

VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING

EOC
READING (2024)

2024 English Standards of Learning

Practice Item Set

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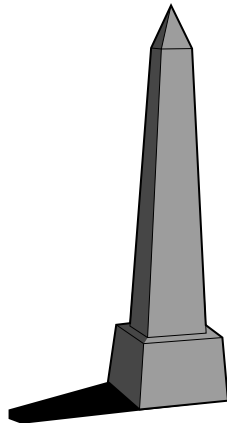
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Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

The Evolution of Timekeeping

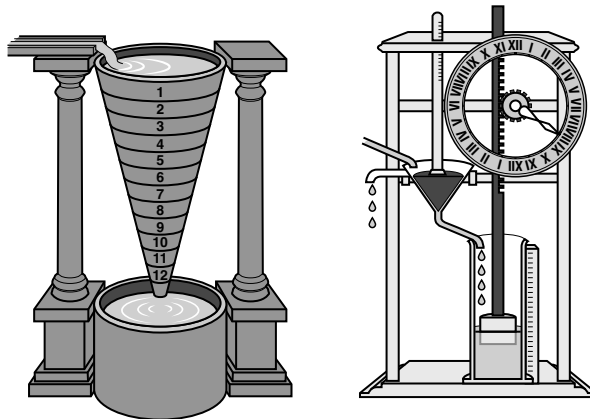
- 1 Clocks are everywhere in today's world. People wear wristwatches and carry mobile phones that show them the exact time of day. Without these timekeepers, our modern world would be chaotic, causing people to show up late for movies, meetings, and appointments. People, however, have not always lived lives that are regimented by hours and minutes. In fact, humans lived for tens of thousands of years without needing any device to organize time. The rhythm of their lives was basically determined by the rising and setting of the sun. When the sun was in the sky, they could work; when the sun had set, they rested. For the past 5,000 years, however, humans have spent a great deal of energy working to organize time more accurately and in smaller increments. As humans have created more accurate clocks, our lives have become increasingly separated from the traditional rhythms of nature and instead are more dependent on these devices.



- 2 The first timekeepers used the natural positions of the sun to divide the day into parts. Around 3500 B.C. the Egyptians built obelisks (ŏb'ə-lĭsks), tall, slender, four-sided monuments that came to a point on the top. In the morning, as the sun rose in the east, an obelisk would cast a long shadow on the ground. As the day passed, the shadow grew shorter until it was the shortest shadow at noon when the sun was exactly overhead. The shadow cast by the obelisk would then continue to grow again as the sun repositioned westward and eventually set.
- 3 When people saw the obelisk was casting its shortest shadow, they could tell it was the exact middle of the day, or noon. This allowed them to divide the day into two parts—before noon and after noon. Later, Egyptians made marks on

the ground around the obelisk to further divide the time of day into shorter segments that are similar to the hours we use today.

- 4 Around 1500 B.C. Egyptians began using sundials, which are essentially smaller versions of obelisks. These ingenious time devices are made by placing a rod in the middle of a circular base that is marked in increments showing the passage of time. Sundials were placed outside in the sun and observers could tell what time of day it was by seeing which mark the shadow fell upon. Sundials were usually portable and allowed people to know what time it was even if they were far from an obelisk. They were very popular throughout Europe and the Middle East until the middle of the 14th century.
- 5 Although sundials allowed people to measure time with a fair amount of accuracy when the sun was shining, these instruments did not give people the ability to measure time at night or on cloudy days. Water clocks, the first timekeepers people used that did not depend upon the sun, appeared in Egypt as early as 2000 B.C. These were used by the Egyptians and then later by the Greeks, who called them *clepsydras* (klĕp'sĭ-drəs), or "water thieves."



- 6 Clepsydras were simple stone containers that came in different types, two of which were outflow clocks and inflow clocks. Outflow clocks had sloping sides and a small hole in the bottom. Water would drip through the hole in the bottom of the container at a constant rate. As the water drained out, markings on the side of the clepsydra would be revealed, telling the observer how much time had passed. Inflow water clocks worked by dripping water into a container that was marked with time increments on the inside. As water filled the container and reached the marks on the inside of it, the observer could tell how much time had elapsed.
- 7 Mechanical clocks first appeared in Europe in the 14th century and demonstrated a huge leap in technology over sundials and water clocks. Instead of using natural processes like the flow of water or the movement of a shadow, mechanical clocks relied on oscillation, or repeated vibrations. These

clocks eventually also used gears, did not need electricity to run, and contained two important parts that allowed them to keep fairly accurate time: a mainspring and a pendulum. The mainspring is a spring that is tightened when a key winds it. As the spring unwinds, it uses its energy to turn gears in the clock. These gears turn the hands on the clock. A pendulum (a string or rod with a weight at its end) helps to control how fast the gears turn. The pendulum swings at an even pace and ensures the gears turn consistently. Mechanical clocks were first built in public spaces, such as town squares, toward the end of the 14th century, and by the 16th century people began to have mechanical clocks in their homes.

