



**FSA**  
ELA & Mathematics  
Assessments

**Grade 6**  
FSA ELA Reading  
Practice Test Questions

The purpose of these practice test materials is to orient teachers and students to the types of questions on paper-based FSA ELA Reading tests. By using these materials, students will become familiar with the types of items and response formats they may see on a paper-based test. The practice questions and answers are not intended to demonstrate the length of the actual test, nor should student responses be used as an indicator of student performance on the actual test. The practice test is not intended to guide classroom instruction.

**Directions for Answering the  
ELA Reading Practice Test Questions**

If you don't understand a question, ask your teacher to explain it to you. Your teacher has the answers to the practice test questions.

To offer students a variety of texts on the FSA ELA Reading tests, authentic and copyrighted stories, poems, and articles appear as they were originally published, as requested by the publisher and/or author. While these real-world examples do not always adhere to strict style conventions and/or grammar rules, inconsistencies among passages should not detract from students' ability to understand and answer questions about the texts.

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Read the passages "Beautiful as the Day" and "Pirate Story" and then answer Numbers 1 through 7.

## Passage 1: Beautiful as the Day

by E. Nesbit

- 1 "I say, let's take our spades and dig in the gravel-pits. We can pretend it's seaside."
- 2 "Father says it was once," Anthea said; "he says there are shells there thousands of years old."
- 3 So they went. Of course they had been to the edge of the gravel-pit and looked over, but they had not gone down into it for fear father should say they mustn't play there, and it was the same with the chalk-quarry. The gravel-pit is not really dangerous if you don't try to climb down the edges, but go the slow safe way round by the road, as if you were a cart.
- 4 Each of the children carried its own spade, and took it in turns to carry the Lamb. He was the baby, and they called him that because "Baa" was the first thing he ever said. They called Anthea "Panther," which seems silly when you read it, but when you say it it sounds a little like her name.
- 5 The gravel-pit is very large and wide, with grass growing round the edges at the top, and dry stringy wildflowers, purple and yellow. It is like a giant's washbowl. And there are mounds of gravel, and holes in the sides of the bowl where gravel has been taken out, and high up in the steep sides there are the little holes that are the little front doors of the little bank-martins'<sup>1</sup> little houses.
- 6 The children built a castle, of course, but castle-building is rather poor fun when you have no hope of the swishing tide ever coming in to fill up the moat and wash away the drawbridge, and, at the happy last, to wet everybody up to the waist at least.

<sup>1</sup>bank-martins: small birds that make their nests in tunnels dug in clay or sand



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- 7 Cyril wanted to dig out a cave to play smugglers in, but the others thought it might bury them alive, so it ended in all spades going to work to dig a hole through the castle to Australia. These children, you see, believed that the world was round, and that on the other side the little Australian boys and girls were really walking wrong way up, like flies on the ceiling, with their heads hanging down into the air.
- 8 The children dug and they dug and they dug, and their hands got sandy and hot and red, and their faces got damp and shiny. The Lamb had tried to eat the sand, and had cried so hard when he found that it was not, as he had supposed, brown sugar, that he was now tired out, and was lying asleep in a warm fat bunch in the middle of the half-finished castle. This left his brothers and sisters free to work really hard, and the hole that was to come out in Australia soon grew so deep that Jane . . . begged the others to stop.
- 9 "Suppose the bottom of the hole gave way suddenly," said she, "and you tumbled out among the little Australians, all the sand would get in their eyes."
- 10 "Yes," said Robert; "and they would hate us, and throw stones at us, and not let us see the kangaroos, or opossums, . . . or Emu Brand birds, or anything."
- 11 Cyril and Anthea knew that Australia was not quite so near as all that, but they agreed to stop using the spades and to go on with their hands. This was quite easy, because the sand at the bottom of the hole was very soft and fine and dry, like sea-sand. And there were little shells in it.
- 12 "Fancy it having been wet sea here once, all sloppy and shiny," said Jane, "with fishes and conger-eels and coral and mermaids."
- 13 "And masts of ships and wrecked Spanish treasure. I wish we could find a gold doubloon, or something," Cyril said.
- 14 "How did the sea get carried away?" Robert asked.
- 15 "Not in a pail, silly," said his brother.
- 16 "Father says the earth got too hot underneath, as you do in bed sometimes, so it just hunched up its shoulders, and the sea had to slip off, like the blankets do us, and the shoulder was left sticking out, and turned into dry land. Let's go and look for shells; I think that little cave looks likely, and I see something sticking out there like a bit of wrecked ship's anchor, and it's beastly hot in the Australian hole."

