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Grade 3  
English Language Arts/Literacy  
**Practice Test**

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# Section 1

**Directions:**

Today, you will take Section 1 of the Grade 3 English Language Arts/Literacy Practice Test.

Read each passage and question. Then, follow the directions to answer each question. Mark your answers by completely filling in the circles in your test book. Do not make any pencil marks outside of the circles. If you need to change an answer, be sure to erase your first answer completely.

If you do not know the answer to a question, you may go on to the next question. If you finish early, you may review your answers and any questions you did not answer in this Section ONLY. Do not go past the stop sign.



- 7 “He could juggle anything,” Sam said, “even eggplants and cauliflower.”
- 8 “I want to juggle too,” Nico said. “Will you teach me?”
- 9 So after lunch, Sam taught Nico how to throw two scarves in an X shape—first the one in his right hand, then the one in his left.
- 10 “Adding the third one is tricky,” Sam said.
- 11 “Like this?” Nico said. “Oops!”
- 12 Sam smiled. “It takes time to catch on.”
- 13 But it didn’t take Nico long at all. After supper, he marched into the family room wearing a magician’s hat.
- 14 “Presenting Nico the Nifty!” he announced, then pulled Sam’s scarves out of his sleeve. He began to juggle—slowly at first, then faster.
- 15 “Amazing!” Dad said.
- 16 “You’re a natural,” said Mom.
- 17 Sam was silent. How could Nico be the better juggler? Sam was older, and he’d been practicing longer. It wasn’t fair.
- 18 It took three days for Nico to learn to juggle beanbags and three more for tennis balls.
- 19 At first, Sam worked as hard as Nico. But Sam’s scarves and beanbags and balls kept drifting and falling and bouncing to the floor, while Nico’s stayed in the air. Finally, Sam quit practicing. Juggling wasn’t fun anymore.
- 20 A few weeks later, as Sam played basketball in the driveway, Nico hurried out of the house with his magician’s hat.
- 21 “Guess what!” he said. “The community center is having a talent show in the park. I’m going to juggle water balloons. Isn’t that a great idea?”
- 22 It was. But Sam didn’t want Nico to know he thought so. “Better wear your swim trunks,” he warned. “You’ll get wet when you drop the balloons.”
- 23 Nico put his hands on his hips. “I’m a good juggler.”
- 24 “So what? Juggling is silly.” Sam spun the basketball on his index finger, something Nico had never been able to do.



43 “Really?” Nico said.

44 “Yeah,” Sam said. “I’m sorry I was mean to you before. Come on. I’ll help you fill more balloons before we leave.”

45 Two hours later, Nico accepted his first-place trophy. He waved to Sam from the stage.

46 “Way to go!” Sam called. For once he was happy for Nico, not jealous. It felt good.

47 As they headed to the car, Sam had a thought. “We should ask Mom to stop at the store on the way home.”

48 “Why?”

49 “Because I think it’s time for Nico the Nifty to try juggling vegetables!”

“Nico the Nifty” by Sara Matson. Copyright 2019 Highlights for Children, Inc. Reproduced with permission of Highlights for Children, Inc. via Copyright Clearance Center.





**3 Part A**

In paragraph 16, what is the meaning of the phrase “you’re a natural”?

- Ⓐ to use things from outside
- Ⓑ to practice something
- Ⓒ to make a good choice
- Ⓓ to have the talent to succeed

**Part B**

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ “. . . Sam taught Nico how to throw two scarves in an X shape. . . .” (paragraph 9)
- Ⓑ “But it didn’t take Nico long at all.” (paragraph 13)
- Ⓒ “He began to juggle—slowly at first, then faster.” (paragraph 14)
- Ⓓ “. . . Nico hurried out of the house with his magician’s hat.” (paragraph 20)



**5 Part A**

Why does Sam say that Nico needs to juggle vegetables?

- Ⓐ Sam is worried Nico will drop the balloons.
- Ⓑ Sam realizes Nico is a very talented juggler.
- Ⓒ Sam thinks Nico should begin juggling at the library.
- Ⓓ Sam knows Nico needs to improve.