- 8 In our homes today, modern clocks still rely on oscillation, albeit of another sort. Our quartz watches rely on the vibration of a quartz crystal. Atomic clocks rely on the vibrations of microwaves emitting from electrons inside atoms and are usually correct to within one second per thousand years. Currently, the most precise clock uses the vibrations of an aluminum ion and keeps time accurately to within a second every 3.7 billion years. Its precision relies on the fact that the aluminum ion vibrates at 1.1 quadrillion times a second. Yet even with this level of exactness, scientists are working on a clock that would be ten times more precise. Someday people may be wearing those devices, which would be accurate to within a second of twice the age of the universe and never require resetting. These remarkable advances in timekeeping mechanisms ensure that, like people of yore, we need no longer rely on the rhythms of nature to order our days but can depend on the increasing accuracy of man-made timekeeping devices.

1 In paragraph 1, the expression “rhythm of their lives” suggests that people’s lives were filled with —

- A** tedium and consistency
- B** patterns and routines
- C** difficulties and changes
- D** pleasure and seriousness

2 Based on paragraph 4, the reader can determine that the sundial was the first timekeeping device to —

- F** measure time more accurately than an obelisk
- G** have a rod that indicated the location of the sun
- H** make timekeeping more accessible
- J** divide the day into specific hours

3 The main idea of paragraph 5 focuses on the concept that water clocks were —

- A** important technology of the ancient world
- B** first developed by Egyptians and then improved by Greeks
- C** developed so that people could tell time without relying on the sun
- D** known as “water thieves” by the Egyptians and the Greeks

4 This selection supports all these statements about timekeeping EXCEPT —

- F** timekeeping divides moments into segments
- G** timekeeping relies on observable movement
- H** timekeeping requires functioning mechanical parts
- J** timekeeping satisfies a human need for order

5 Based on information in the selection, which statement represents the author's opinion?

- A** The most precise clock now uses an aluminum ion for accuracy.
- B** Life in ancient times was simpler because people relied on nature to organize their days.
- C** Sundials are smaller versions of the obelisks used by an ancient civilization.
- D** By the end of the 16th century, mechanical clocks were used in many homes.

Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

The Intersection

When the United States entered World War II in 1941, a great number of men joined the military. At the same time, many women went to work in factories, textile mills, offices, and other workplaces to earn money and produce the goods needed to support the military. In this selection three such young women begin their workday.

- 1 The clock on the end table droned on incessantly. Ruth Whitby groaned as she rolled over to turn off the alarm and wished, not for the first time, that it was 4:50 in the afternoon. Sleep, like tires, gasoline, meat, and sugar, was a commodity in short supply in the Whitby household.
- 2 Her thoughts turned to her husband Jack, who was currently deployed on an aircraft carrier in the Pacific Ocean. Did he think of her as often as she thought of him? She wondered what he was doing and whether it was day or night. Was he temporarily stationed on a steamy tropical island or huddled against the cold off the coast of Alaska?
- 3 Dressed in a brown cotton dress with large cloth buttons, Ruth looked in the mirror at her drab reflection and, to her surprise, felt nothing. In her previous life, as she referred to her pre-WWII existence, she had been proud of her sense of style, of her coordinated shoes and handbags, of her impeccable fashion sense. That facade had evaporated when Jack enlisted, and, Ruth admitted, she liked herself more now than she had in the past.
- 4 She woke her children, asking the oldest, Linda, to help her younger sister Suze dress, and hurried downstairs to make breakfast. It would be corn flakes for breakfast again. There was no sugar or coffee; she had spent her monthly rations on taking the three purchasing agents who worked for her at McNab's textile mill out for dinner. After all her years spent shopping for clothes, now she had become director of purchasing for a mill that produced miles of cotton and canvas fabric for the making of military clothes.
- 5 After five chaotic minutes of getting her three energetic children ready, she marched them out the door and headed to Grandma's house. It was a long walk in the opposite direction from the textile mill, but the children required minding before and after school. As they rounded the corner onto Baxter

Street, Ruth saw lights gleaming in every window of Louise Polanski's quaint brick bungalow . . .

