamp . . ."

"Here's an idea," said Sayeed. "Each bunk has to present a nature report next week, right? So how about we report on the marsh? We'll take a field trip tonight."

That night, Harry and his bunkmates trudged out to the marsh with Sayeed leading the way. Most of the boys carried flashlights with weak beams that poked hazy cones of light into the bushes.

"Have you got your good camera, Walt?" asked Harry. Walt nodded. Harry had also come prepared with a notebook, plastic gloves, and an assortment of empty bottles in his pack. With fear rising in his throat like mercury, Harry listened to his friends' nervous chatter. Suddenly, Justin stopped, causing everyone in the group to bump into one another like dominoes.

"Did you hear that?" he whispered. Everyone stopped and listened. "There it is again."

It was the slow *gurgle* and *pop* of something bubbling from below.

"Are we there yet?" Walt's voice quivered.

"It's just up ahead," said Sayeed.

Slowly, everyone trooped forward. Harry could now see pools of water surrounded by reeds, cattails, and clumps of tall grasses. Sayeed signaled the boys to halt. Suddenly, his flashlight beam wavered and then cut out.

"I just put new batteries in this thing!" said Sayeed. Now, only a few small beams from the boys' flashlights hovered around their feet.

The *plop*, *gurgle* sound was louder now, and some of the boys whispered about going back to the bunk. Suddenly, a flickering, yellow light appeared over the marsh. Someone screamed, but this time it wasn't Harry.

"Tell me that's your flashlight, Sayeed," said Jon.

"Nope," said Sayeed. Now the light seemed to move over the murky water, and Harry thought he glimpsed a face pulsing in and out of the haze. The sight sent a shiver down his spine.

"Whatever that thing is, it wants us to follow it," whispered Justin.

Behind Harry, Walt's camera was going *click, click, click*. Now was Harry's chance—he swallowed a stone of fear and unzipped his pack. Pulling on the plastic gloves, he uncapped two sample bottles and tiptoed forward. Five minutes later, he slipped back among his friends, proud of himself for having conquered his fear. He felt like he had proven himself to his friends after his earlier show of cowardice. When Sayeed got his flashlight working again, they headed back to the bunk.

The following week, Harry's group presented their nature report to the entire camp. Harry listened as Justin narrated Walt's slideshow. The boys had been preparing for their presentations at every spare moment, rehearsing their parts night and day. Walt had been in charge of creating a slide show for their work, while Justin would be in charge of speaking in front of the entire camp audience. The pictures captured the eerie light just as they had seen it. Similar lights had been seen over swamps and marshes for centuries, Justin reported. Sometimes called will-o'-the-wisp or *ignis fatuus*—Latin for “foolish fire”—this phenomenon had fascinated and frightened people around the world. To this day, people love to tell tales of unlucky explorers being lured to swampy deaths when they had tried to capture the moving lights. Of course, no records support any of these stories.

At the end of the slideshow, Harry took a deep breath and swallowed his nerves. Finally, it was Harry's turn to present his findings from the swamp. He carried his sample bottles and a big index card to the front of the hall.

“I did some research about what we saw last week,” he said. Harry had surfed the Internet for information, and he had taken water and air samples and analyzed them with the science counselors. “There is a scientific explanation for everything we saw.”

A few campers shouted in protest. “Just listen,” said Harry. “Marshes and swamps often contain methane gas. Lots of plants and other kinds of organic matter sit in the water, decaying. Sometimes, this decaying process produces traces of hydrogen phosphide. This chemical then ignites the methane, producing a glow that moves and hovers over the water.”

After the presentation, Justin said, “I liked it better when it was a scary mystery.”

“I know—me too,” said Harry.

“Don't worry, though, Harry. We've got some good scare tactics to spring on you tonight.”

Harry rolled his eyes and smiled.

- 21** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement **best** describes a central message expressed in the text?

- ☐ (A) Sometimes it's more fun for mysteries to remain unexplained.
- ☐ (B) Being successful requires a lot of hard work and a little luck.
- ☐ (C) True friendship is hard to find and should be cherished.
- ☐ (D) There are some occurrences science can't explain.

Part B: Which sentences from the text **best** support your answer in part A? Select **two** options.

- ☐ (A) "Harry shrugged, knowing that the whole incident would soon be forgotten."
- ☐ (B) "Walt had been in charge of creating a slide show for their work, while Justin would be in charge of speaking in front of the entire camp audience."
- ☐ (C) "The pictures captured the eerie light just as they had seen it."
- ☐ (D) "To this day, people love to tell tales of unlucky explorers being lured to swampy deaths when they had tried to capture the moving lights."
- ☐ (E) "Harry had surfed the Internet for information, and he had taken water and air samples and analyzed them with the science counselors."
- ☐ (F) "After the presentation, Justin said, 'I liked it better when it was a scary mystery.'"