- 17 The others agreed, but Anthea went on digging. She always liked to finish a thing when she had once begun it. She felt it would be a disgrace to leave that hole without getting through to Australia.

Excerpt from "Beautiful as the Day" by E. Nesbit. In the public domain.

## Passage 2: Pirate Story

by Robert Louis Stevenson

- 1 Three of us afloat in the meadow by the swing,  
Three of us aboard in the basket on the lea.  
Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring,  
And waves are on the meadow like the waves there are at sea.
- 5 Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat,  
Wary of the weather and steering by a star?  
Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the boat,  
To Providence, or Babylon, or off to Malabar?
- 10 Hi! but here's a squadron a-rowing on the sea—  
Cattle on the meadow a-charging with a roar!  
Quick, and we'll escape them, they're as mad as they can be,  
The wicket is the harbour and the garden is the shore.

"Pirate Story" by Robert Louis Stevenson. In the public domain.

**Now answer Numbers 1 through 7. Base your answers on the passages "Beautiful as the Day" and "Pirate Story."**

1. Select the sentence from Passage 1 that supports the idea that the children are imaginative.
- Ⓐ "'Father says it was once,' Anthea said; 'he says there are shells there thousands of years old.'" (paragraph 2)
  - Ⓑ "'Of course they had been to the edge of the gravel-pit and looked over, but they had not gone down into it for fear father should say they mustn't play there, and it was the same with the chalk-quarry.'" (paragraph 3)
  - Ⓒ "'The children dug and they dug and they dug, and their hands got sandy and hot and red, and their faces got damp and shiny.'" (paragraph 8)
  - Ⓓ "'Fancy it having been wet sea here once, all sloppy and shiny,' said Jane, 'with fishes and conger-eels and coral and mermaids.'" (paragraph 12)

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2. Select **three** details that should be included in a summary of Passage 1.

- Ⓐ A group of children go to a gravel pit to play.
- Ⓑ Each of the children has his or her own shovel.
- Ⓒ Grass and wildflowers grow around the gravel pit.
- Ⓓ The children decide to dig a hole through the earth.
- Ⓔ The children's father tells them the sea is a blanket.
- Ⓕ The baby is called the Lamb because of his first word.
- Ⓖ The children talk about what will happen if the hole reaches Australia.

3. Fill in the bubbles to show how different characters advance the plot of Passage 1. More than one bubble may be filled in for each character.

	Anthea	Jane	Robert
<b>feels nervous about the hole to Australia</b>	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ
<b>understands they cannot dig to Australia</b>	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Ⓕ
<b>continues digging after others quit</b>	Ⓖ	Ⓗ	Ⓖ



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4. What is the effect of the personification in paragraph 16?
- Ⓐ It shows that the gravel pit is very large.
  - Ⓑ It explains why the children chose to dig in the gravel pit.
  - Ⓒ It explains why the children's father wants them to avoid the gravel pit.
  - Ⓓ It gives a picture of what caused the sea to disappear from the gravel pit.
5. How does the description of the setting in paragraph 5 affect the overall meaning of Passage 1?
- Ⓐ Describing the gravel pit as "like a giant's washbowl" creates a sense of adventure.
  - Ⓑ Mentioning the shape of the gravel pit explains that there used to be a beach there.
  - Ⓒ Using words like "large and wide" to describe the gravel pit shows that the children must be careful.
  - Ⓓ Giving the location of the gravel pit helps the reader understand how far the children walk to get there.