- 6 Louise rolled out of bed at 5:58 in the morning and headed toward the bathroom. She shared her rented house with five other women, all young and all employed at McNab's textile mill. With six women and only one bathroom, the housemates scheduled bathroom use at ten-minute intervals for the critical times of day: mornings before work and evenings before dates. Louise, to whom the others paid rent, held the prime time slot of 6:00 to 6:10. She pounded on the bathroom door and yelled, "Time's up!" The door flew open and a cloud of steam billowed into the hall. As Sandra Northcott exited, Louise ducked in and locked the door behind her.
- 7 Louise used her allotted time to sponge bathe, brush her teeth, and battle her unmanageable auburn curls into a vague semblance of a hairdo. She didn't have time to bother with makeup.
- 8 About to turn nineteen in two months, Louise Ellen Polanski was the youngest in the house. She held a demanding position at McNab's, worked a twelve-hour shift, and earned an enviable wage. She had completed three years of accounting classes in only two and earned top grades doing so. She applied at McNab's on her eighteenth birthday and had been hired immediately—there were far too many jobs available and far too few candidates to fill them. Three months after she started work, the chief accountant was drafted into the United States Army. Unfortunately, his assistant left a few days later to nurse her elderly mother. Louise had assured Albert McNab that, despite her youth, she could handle the responsibility; she had been true to her word.
- 9 Had the Japanese not attacked Pearl Harbor, Louise would still be living on her parents' farm in western Virginia. She probably would have married Harry Lennox or possibly Pete Lipscomb. But, as she and her family had listened to Roosevelt's declaration of war, Louise knew her life would change dramatically. Harry, Pete, and Louise's two older brothers enlisted immediately. Louise had wanted to do her duty. If her work in a Richmond textile factory brought any of those young men home even one day sooner, she, too, would have performed her part.
- 10 Louise put on a dark green skirt and a pale yellow blouse. She pulled on a pair of hand-knit socks—a gift from her mother—and laced up her plain brown Oxfords. In the kitchen she devoured a piece of singed toast and a cup of artificial coffee and headed out the door. She passed Vera Rinaldi's apartment building just as Vera came out in her unofficial uniform of denim coveralls and steel-toed boots . . .
- 11 Vera Rinaldi was the only child of a stern yet loving mother and a perpetually cheerful father. Both loved their daughter wholeheartedly; both found Vera

puzzling. From an early age, Vera cleverly avoided doing what her mother thought of as “girl” things. She had been remarkably persistent in wanting to pursue her father’s profession. However, women simply did not work as electricians. Vera didn’t care. By the time she was sixteen, she was as skilled as any experienced electrician. Her parents declared adamantly that she might never get a job as an electrician, but Vera proved them wrong.

- 12 When the Lend-Lease Act¹ went into effect in 1941, Vera was positive that Albert McNab would reopen his mill. She applied for a position as an electrician and was given an interview primarily because she had entered her name as V. M. Rinaldi. Expecting a man, McNab had been dumbfounded when wide-eyed, fresh-faced Vera Rinaldi, with a screwdriver and snub-nosed pliers in her right hand, sauntered into his office. She unplugged his desk lamp and, in a matter of minutes, dismantled and rewired the lamp completely, using a length of wire she yanked from her pocket. Vera Rinaldi strolled out of the office that day—with a new job.
- 13 Vera and Louise crossed over to Mill Road just as Ruth arrived at the intersection. The three women walked together, talking about everything and nothing. Would McNab’s get another Army contract for 50,000 square yards of canvas? Was *Casablanca* still playing at the movie theater? Had any of them listened to Roosevelt on the radio last night?
- 14 They clocked in at the gate, and each went to her office. Vera had a long list of repairs to work on. There was the usual frayed wiring, uncontrollable looms that no one could stop, and lamps that needed more than a new light bulb to keep working. Ruth found six new contracts on her desk, along with the news that the last shipment of cotton had been short a dozen bales. Louise faced the task of working out the payroll for 312 workers, herself included.
- 15 The sun shone on a beautiful Virginia day as the three women satisfied heavy demands and faced new challenges. Evening would arrive, casting shadows on the intersection, where their laughter and conversation would herald the end of another exhausting day.

¹Lend-Lease Act – a plan that helped the United States build war supplies for and offer needed materials to Britain and other countries in WWII

6 Which tone is conveyed in paragraph 1?

- F** Irritation
- G** Exhaustion
- H** Depression
- J** Resignation

7 Read this sentence from paragraph 3.

That facade had evaporated when Jack enlisted, and, Ruth admitted, she liked herself more now than she had in the past.