- 22** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read the sentence from the text.

With fear rising in his throat like mercury, Harry listened to his friends' nervous chatter.

How does the simile "fear rising in his throat like mercury" help the reader understand Harry's feelings about the marsh?

- (A)** It emphasizes that Harry is scared by what his friends are saying about the marsh.
- (B)** It illustrates Harry's increasing level of anxiety as he and his friends enter the marsh.
- (C)** It explains that Harry is troubled by his friends' nervous behavior as they enter the marsh.
- (D)** It demonstrates that Harry is worried about having to do a report on the marsh with his friends.

Part B: Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "It was tradition at Camp Marshwillow for the counselors to frighten the new campers by telling ghost stories."
- (B)** "Suddenly, Justin stopped, causing everyone in the group to bump into one another like dominoes."
- (C)** "Someone screamed, but this time it wasn't Harry."
- (D)** "The sight sent a shiver down his spine."

- 23** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read the sentence from the text.

Sometimes called will-o'-the-wisp or *ignis fatuus*—Latin for ‘foolish fire’—this phenomenon had frightened people around the world.

What is the meaning of phenomenon as it is used in the sentence?

- (A)** a frightening event or occurrence that has no scientific explanation
- (B)** something that has an effect on many people across different cultures
- (C)** an unusual fact or situation that is observed but difficult to understand or explain
- (D)** an object or idea that is based in folklore and passed down through generations

Part B: Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** “Most of the boys carried flashlights with weak beams that poked hazy cones of light into the bushes.”
- (B)** “Harry could now see pools of water surrounded by reeds, cattails, and clumps of tall grasses.”
- (C)** “The *plop, gurgle* sound was louder now, and some of the boys whispered about going back to the bunk.”
- (D)** “Now the light seemed to move over the murky water, and Harry thought he glimpsed a face pulsing in and out of the haze.”

- 24** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read the sentence from the text.

To this day, people love to tell tales of unlucky explorers being lured to swampy deaths when they had tried to capture the moving lights.

What does lured **most likely** suggest about how people reacted to swamp light?

- ☐ **A** People were scared by the light.
- ☐ **B** People were tempted by the light.
- ☐ **C** People were surprised by the light.
- ☐ **D** People were confused by the light.

Part B: Which sentence from the story **best** supports your answer in part A?

- ☐ **A** "'Whatever that thing is, it wants us to follow it,' whispered Justin."
- ☐ **B** "The pictures captured the eerie light just as they had seen it."
- ☐ **C** "Similar lights had been seen over swamps and marshes for centuries, Justin reported."
- ☐ **D** "'There is a scientific explanation for everything we saw.'"

- 25** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement **best** describes how Harry develops as a character over the course of the text?

- (A)** He learns that he can trust his counselors after he explores the marsh with them.
- (B)** He becomes better friends with the other campers by working together on the report.
- (C)** He discovers that he really enjoys conducting science experiments while researching for the report.
- (D)** He overcomes his fear of the unknown by collecting samples in the marsh and presenting his findings.

Part B: Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "All of the boys around the table *oohed* and *ahhed* their agreement at the possibility of exploring the unknown territory."
- (B)** "That night, Harry and his bunkmates trudged out to the marsh with Sayeed leading the way."
- (C)** "The boys had been preparing for their presentations at every spare moment, rehearsing their parts night and day."
- (D)** "At the end of the slideshow, Harry took a deep breath and swallowed his nerves."

- 26** The events in the text serve to advance the plot. Draw a line from each event on the left to the effect it has on the plot.

Event	Effect on Plot
The sounds of the marsh grow louder.	introduces a conflict within a character that is resolved in the story
Harry presents his findings to the group.	conveys the building fear of the characters while in the marsh
Justin draws a picture of Harry being scared.	provides the turning point, or climax, of the story

- 27** For each of Harry's actions listed in the chart, write what it reveals about his point of view.

Action	Point of View
Harry collects samples from the marsh.	
Harry explains his findings.	
Harry rolls his eyes and smiles.	

Point of View he wants to overcome his fears he is a good sport about getting teased he is confident in his work

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 28** What does the dialogue between Justin and Harry show about the relationship between the characters in the text? Include information from the text to support your response.

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

The Harlem Renaissance

The art and writings of people in a particular time and place say a lot about their identity. What were people thinking and doing? What did they dream of achieving? In the early years of American history, African Americans had struggled to create and control their own identities, but the Harlem Renaissance helped changed this.

Between 1910 and 1920, large numbers of African Americans left the South, where they and their ancestors had been enslaved. Many had spent their lives struggling against racial prejudice to find good jobs and decent wages. They traveled north to look for new prospects in what was called the Great Migration. Many of them moved into large cities.