**Part B**

Which **two** sentences from the passage **best** support the answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ “‘He could juggle anything,’ Sam said, ‘even eggplants and cauliflower.’” (paragraph 7)
- Ⓑ “‘Do you think it’s too late to cancel?’ Nico moaned.” (paragraph 34)
- Ⓒ “‘If you do it now, you probably won’t do it onstage.’” (paragraph 38)
- Ⓓ “‘Before you know it, you’ll be as good as the one we saw at the library.’” (paragraph 42)
- Ⓔ “He waved to Sam from the stage.” (paragraph 45)

**6** Which **two** statements explain what paragraphs 35 through 38 show about Sam?

- Ⓐ They show how well Sam played during an important basketball game.
- Ⓑ They show that Sam feels guilty about the way he has treated Nico.
- Ⓒ They show the reasons Sam was unable to play in a basketball game.
- Ⓓ They show how Sam uses his memory of a similar feeling to help Nico.
- Ⓔ They show that Sam wishes he could perform in the talent show with Nico.



**GO ON TO NEXT PAGE**



Japanese cedar grown as bonsai



Photo courtesy of the National Bonsai Foundation

- 3 The Chinese first trained trees in pots more than 1,300 years ago. They called their miniature trees *penjing*. They would often create elaborate landscapes or animal shapes with trees.

This trident maple has been grown into the shape of a dragon.



Photo Courtesy of US National Arboretum

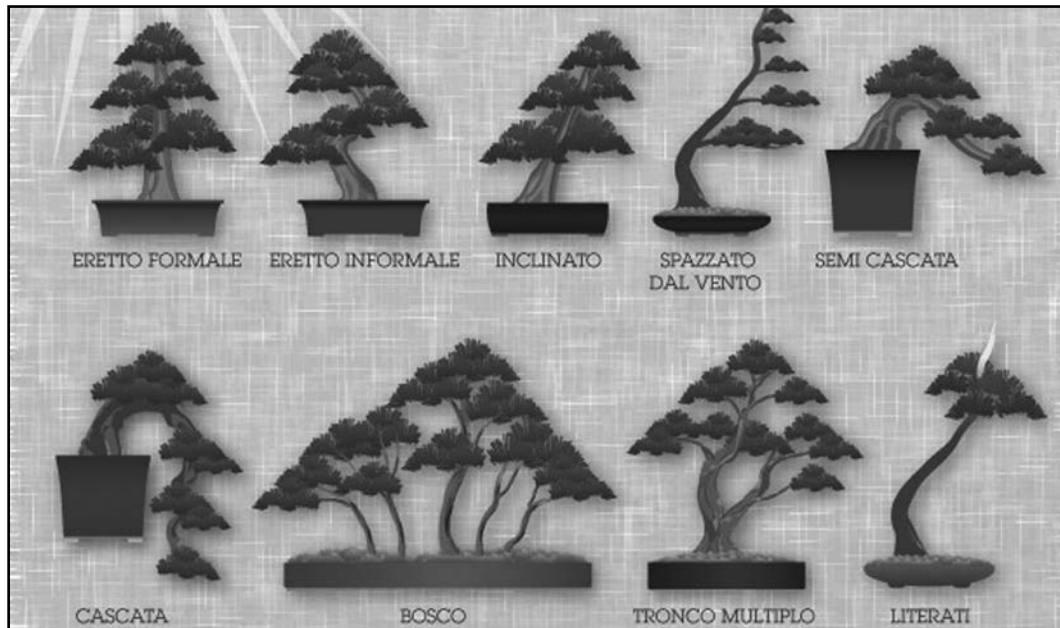
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## Some common bonsai shapes



- 4 A good bonsai tells a story. Different styles are meant to look like trees growing in harsh winds (windswept), on cliffs (cascade), or in other natural settings. Bonsai from flowering bushes can look like trees in spring.
- 5 Wires are wrapped around living branches to train them to grow into interesting shapes. The wires stay on for a few months, until the shape holds.



- 6 Bonsai artists use scissors, clamps, and other small tools to shape the branches. Dramatic dead branches can make a tree look older.
- 7 Once a tree is shaped, it's moved into a pot. The bonsai artist carefully chooses a pot that will look just right with the finished tree. Large roots, which don't feed the tree, are removed. The pot is filled with special soil to keep the roots healthy.
- 8 In nature, some tree roots will tightly grip rocks. This is a popular style for bonsai. While a tree is still young, its roots are draped over a rock and wrapped with medical tape until the roots grip the rock on their own.
- 9 Most bonsai like to live outdoors. They are real, living trees and need plenty of sun and rain. Many also need a cold season to stay healthy. But bonsai grown from tropical trees need to come inside for the winter.
- 10 It can take many years to train a bonsai into just the right shape. Since they are living, growing plants, bonsai are never finished. They need daily care to stay healthy and keep looking their best. But if they're well-tended, they can live for hundreds of years. Anyone can grow bonsai. If you'd like to give it a try, check for a bonsai club near you or ask at your local arboretum.