The author's word choice in this sentence highlights the idea that —

- A** Ruth's life underwent a significant transition
- B** Ruth's life was defined by her relationships
- C** Ruth felt unhappy before the war started
- D** Ruth did not want her husband to join the war

8 Why does the author include the flashback in paragraph 9?

- F** To describe how an event affected many lives
- G** To illustrate an idea about decision making
- H** To develop a sense of intensifying suspense
- J** To highlight the tragedies of a certain era

9 The details in paragraph 13 contribute to the selection by —

- A** indicating that it is important to remain informed
- B** noting that the three women live in close proximity to one another
- C** reinforcing the idea that close friendships are important
- D** highlighting the similarities of the three women

10 In this selection, Vera's character is best described as a —

- F** rebel
- G** trickster
- H** loner
- J** scapegoat

Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

Ancient Canals: The Old Is New Again

- 1 Many specialized plants and animals call the Sonoran Desert home. Rains are intermittent in this arid climate, which has forced desert dwellers to adapt in a variety of ways. Instead of leaves, many plants have needles and thorns, which help conserve water. Animals sleep in shady dens or holes during the day and emerge at night when the temperature drops. Humans, like the Hohokam people, have also adapted to this environment by constructing canals to channel water from areas where it is plentiful to areas where it is scarce.
- 2 Both Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona, were built near and, in some cases, on ancient cities of the Hohokam people. These cities, in recent years, have refurbished some of their oldest canals, transforming ancient wonders into modern marvels.

The Phoenix Basin

- 3 The Hohokam's canal system along the Phoenix Basin was the most complex and well-designed in early North America. For many years archaeologists believed that the ancient canals around Phoenix were the oldest in North America. Over many years, the Hohokam built this system of canals to channel water from the Salt River and the Gila River. Using wooden tools and baskets to remove the soil and level the canal bed, the Hohokam built miles of canals to irrigate their fields of corn, squash, and beans. These crops would have been impossible to cultivate without the diverted water.
- 4 Researchers are amazed by the technological complexity of the ancient Hohokam canal system. The turbulent rivers of the Phoenix Basin posed a particular challenge. The powerful water could easily wash away stone and dirt walls at the juncture between river and canal. The Hohokam solved this problem by building canals on terraces, allowing the rivers to flood the area leading up to the canals. The canals would simply drain the terraces as they filled with water. The canals sloped gradually away from the rivers, which allowed water to flow to farming plots in the desert many miles away.

The Tucson Basin

- 5 Tucson's canals date back nearly three thousand years and are still in use. In fact, the Tucson Basin's canal system is the oldest in North America. The Hohokam, it now seems, built the canals in Tucson far earlier than the network that was discovered in the Phoenix Basin. The Tucson canals differ from those in Phoenix because of the character of the Santa Cruz River. Compared to the

Salt and Gila Rivers, the Santa Cruz River is rather calm. Because the Santa Cruz flows more slowly than the Salt and Gila Rivers, researchers believe the Hohokam developed and honed their canal-building skills along its shores. Later they expanded into the Phoenix Basin and continued to develop their canal-building expertise.

- 6 In the Tucson Basin, small farming communities bloomed along the river, each with a small network of stone-lined canals to irrigate the Hohokam's crops. Tucson Basin canals carried water from about half a mile to two or three miles away from the banks of the river. The canals did not always link with one another, although some did if enough water was available. Later canals tended to be larger and longer before they spilled into stone-lined tanks at the fields where the water was needed. In some areas the Hohokam actually built large reservoirs. On one side of each reservoir, a large rock could be moved to allow the water to flow into the fields as needed.
- 7 While this system is impressive, scientists have examined the sediment in the Tucson Basin canals and have learned that the canals did not carry water year round. Plants like cattails that are usually found growing around consistent sources of water are absent from the canal sediments. Pools and reservoirs would therefore have been important for storing water during the dry season. Researchers believe that the canals in the Tucson Basin carried water only during the more temperate months, coinciding with the seasons when the farmers would grow their crops. All along the Santa Cruz, tenacious farmers planted, tended, and harvested crops, providing agricultural products in a part of the country that, even today, is far more famous for desert wildlife than for agriculture. Archaeologists have uncovered evidence of corn, beans, tobacco, and cotton in the farming plots fed by Tucson Basin canals.

Still Flowing

- 8 Amazingly, the Hohokam canal systems in both Phoenix and Tucson are, to some degree, still in use. When city planners needed to route water for irrigation and drinking from the Salt, Gila, and Santa Cruz Rivers, they discovered that the lines dug by the Hohokam thousands of years ago were located along the most efficient routes. Consequently, engineers built new city water canals directly over some of the lines built by the Hohokam thousands of years ago.