In just a few years, Harlem, which is a neighborhood in New York City, saw a huge increase in the number of African Americans living together. Local governments opened new schools to serve the educational needs of the population. New businesses, many of them owned and operated by African Americans, opened and created jobs for local residents.

As part of this cultural shift, African Americans experienced a burst of creativity. Writers crafted poems and stories that described past and present conditions. Painters and musicians contributed images and songs about people and places that were familiar to the African American audience.

W. E. B. Du Bois was one of the first people to inspire and support African American expression; he believed that education was the key to the future. Du Bois founded the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), and he also edited a magazine called *The Crisis*.

Another important figure of the Harlem Renaissance was Langston Hughes. Hughes worked to create a new style of poetry that incorporated the rhythms of jazz and blues music. He also wanted his poems to carry on the importance of the oral tradition. Hughes's writing would influence many other poets, and his work granted African Americans the freedom to think of and express themselves in new and hopeful ways.

Zora Neale Hurston also wrote about the African American culture and condition. In college, Hurston had studied anthropology because she wanted to learn how different cultures lived. After school, she traveled throughout the southern United States and collected stories. She listened to others talk about how they were raised, and then she wrote down people's recollections about the past. Hurston felt that it was important to preserve these stories forever.

Writing was not the only creative endeavor to be influenced by African Americans. Jazz had emerged as a popular form of expression on the music scene. Musicians such as Duke Ellington formed big bands that played jazz in dance halls; jazz could be wild, fast, and exciting. Other types of jazz were improvised, or created on the spot as the musicians played.

The voices of African American artists carried far beyond the city of Harlem. They continued to echo from the 1920s into the new century where they have influenced many and nurtured new writers, musicians, and artists. Along the way, they have helped others experience the world from fresh perspectives.

- 29** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement **best** describes one effect of the Harlem Renaissance?

- (A)** Large communities of African Americans were found in many major American cities.
- (B)** African Americans began the Great Migration and created jazz music.
- (C)** Many African Americans were inspired to create art and music familiar to their culture.
- (D)** Some African Americans moved north to become influential authors.

Part B: Which sentences from the text **best** support your answer in part A? Select **three** options.

- (A)** "Many of them moved into large cities."
- (B)** "Local governments opened new schools to serve the educational needs of the population."
- (C)** "New businesses, many of them owned and operated by African Americans, opened and created jobs for local residents."
- (D)** "Writers crafted poems and stories that described past and present conditions."
- (E)** "Painters and musicians contributed images and songs about people and places that were familiar to the African American audience."
- (F)** "Jazz had emerged as a popular form of expression on the music scene."

- 30** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read the paragraph from the text.

Zora Neale Hurston also wrote about the African American culture and condition. In college, Hurston had studied anthropology because she wanted to learn how different cultures lived. After school, she traveled throughout the southern United States and collected stories. She listened to others talk about how they were raised, and then she wrote down people's recollections about the past. Hurston felt that it was important to preserve these stories forever.

Which dictionary entry **best** defines anthropology as suggested by the description of Hurston's actions in the paragraph?

- (A)** (n) 1. the study of traditional legends; superstitions or folklore of a people
- (B)** (n) 1. the study of human beings' similarities to and differences from other animals
- (C)** (n) 1. the scientific study of humans, especially their origin and physical development
- (D)** (n) 1. the science of the history, cultural development, and social customs and beliefs of humans

Part B: Which details about Zora Neale Hurston in the text **best** support your answer in part A? Select **three** options.

- (A)** She felt people and their life stories were important.
- (B)** She traveled throughout the southern United States.
- (C)** She wrote down people's recollections about the past.
- (D)** She listened to others talk about how they were raised.
- (E)** She was a famous historical writer who wrote about people.
- (F)** She attended a New York university and studied anthropology.

- 31** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement **best** summarizes the central idea of the text?

- (A)** The Harlem Renaissance helped shape African American culture.
- (B)** The Harlem Renaissance set the course for African American freedom.
- (C)** The Harlem Renaissance protected freedom of expression for African Americans.
- (D)** The Harlem Renaissance was the last great period of creativity for African Americans.

Part B: Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "Many had spent their lives struggling against racial prejudice to find good jobs and decent wages."
- (B)** "They traveled north to look for new prospects in what was called the Great Migration."
- (C)** "Hughes's writing would influence many other poets, and his work granted African Americans the freedom to think of and express themselves in new and hopeful ways."
- (D)** "Writing was not the only creative endeavor to be influenced by African Americans."

- 32** The author organizes the second half of the text by comparing and contrasting important figures and forms of expression in the Harlem Renaissance. Draw a line from each figure to the phrase that **best** describes his or her contribution to the movement.