Tiny Trees by Kevin Kohler, from Ask November 2018 by Carus Publishing Company d/b/a Cricket Media.

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- 9 What does the word **trimmed** mean as it is used in paragraph 2?
- Ⓐ cut shorter
  - Ⓑ decorated
  - Ⓒ carefully arranged
  - Ⓓ removed
- 10 Read the last sentence from paragraph 2.

Some you can hold in your hand, while others are so big they need a forklift to move.

What is the purpose of the sentence?

- Ⓐ It helps the reader understand that bonsai can be many different sizes.
  - Ⓑ It helps the reader understand that bonsai can be displayed in different locations.
  - Ⓒ It helps the reader understand the differences between the types of trees used to create bonsai.
  - Ⓓ It helps the reader understand why it is important to grow bonsai in pots.
- 11 Paragraph 4 provides the **most** information about
- Ⓐ the definition of bonsai.
  - Ⓑ the reason artists train bonsai.
  - Ⓒ the different shapes of bonsai.
  - Ⓓ the types of tools used to shape bonsai.



- 15** Based on the passage, what is one way artists make sure bonsai trees will hold their shape?
- Ⓐ Artists choose trees that grow more easily in larger pots.
  - Ⓑ Artists leave wires wrapped around branches for a few months.
  - Ⓒ Artists remove the dead branches from the trees.
  - Ⓓ Artists leave the trees outdoors during the winter.

**16 Part A**

Which sentence from “Tiny Trees” **best** states the main idea of the passage?

- Ⓐ “Bonsai is a Japanese word that means ‘potted tree.’” (paragraph 1)
- Ⓑ “Inspired by nature, bonsai artists create beautiful living sculptures from trees or shrubs.” (paragraph 1)
- Ⓒ “Bonsai are not special small species of trees.” (paragraph 2)
- Ⓓ “The Chinese first trained trees in pots more than 1,300 years ago.” (paragraph 3)

**Part B**

Which detail from the passage **best** supports the correct answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ “But a bonsai is far more than a plant in a pot.” (paragraph 1)
- Ⓑ “They are regular full-sized trees. . . .” (paragraph 2)
- Ⓒ “They called their miniature trees *penjing*.” (paragraph 3)
- Ⓓ “They would often create elaborate landscapes or animal shapes with trees.” (paragraph 3)



- 20 Which word has the same sound as the underlined part of the word **before**?
- Ⓐ shepherd
  - Ⓑ eighty
  - Ⓒ mother
  - Ⓓ enough
- 21 Which word has the same sound as the underlined part of the word **awful**?
- Ⓐ tower
  - Ⓑ caught
  - Ⓒ nation
  - Ⓓ knew
- 22 Which word has the same sound as the underlined part of the word **easily**?
- Ⓐ climbing
  - Ⓑ lucky
  - Ⓒ leader
  - Ⓓ yellow
- 23 Which word has the same sound as the underlined part of the word **neighbor**?
- Ⓐ became
  - Ⓑ decide
  - Ⓒ highest
  - Ⓓ forget







**You have come to the end of Section 1 of the test. Review your answers from Section 1 only.**





## Section 2

**Directions:**

Today, you will take Section 2 of the Grade 3 English Language Arts/Literacy Practice Test.