11 The author organizes information in paragraph 1 using explanation most likely to —

- A** show how animals and people who live in the desert are alike
- B** introduce how humans adjusted to the desert environment
- C** describe harsh conditions that exist in the desert
- D** clarify how plants and animals are able to survive in the desert

12 The reader can tell this article is expository because it —

- F** defends a position with supporting evidence
- G** provides factual information logically
- H** integrates details to describe an event
- J** presents the events chronologically

13 How do scientists know that the canals were dry at times?

- A** Water plant remains have not been discovered near the canals.
- B** The Hohokam used large tanks to store water.
- C** Rocks that adjusted the flow of water to the fields were found next to reservoirs.
- D** The Hohokam did not grow certain crops that required constant watering.

Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

On D Street

Myla Goldberg

The following excerpt from a novel describes the experiences of a young girl growing up in South Boston, Massachusetts (also known as Southie), during the early 1900s.

- 1 On D Street there was no need for alarm clocks: the drays,¹ ever punctual, were an army storming the gates of sleep. The wooden wagons were heavy and low-riding with loud rattling wheels, their broad planks too battered and begrimed to recall distant origins as trees. Each dray was pulled by horses—two, four, or sometimes six per wagon—pounding down nearby Third Street. Windows rattled and floors shook; the sound was a giant hand shaking Lydia Kilkenny’s sleeping shoulders. Each morning she did not awaken to the sound, but inside it. In winter the drays came when the sky was still dark, their pounding hooves sharp reports against the frozen cobblestones. In summer, perhaps because the sky was already pale with light, the sound of the horses seemed kinder.



Courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society, Chicago Daily News negatives collection, DN-0058281B

- 2 She knew the clattering wagons were bound for Boston proper, but the vague tangle of streets across the Broadway bridge surfaced in her mind with the

sound of the horses and resubmerged with its diminishment. As the flow of drays subsided—the wagons no longer traveling two by two but single file—pounding hooves gave way to the creak of floorboards and the muffled voices of neighbors. Factory whistles blew. Church bells rang. The vegetable man made his way down D Street shouting, “Fresh tomatoes,” even if there were no tomatoes, because those words distinguished him from the other vegetable men who plied their carts through Southie.

- 3 South Boston belonged to Lydia as profoundly and wordlessly as her thimble finger. Her knowledge of its streets was more complete than any atlas, her mental maps reflecting changes that occurred from season to season, day to day, and hour to hour. Each time she left 28 D Street—one among a row of identical triple-decker tenements lining the street like so many stained teeth—her route reflected this internal almanac. No matter what the errand, Third Street was best avoided in early evening when the flood tide of drays returning to their stables posed a threat to both body and nose.
- 4 In deep winter, when ice and hard-packed snow made walking treacherous, West Broadway was the place to catch a ride on the tailboard of a snow dray delivering milk [or] groceries, . . . but sledding was best saved for Dorchester Heights. If a good enough sled could be found, and if the streets were not too crowded, it was possible to start at G Street and traverse almost a quarter of the alphabet—all the way to L Street. Whether because he was luckier or a year older, Michael was the superior sledder; at her best Lydia could only make J Street before her sled or her resolve gave out.
- 5 Because Dan Kilkenny was an iceman, the whole D Street gang was in thrall to Lydia and Michael in summer. In the thick of that season there were few things more magical than ice—the blocks that emerged, impossibly, from the back of the wagon, steaming not with heat but with cold, the unmistakable stomp of the iceman conquering the stairwell, gleaming blocks of ice piled on his broad back like enormous melting diamonds. . . . Lydia was certain Heaven resembled the interior of her father’s ice wagon: a dark place, cool and quiet. There the salt hay, sawdust, and straw effaced the airborne tang of leather and glue from the nearby shoe factory and muted the call of the ragman.
- 6 On very hot days there was no need to confer in advance. The lot of them would be playing ball in Commonwealth Park, or ambling toward the beach at City Point, or playing marbles or Kick the Wicket on the street. Without a word Michael would turn to Lydia, or she toward him, and with a whoop they would preempt the day’s pursuit and set out for ice. At the sight of Dan Kilkenny’s brood, the iceman would toss out an extra block, the surplus ice arcing toward the street in a dream of captured light before exploding into frozen bliss on the cobbles. Decorum was traded for the fleeting comfort of ice pressed into the

perfect place. Frozen shatterings found their way into mouths, inside shirts and dresses, under chins, and atop closed eyes. Ice was nestled into the hollows of throats and hammocked by the webbing between fingers and toes. Ice bent the iron rule of summer for a few precious moments before the heat clamped down again.

- 7 For ten years, this was enough. Then in fifth grade, Lydia saw a city map and realized her entire world was the smallest finger of Boston's broad hand. The hazy destination of the morning drays acquired focus. Across the bridge lay Boston Common and the swan boats of the Public Garden. Across the bridge lay Washington Street—the longest street in all New England—which began like any other but then continued south, a single, determined thread of cobblestone that wove itself through every town from Boston to Providence. Once Lydia saw Washington Street, she knew she could not allow it to exist without her.