Figure	Contribution
W. E. B. Du Bois	had a passion for culture and helped to preserve African American stories and experiences of the past
Langston Hughes	is synonymous with big bands and the jazz music that influenced African American culture during the Harlem Renaissance
Zora Neale Hurston	changed the African American written expression by preserving the oral tradition and combining the rhythms of jazz and blues with language
Duke Ellington	felt education was the key factor in improving a person's life and established an organization to focus on the improvement of African Americans

- 33** Which statement about the author's point of view is **best** supported by the text?
- (A) The author believes that history influences the cultural development of everyone in the United States.
 - (B) The author believes that the Harlem Renaissance was key in creating the existing culture of African Americans.
 - (C) The author believes that the Great Migration occurred because of the cultural development of Harlem, New York.
 - (D) The author believes that the greatest time of cultural development in American history was the Harlem Renaissance.

Read the directions. Then answer the questions.

- 34** Which sentence is correct?
- (A) My family loves bookstores, so yesterday I and my dad went to Tattered Cover and browsed for an hour.
 - (B) My family loves bookstores, so yesterday me and my dad went to Tattered Cover and browsed for an hour.
 - (C) My family loves bookstores, so yesterday my dad and I went to Tattered Cover and browsed for an hour.
 - (D) My family loves bookstores, so yesterday my dad and me went to Tattered Cover and browsed for an hour.
- 35** Choose the **two** sentences that contain grammar errors.
- (A) Max sat hisself down to play with Jane, her dolls, and her new race car.
 - (B) "Stop, Max! I will do it myself," Jane grumbled as she reached down to pick up the toys.
 - (C) Jane was so frustrated that she started picking up the car she hadn't even used herself.
 - (D) "Jane, certainly you can figure out a way for Max and you and yourself to get along," interrupted Jane's mom.
 - (E) *I can play by myself all the time, so why can't he?* she thought to herself as she pulled a doll out of Max's hand.
 - (F) "Mom! I need to get myself some rest, and Max has a way of preventing that from happening," Jane protested.

- 36** A student is writing a story for class. Read the sentences from the story.

When Matthew goes to the store to get groceries for his mom, _____ should make sure to buy peanut butter. Peanut butter is the key ingredient for the sandwiches _____ will take to the beach.

Which set of pronouns correctly fills in the blanks?

- (A)** he, we
- (B)** I, they
- (C)** she, I
- (D)** we, you

- 37** A student is writing an article for the student newspaper about the basketball game on Friday night. Read the draft of the article and answer the question that follows.

Friday night, our Bulldogs faced the Hawks in the year's first game of the season. The gym was packed with fans ready to cheer for their team. The whole crowd sat on the edge of their seats as the game began with the traditional tip off. Michael Ellis, number 23, passed the ball toward his fellow Bulldog: number 17, Nathan Anderson. But then, suddenly, number 14 from the Hawks stole the ball and sank a three-point shot. The first half was a tense battle. The Bulldogs scored 20 points, while the Hawks had 36. The Bulldogs came out of the locker room at halftime with a newfound determination. It was a rough start, but the Dogs eventually devoured the Hawks.

Which **two** words **best** replace the underlined word with more clear and specific language?

- (A)** added
- (B)** attempted
- (C)** earned
- (D)** made
- (E)** collected

- 38** A student is writing a story for a literary magazine. Read the draft of the story introduction and complete the task that follows.

Saturday started out like any other weekend. I woke up like a snail creeping across the sidewalk, slowly and at my own pace. I chose to remain in my fleece pajamas and headed for the refrigerator. It wasn't until I stepped onto the cold tile of the kitchen floor that things changed. It was a nice day outside, but it would be a heavy downpour of bad luck inside my quiet little home. It all began with my mom flavoring her morning coffee with tears.

Choose the **best** way to revise the underlined phrase so that the story maintains a consistent style and voice.

- (A)** pretty nice Saturday morning
- (B)** new morning of fresh starts
- (C)** morning full of sunshine
- (D)** welcome morning

- 39** A student is writing an essay for his teacher about natural farming. Read the draft of a paragraph from the essay and answer the question that follows.

The change to more natural farming started with farmers in the 1970s. They wanted to use natural ways to grow and protect their plants. The first group of farmers to use natural methods was located in California. This group wanted to make sure that farmers' claims were honest and accurate. As a result, they helped pass several laws in the 1980s. But they also knew how important it was to let people know. A few big stories were written about the topic. Finally, the whole country took notice.

What is a more clear and specific phrase to replace the underlined phrase?

- (A)** to educate Americans
- (B)** to inform American farmers
- (C)** to help Americans pass laws
- (D)** to force Americans to take action