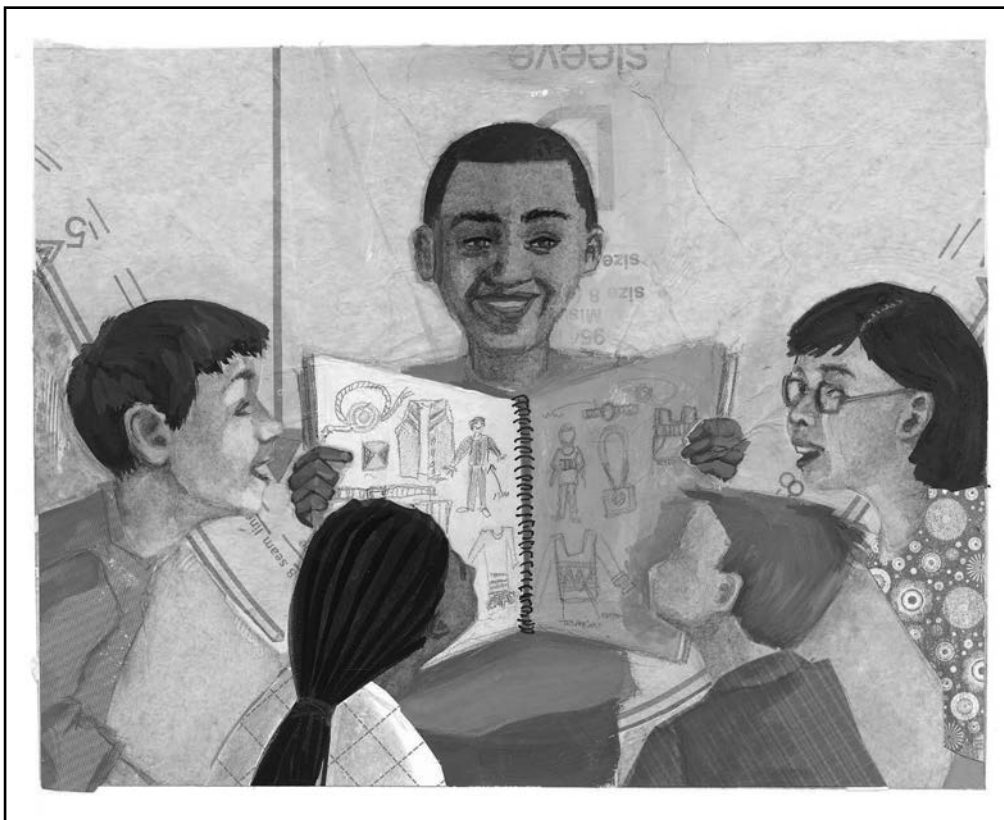
Read each passage and question. Then, follow the directions to answer each question. Mark your answers by completely filling in the circles in your test book. Do not make any pencil marks outside of the circles. If you need to change an answer, be sure to erase your first answer completely.

One of the questions may ask you to write a response. Write your response in the space provided in your test book. Only responses written within the space provided will be scored.

If you do not know the answer to a question, you may go on to the next question. If you finish early, you may review your answers and any questions you did not answer in this Section ONLY. Do not go past the stop sign.







“Hobby Friday” by Beverly J. Letchworth,  
illustrated by Mikela Prevost, Spider, April 2019

“Hobby Friday” from *Spider Magazine* volume 12, issue 4 by Beverly Letchworth. Copyright April 2019 by Cricket Media. Reproduced with permission of Cricket Media, Inc. via Copyright Clearance Center.



- 3 In "Hobby Friday," what do paragraphs 9 through 16 show about Chris?
- Ⓐ They show that he decides collecting baseball cards is his favorite hobby.
  - Ⓑ They show that he is changing his mind about sharing his favorite hobby with the class.
  - Ⓒ They show that he needs to work on his hobby with his grandmother.
  - Ⓓ They show that he feels confident about sharing his favorite hobby with his class.

4 **Part A**

In paragraph 18 of "Hobby Friday" when Chris tells himself "Don't let them see you sweat," he means that he feels

- Ⓐ hot and uncomfortable.
- Ⓑ proud of himself.
- Ⓒ embarrassed.
- Ⓓ very nervous.

**Part B**

Which sentence from the passage supports the correct answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ "Suddenly, Chris knew what he had to do." (paragraph 13)
- Ⓑ "Everyone in the class turned to look at him." (paragraph 15)
- Ⓒ "His heart was pounding, and his legs felt shaky." (paragraph 16)
- Ⓓ "There were a few snickers, even though Mrs. Griswell was shaking her head." (paragraph 20)





Read the passage "Paint the Morning." Then answer the questions.

## Paint the Morning

by Sandi Takayama



"Paint the Morning" by Sandi Takayama,  
illustrated by Bradley Clark, Spider, January 2011

- 1 Malia slipped quietly out of bed and out of the house. She sat still and silent on the back lanai<sup>1</sup> as she watched the morning spread across the sky. She closed her eyes and felt the sunshine warming her body. She heard the wind whispering through her hair.

<sup>1</sup>**lanai:** a Hawaiian word for a large, open porch that usually has a roof and is partially enclosed





"Paint the Morning" by Sandi Takayama,  
illustrated by Bradley Clark, Spider, January 2011

10 The footsteps faded away.

11 Malia smiled and picked up her paintbrush. Then she painted the colors of the sky, the warmth of the sun, and the sound of the wind. Malia painted the morning.