¹drays – low, heavy carts without sides

14 Read this sentence from paragraph 5.

There the salt hay, sawdust, and straw effaced the airborne tang of leather and glue from the nearby shoe factory and muted the call of the ragman.

In this sentence, the word effaced means —

- F** called into question
- G** supported with ease
- H** reduced to nothing
- J** brought to mind

15 Read this sentence from paragraph 7.

Then in fifth grade, Lydia saw a city map and realized her entire world was the smallest finger of Boston's broad hand.

The figurative language in the sentence impacts readers by helping them —

- A** understand her perspective of being in fifth grade
- B** recognize the usefulness of such complex maps
- C** imagine the size of Lydia's neighborhood by referring to their own hands
- D** sense how overwhelming a crowded city can be for a girl Lydia's age

16 Based on this story, the reader may best understand that Lydia —

- F** learned how to ride a sled from her brother
- G** had lived her entire life with her family in South Boston
- H** frequently crossed the bridge to shop with her mother
- J** was determined to improve her neighborhood in South Boston

Directions: Read the passages and answer the questions that follow.

Stone Age Skating Experience

- 1 Greta mustered a genuine-looking smile as she tore the silver wrapping paper and revealed the words “FasTech, the finest ice skates in the Northern Hemisphere,” printed in bold letters on the box. “They’re great, Mom!” she said. “Thank you!” Greta knew the ice skates were expensive, and she refused to let her mother know that she was anything but grateful.
- 2 “Are they the right kind? They’re supposed to help you skate faster,” Greta’s mother stated.
- 3 Greta’s recent first place win at the Citywide 5-Kilometer Speed-Skating Championship spurred everyone’s interest in her success. Even Mr. Ranta at The Sports Shack talked with Greta about her equipment, times, and style when she was there having her skates sharpened. Then there was the upcoming 10-kilometer race—family and friends would be rooting for her. “They’re what the pros wear,” Greta said, “and I’m going to take them down to the lake and try them out.”
- 4 Greta donned warm outerwear, then hugged her mother and rushed out the door before she could catch a hint of displeasure. It wasn’t that Greta didn’t appreciate the gift. She did—greatly. The skates would no doubt help her trim time in the upcoming race. The fact was that Greta had just secretly, and most likely foolishly, hoped for something different. She had hoped for something that didn’t really exist anymore: ancient bone skates.
- 5 Once at the lake, Greta sat on a bench near the edge of the frozen water and stared to the other side, her breath cascading like fog over the icy stillness. She pictured herself sitting at the computer last month researching professional skates when she found an article about the history of ice-skating. She had been immediately fascinated by the different designs of skates used over the years, particularly the first skates made out of bones. These skates had no metal blades or boots. They were just a pair of bones, filed down on the bottom side, with leather straps through them.
- 6 Greta had been so intrigued about how someone could actually skate on bones that she rushed to talk with her mother about them, only to hear her say, “That’s interesting, dear, but I need to run to the bank before it closes.” Each time Greta had tried to discuss bone skates with her mother, her mother had other things to do. Greta decided that this obsession was hers alone.

- 7 With a deep sigh, Greta turned her attention back to the lake. She laced up the new FasTechs and began cutting long strides into the hard ice.
- 8 After an hour of practice, Greta walked to The Sports Shack, where she knew her mother had purchased the skates. She wanted to talk with Mr. Ranta about how to take care of her skates so they would last as long as possible. Mr. Ranta, the owner, provided Greta with a wealth of information. She thanked him profusely and jokingly asked, "Now, Mr. Ranta, can you make some bone skates for me?"
- 9 "Bone skates! Here I thought I was the only person who knew about bone skates. I have a marvelous collection of skates, but they all have metal blades. I've seen bone skates in a museum, but as you can imagine, it is impossible to find any for sale. I would love to make some bone skates. At least I'm willing to give it a try," Mr. Ranta's excitement radiated like sparkles from fireworks.
- 10 Caught off guard by his enthusiasm, Greta could only stare at him.
- 11 Mr. Ranta smiled. "Like me, I can see you're curious about how people could possibly skate on bones. It couldn't have been easy, but what a great opportunity to see what it was like. I think I can create new skates modeled after the ancient ones, and you can experiment with them."
- 12 Greta's pulse increased as she saw Mr. Ranta grab a pencil and make bold, precise strokes on a piece of paper. After a few minutes of discussion about the design, Mr. Ranta said, "I'll talk with Vera at the meat market. She saves bones for customers' dogs, so she should be able to give us some to work with. I also have some leather pieces in the back of the store."
- 13 Caught up in the frenzy of the plan, Greta flew home. Each day, she shortened her practice time at the lake so she could stop by to check on Mr. Ranta's progress with the bone skates. After almost two weeks, Greta heard the words she'd been waiting for. "They're done," Mr. Ranta said when he saw her. "And, by the way, I'm not charging you for these skates, but you must promise to give them to me when you are done experimenting. They may not be authentic but they will complete my collection. Now, look in the bag behind the back counter. I'll talk with you as soon as I finish with this customer."
- 14 Inside the rumpled bag were two bones, each with slots drilled into them, one in the front and one in the rear. "I used the sander to flatten the sides that go against your boots," Mr. Ranta said, walking up to Greta. "You'll use these straps of leather and the buckles to hold the skates on."



Image courtesy of Dr. Federico Formenti

- 15 After listening intently to details, Greta raced to the lake and put on the skates the way Mr. Ranta had explained. As soon as she stepped onto the ice, her feet flew out from under her. She stood up again and one of her ankles buckled as a bone skate squeezed its way out from under her boot. Once she could actually stand up and move on the ice, she realized that bone skating bore little resemblance to the smooth skating technique she knew. She would have to adopt a slip and slide movement to master skating on bones. Greta hadn't felt this shaky on the ice since she was five.
- 16 Instead of practicing for her upcoming race, Greta spent two weeks learning to skate completely across the lake on bones. She would start slowly and let the ice help her gain speed, wistfully imagining herself moving across the ice in ancient Scandinavia while following a herd of reindeer.
- 17 After one such outing, Greta returned home to find her mother typing on the computer. Mother queried, "Mr. Ranta tells me that you two have something in common. Want to tell me about it?"
- 18 The story spilled out of Greta's mouth like a rushing waterfall. "I'm sorry, Mom," Greta confessed. "I know the race is in a couple of days. I just got sidetracked with the history of skating, and bones, and experiments. I promise I won't disappoint you at the race."
- 19 Greta's mother briefly glared at her daughter before returning to the computer. "I'm glad you found something to be so passionate about."

20 On the day of the race, Greta stood on the ice wearing her sleek blue body suit and streamlined helmet, her feet snugly fastened in her FasTechs, feeling quite awkward. Competitors began surrounding her, jostling for positions. The starting pistol cracked and skaters began flowing across the ice—except for Greta, who stumbled forward and nearly fell. Gathering herself together, she began to focus intently on her style. Step, slice, kick. Step, slice, kick. What had been natural a month ago started to come back. Within minutes, Greta began moving more fluidly, but by that time the pack was far ahead of her. Greta experienced her worst finish since she had begun racing, and, at the finish line, she forced herself to congratulate the winners. Looking down, Greta approached her mother. Together they silently shuffled to the car.

History on Ice

- 1 In the country of Finland, ice-skating is as popular as football is in the United States. Instead of the Super Bowl, Finland hosts an event called the Finland Ice Marathon, a challenging race of both speed and endurance held annually on Lake Kallavesi. Every year thousands of people visit just to watch or participate in this captivating event. Ice-skating, however, did not begin as a sport but as an important means of travel.
- 2 If any nation required fast travel on ice, it was Finland, a small country with more than 60,000 lakes. Scientists believe that ice-skating began in Finland some 5,000 years ago as a means of traveling quickly over a landscape dotted with frozen rivers and lakes. To increase speed, Finnish hunters needed smooth, hard objects to strap to their feet to reduce friction.
- 3 To fulfill this requirement, early Finns made skates from animal bones. Usually from cattle or deer, these bones provided the perfect texture for gliding on the ice. Craftsmen began with a section of bone roughly eight inches long, carved a hole at each end, and strung leather straps through these holes. Using the leather straps, hunters could then attach the skates to boots. For greater stability, the Finns also slightly flattened the bottom of the skates. Although scientists are not certain, they believe the skaters used wooden poles, as skiers do, to keep their balance while zooming along on the ice.
- 4 Speed would have been imperative for early hunters. Due to its northern latitude, Finland experiences sunlight for only six hours a day in December, depending on where one is in the country. In fact, near the arctic regions, the sun does not appear at all in late December. Researchers believe that given an average of six hours of sunlight, a skater could traverse more than 12 miles, probably in a round trip.
- 5 To test their theory, researchers made replicas of the bone ice skates that ancient Finns used. Working with high-tech devices, researchers recorded the skaters' metabolic rates as well as distances covered. They discovered that these skates reduced traveling time and saved enough energy to allow the hunter to cover more miles in the allotted time. In a difficult environment, those humble skates might well have made survival possible.
- 6 Sometime in the 13th century, metal skates supplanted their bone counterparts. Illustrations from 14th-century books show people with iron rods strapped to the bottoms of their shoes. At this point in history, ice-skating seems to have shifted to a mainly recreational activity.