"Paint the Morning" from *Spider Magazine* volume 15, issue 4 by Sandi Takayama. Copyright January 2011 by Cricket Media. Reproduced with permission of Cricket Media, Inc. via Copyright Clearance Center.



- 7 How is paragraph 10 in “Paint the Morning” important to the passage?
- Ⓐ It shows that Malia finishes her painting.
  - Ⓑ It shows that Malia is bothered by the noise.
  - Ⓒ It shows that Malia’s idea is successful.
  - Ⓓ It shows that Malia’s family walks quietly.



- 9 The characters Chris from “Hobby Friday” and Malia from “Paint the Morning” both feel that other people do not understand them. Think about what would happen if Chris and Malia met each other. Also think about what things the characters would talk about and what things they would do together.

Write a story about what happens when Chris from “Hobby Friday” and Malia from “Paint the Morning” meet.

Use details and examples from **both** passages in your story.

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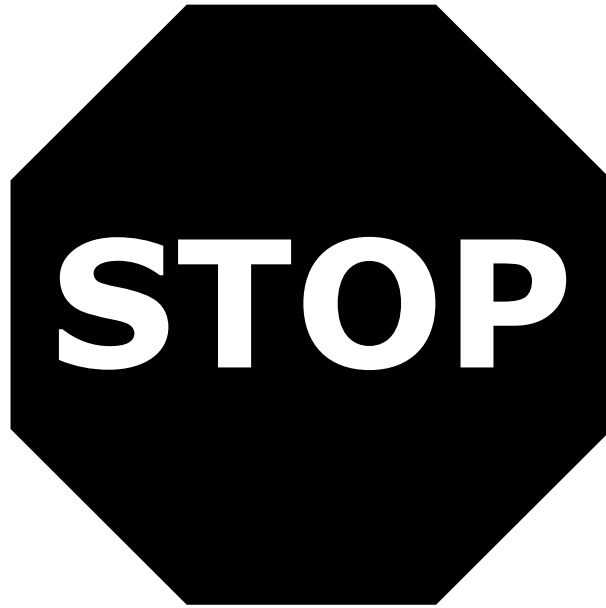
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**You have come to the end of Section 2 of the test. Review your answers from Section 2 only.**





**Read the passages. You will then answer questions about the passages and write a response stating your opinion about video games.**

## Why Do Adults Think Video Games Are Bad?

*by Joanne Orlando*

- 1 Parents and children can have different ideas when it comes to video games.
- 2 Children like video games because they are fun and because they can be challenging. You have to solve problems, work out the best moves for your character, and decide how to use your equipment and supplies in the best possible way. Making all these decisions can be exciting.
- 3 Parents want to make sure that their children are safe and healthy. Because of this, they notice different things about video games.
- 4 Many worry that playing video games might have a bad effect on the way their child behaves. For example, if a video game has lots of fighting in it, they worry that playing it will encourage their child to be violent.
- 5 They are concerned that their child might always choose to play a video game instead of playing outside and getting exercise. Even though you sit still when you read a book, they know that kids can develop good reading skills and learn a lot. Many adults aren't so sure that kids can learn anything educational from video games.
- 6 Sometimes adults think that spending too much time with animated characters is unhealthy for kids. They know it's important for kids to spend time with "real" people and learn good social skills needed for the real world.

### **What Do Experts Say?**

- 7 Experts think playing video games can have good and bad effects on kids. New research shows that there are lots of benefits.
- 8 One good thing is the video games that children play today often encourage them to work in teams, cooperate, and to help each other. This is because games today are often designed for multiple players, not like old-fashioned video games that were mostly designed for one player.



- 1 Read the **two** sentences from paragraph 2 of the passage “Why Do Adults Think Video Games Are Bad?”

Children like video games because they are fun and because they can be challenging. You have to solve problems, work out the best moves for your character, and decide how to use your equipment and supplies in the best possible way.

Which statement **best** explains how the sentences are connected?

- Ⓐ They explain events in the order that they happen.
  - Ⓑ They make a statement that is supported with details.
  - Ⓒ They explain the difference between two ideas.
  - Ⓓ They ask a question and then give an answer.
- 2 In paragraph 8 of the passage “Why Do Adults Think Video Games Are Bad?,” what does the word **cooperate** mean?
- Ⓐ to create something new
  - Ⓑ to do something together
  - Ⓒ to ask for something
  - Ⓓ to fix something



## Are Video Games Bad for Me?

Reviewed by: Mary L. Gavin, MD

- 1 Lots of kids love video games. In fact, they like them so much that they might hear something like this from Mom or Dad: “Enough! Unplug that thing and find something else to do!”
- 2 It can be good advice, even if you were just about to crash through to the next level. Why? Too much of anything is just too much. It’s true that some studies have shown certain video games can improve hand–eye coordination, problem-solving skills, and the mind’s ability to process information. But too much video-game playing may lead to health problems.
- 3 It’s hard to get enough active play and exercise if you’re always inside playing video games. And without enough exercise, kids can become unhealthy.
- 4 Really overdoing video games also could affect other important stuff, like friendships and how well a kid does in school. And kids who play violent video games might act more aggressively.
- 5 But here’s the good news: Playing video games some of the time can be OK. Just choose quality games and limit screen time—which includes TV, computer, smartphone, tablet, and video game time combined—to no more than two hours a day.
- 6 A good game will be the right one for how old you are. Games are rated like movies, and your mom or dad can help figure out which ones you should use. If you can choose one that gets you up and moving, that’s even better.
- 7 You might challenge your mom, dad—or even your grandma—to swing the bat in a game of baseball or try out some fancy moves in one of the dancing games. Could your grandma be a dancing queen? Time to find out!

Used with permission.





**6 Part A**

What is a main idea of the passage?

- Ⓐ Video games are a popular activity for children.
- Ⓑ Playing video games with your family is fun, and it teaches teamwork.
- Ⓒ It is important to spend time on other activities, not just on video games.
- Ⓓ Video-game ratings help parents choose games for their children.

**Part B**

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ "Lots of kids love video games." (paragraph 1)
- Ⓑ "It's hard to get enough active play and exercise if you're always inside playing video games." (paragraph 3)
- Ⓒ "A good game will be the right one for how old you are." (paragraph 6)
- Ⓓ "Games are rated like movies, and your mom or dad can help figure out which ones you should use." (paragraph 6)



9 After reading the passages, do you think that video games are good for children or bad for children? Write a response in which you clearly state your opinion on the issue. Support your opinion with reasons and details from **both** passages.

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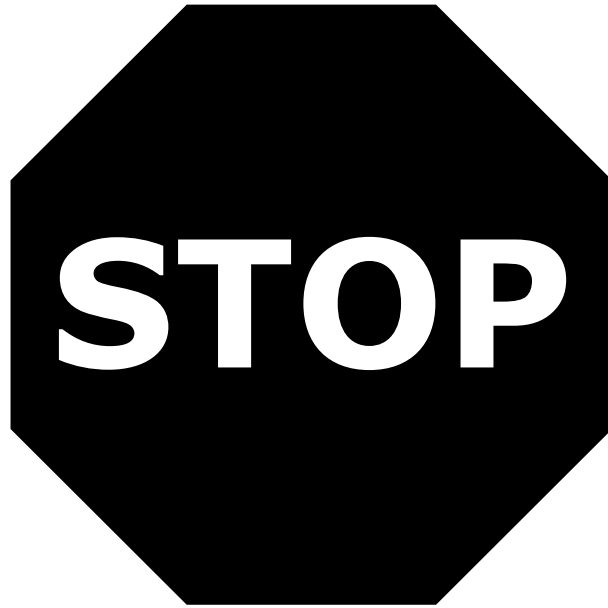
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SERIAL #



**You have come to the end of Section 3 of the test. Review your answers from Section 3 only.**

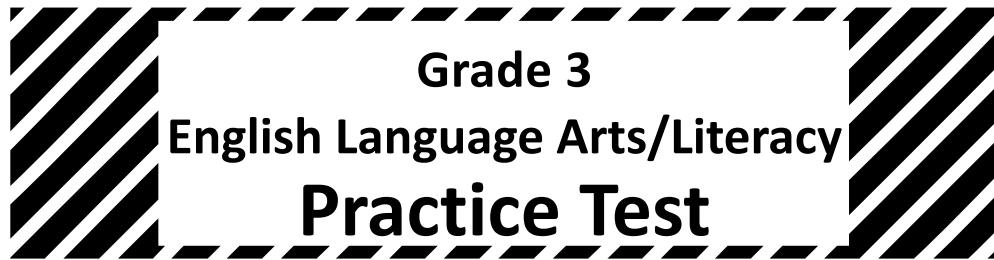






# MCAP

Maryland Comprehensive  
Assessment Program



Grade 3  
English Language Arts/Literacy  
Practice Test