- 7 Even though the bone skates now sit on museum shelves, ice-skating remains as popular as ever in northern Europe. Today the Finns even hold championships in which the athletes purposely trade in their advanced titanium skates that cut the ice and flash in the sunlight in favor of the old bone skates of their ancestors. The skaters may not travel as fast, but they relish the opportunity to honor their own cultural origins.

17 The author's use of a simile in paragraph 18 of "Stone Age Skating Experience" suggests that Greta —

- A** has practiced explaining the situation
- B** is telling her mother a partial story
- C** has trouble relating all the details
- D** is relieved to tell her mother the truth

18 Which sentence from "History on Ice" is least supported by details and would benefit from clarification?

- F** Ice-skating, however, did not begin as a sport but as an important means of travel.
- G** To increase speed, Finnish hunters needed smooth, hard objects to strap to their feet to reduce friction.
- H** Craftsmen began with a section of bone roughly eight inches long, carved a hole at each end, and strung leather straps through these holes.
- J** At this point in history, ice-skating seems to have shifted to a mainly recreational activity.

19 Both selections express the idea that —

- A** skating on bones takes time to perfect
- B** early bone skaters endured harsh winter conditions
- C** bone skating is rising in popularity
- D** ancient bone skaters followed reindeer herds

Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

The Asphalt Garden

The light is withdrawing.
Soon the sun's rays
will be too feeble
to melt the snow from the commuters' windshields.

5 Soon it will be midnight in the morning
and dusk all afternoon,
and the sycamores, elms, and oaks,
with whom we share
the sidewalks, will stand

10 shorn and nearly bare
and shiver in their cloaks of dry leaves
as if startled from a reverie
by the din
of trucks rumbling past.

15 Once, in a dark alley on a brittle day
in the infancy of the new year,
I found a patch of grass growing
in the hot breath of a laundromat's clothes dryer.
I kneeled on the ground

20 and pulled the gloves from my hands.
There, amid the lush green plot, was a tiny tree.
I touched its green-gilt leaves
and smelled citrus: lemon or grapefruit.
A seed carelessly tossed had somehow taken root,

25 and now in the heart of the city,
buffeted by the raw wind of winter,
a tropic life held fast to its square foot
of summer.

Is it memory, then, or anticipation,
30 that gives the pedestrian elms and oaks and sycamores
that pensive, inward look,
as if they were struggling to touch
the name of something just out of reach?
The soil beneath the city street,
35 once tilled and cleft by plow,
lies barren under the asphalt.
Rooted to the earth,
do the trees dream of the stream that flowed here once,
where shy deer would bend their slender necks to drink
40 and sometimes startle, having mistaken
the shadow of a passing cloud
for the onset of night?

20 The imagery in lines 7–11 of the poem helps the reader —

- F** envision the types of trees that grow in the city
- G** empathize with the trees' exposure to cold weather
- H** appreciate the changing of the seasons
- J** understand how nature enhances the city's landscape

21 In line 21, the speaker uses the word "lush" when describing the patch of grass to —

- A** contrast the small area of growth with the desolate setting
- B** emphasize the effects of the heat coming from the dryer
- C** highlight the variety of plants growing in the alley
- D** establish a sad mood with an image of the plants

22 In lines 29–33 of the poem, the poet's use of the rhetorical question suggests that the speaker —

- F** admires the trees for their ability to survive the winter
- G** believes most people fail to appreciate the presence of the trees
- H** is expressing personal feelings through a description of the trees
- J** is looking forward to spring, when the trees will again be green

23 The purpose of the imagery in the poem is most likely to —

- A** enhance the contrast between nature and the street
- B** bring the reader closer to the emotions of the speaker
- C** portray the thoughts of a lifelong city resident
- D** show the reader that changes in nature are important

EOC Reading (2024)
Practice Item Set Spring 2025
Answer Key

Sequence Number	Correct Answer	Reporting Category	Reporting Category Description
1	B	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
2	H	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
3	C	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
4	H	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
5	B	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
6	G	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
7	A	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
8	F	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
9	D	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
10	F	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
11	B	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
12	G	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
13	A	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
14	H	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
15	C	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
16	G	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
17	D	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
18	J	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies

EOC Reading (2024)
Practice Item Set Spring 2025
Answer Key

Sequence Number	Correct Answer	Reporting Category	Reporting Category Description
19	A	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
20	G	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
21	A	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
22	H	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
23	B	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies

