

Ohio's State Tests

ITEM RELEASE

SPRING 2016

**GRADE 6
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

Table of Contents

Questions 1 – 6: Content Summary and Answer Key	ii
Stimulus for Questions 1 – 6	1
Question 1: Question and Scoring Guidelines	5
Question 1: Sample Responses	7
Question 2: Question and Scoring Guidelines	11
Question 2: Sample Response	13
Question 3: Question and Scoring Guidelines	15
Question 3: Sample Response	17
Question 4: Question and Scoring Guidelines	19
Question 4: Sample Response	21
Question 5: Question and Scoring Guidelines	23
Question 5: Sample Responses	27
Question 6: Question and Scoring Guidelines	31
Question 6: Sample Response	33

Grade 6 ELA
Spring 2016 Item Release
Content Summary and Answer Key

Question No.	Item Type	Content Strand	Content Standard	Answer Key	Points
1	Hot Text Item	Key Ideas and Details	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	---	1 point
2	Multiple Choice	Craft and Structure	Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.	C	1 point
3	Multiple Choice	Craft and Structure	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.	C	1 point
4	Multiple Choice	Vocabulary	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.	D	1 point
5	Evidence-Based Selected Response	Key Ideas and Details	Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.	C; C	1 point
6	Multiple Choice	Craft and Structure	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.	C	1 point

Grade 6
English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Item Release

Stimulus for Questions 1 – 6

Stimulus for Questions 1 – 6

Passage 1: from *My Antonia* by Willa Cather

In this excerpt from My Antonia, the narrator, Jim Burden, walks along a country road after a disappointing afternoon in Black Hawk, the big town near the farm where he grew up. Earlier in the day, Jim had reunited with his childhood friend Antonia and was introduced to her husband, Anton Cuzak, and their children.

- 1 I took a long walk north of the town, out into the pastures where the land was so rough that it had never been ploughed up, and the long red grass of early times still grew shaggy over the draws and hillocks.¹ Out there I felt at home again. Overhead the sky was that indescribable blue of autumn; bright and shadowless, hard as enamel. To the south I could see the dun-shaded river bluffs that used to look so big to me, and all about stretched drying cornfields, of the pale-gold colour, I remembered so well. Russian thistles were blowing across the uplands and piling against the wire fences like barricades. Along the cattle-paths the plumes of goldenrod were already fading into sun-warmed velvet, grey with gold threads in it. I had escaped from the curious depression that hangs over little towns, and my mind was full of pleasant things; trips I meant to take with the Cuzak boys, in the Bad Lands and up on the Stinking Water. There were enough Cuzaks to play with for a long while yet. Even after the boys grew up, there would always be Cuzak himself! I meant to tramp along a few miles of lighted streets with Cuzak.
- 2 As I wandered over those rough pastures, I had the good luck to stumble upon a bit of the first road that went from Black Hawk out to the north country; to my grandfather's farm, then on to the Shimerdas' and to the Norwegian settlement. Everywhere else it had been ploughed under when the highways were surveyed; this half-mile or so within the pasture fence was all that was left of that old road which used to run like a wild thing across the open prairie, clinging to the high places and circling and doubling like a rabbit before the hounds.
- 3 On the level land the tracks had almost disappeared—were mere shadings in the grass, and a stranger would not have noticed them. But wherever the road had crossed a draw, it was easy to find. The rains had made channels of the wheel-ruts and washed them so deeply that the sod had never healed over them. They looked like gashes torn by a grizzly's claws, on the slopes where the farm-wagons used to lurch up out of the hollows with a pull that brought curling muscles on the smooth hips of the horses. I sat down and watched the haystacks turn rosy in the slanting sunlight.
- 4 This was the road over which Antonia and I came on that night when we got off the train at Black Hawk and were bedded down in the straw, wondering children, being taken we knew not whither. I had only to close my eyes to hear the rumbling of the wagons in the dark, and to be again overcome by that obliterating strangeness. The feelings of that night were so near that I could reach out and touch them with my hand. I had the sense of coming home to myself, and of having found out what a little circle man's experience is. For Antonia and for me, this had been the road of Destiny; had taken us to those early accidents of fortune which predetermined for us all that we can ever be. Now I understood that the same road was to bring us together again. Whatever we had missed, we possessed together the precious, the incommunicable past.

¹ draws and hillocks: small valleys and small hills

Excerpt from *My Antonia* by Willa Cather. In the public domain.

Passage 2: Home on the Range

by John A. Lomax

- 1 Oh, give me a home where the buffalo roam,
Where the deer and the antelope play,
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the skies are not cloudy all day.
- 5 CHORUS: Home, home on the range,
Where the deer and the antelope play;
Where seldom is heard a discouraging word
And the skies are not cloudy all day.
- Where the air is so pure, the zephyrs so free,
10 The breezes so balmy and light,
That I would not exchange my home on the range
For all of the cities so bright. . . .
- How often at night when the heavens are bright
With the light from the glittering stars
15 Have I stood here amazed and asked as I gazed
If their glory exceeds that of ours.
- Oh, I love these wild flowers
in this dear land of ours
The curlew¹ I love to hear scream,
20 And I love the white rocks and the antelope flocks
That graze on the mountain-tops green.
- Oh, give me a land where the bright diamond sand
Flows leisurely down the stream;
Where the graceful white swan goes gliding along
25 Like a maid in a heavenly dream.

¹curlew: a type of bird

Grade 6
English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Item Release

Question 1

Question and Scoring Guidelines

Question 1

Select the excerpt from paragraph 2 in Passage 1 that supports the idea that modern changes have come to the prairie.

2 As I wandered over those rough pastures, I had the good luck to stumble upon a bit of the first road that went from Black Hawk out to the north country; to my grandfather's farm, then on to the Shimerdas' and to the Norwegian settlement. Everywhere else it had been ploughed under when the highways were surveyed; this half-mile or so within the pasture fence was all that was left of that old road which used to run like a wild thing across the open prairie, clinging to the high places and circling and doubling like a rabbit before the hounds.

Points Possible: 1

Content Strand: Key Ideas and Details

Content Standard: Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Scoring Guidelines

For this item, a full-credit response includes:

- Selection of "Everywhere else it had been ploughed under when the highways were surveyed;" (1 point).

Grade 6
English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Item Release

Question 1

Sample Responses

Sample Response: 1 point

Select the excerpt from paragraph 2 in Passage 1 that supports the idea that modern changes have come to the prairie.

2 As I wandered over those rough pastures, I had the good luck to stumble upon a bit of the first road that went from Black Hawk out to the north country; to my grandfather's farm, then on to the Shimerdas' and to the Norwegian settlement. **Everywhere else it had been ploughed under when the highways were surveyed;** this half-mile or so within the pasture fence was all that was left of that old road which used to run like a wild thing across the open prairie, clinging to the high places and circling and doubling like a rabbit before the hounds.

Notes on Scoring

This response receives full credit (1 point) because the text "Everywhere else it had been ploughed under when the highways were surveyed;" was selected.

Sample Response: 0 points

Select the excerpt from paragraph 2 in Passage 1 that supports the idea that modern changes have come to the prairie.

2 As I wandered over those rough pastures, I had the good luck to stumble upon a bit of the first road that went from Black Hawk out to the north country; to my grandfather's farm, then on to the Shimerdas' and to the Norwegian settlement. Everywhere else it had been ploughed under when the highways were surveyed; this half-mile or so within the pasture fence was all that was left of that old road which used to run like a wild thing across the open prairie, clinging to the high places and circling and doubling like a rabbit before the hounds.

Notes on Scoring

This response receives no credit (0 points) because the text "this half-mile or so within the pasture fence was all that was left of that old road which used to run like a wild thing across the open prairie," was selected and is incorrect.

Sample Response: 0 points

Select the excerpt from paragraph 2 in Passage 1 that supports the idea that modern changes have come to the prairie.

2 As I wandered over those rough pastures, I had the good luck to stumble upon a bit of the first road that went from Black Hawk out to the north country; to my grandfather's farm, then on to the Shimerdas' and to the Norwegian settlement. Everywhere else it had been ploughed under when the highways were surveyed; this half-mile or so within the pasture fence was all that was left of that old road which used to run like a wild thing across the open prairie, clinging to the high places and circling and doubling like a rabbit before the hounds.

Notes on Scoring

This response receives no credit (0 points) because the text "As I wandered over those rough pastures, I had the good luck to stumble upon a bit of the first road that went from Black Hawk out to the north country;" was selected and is incorrect.

Grade 6
English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Item Release

Question 2

Question and Scoring Guidelines

Question 2

Which sentence from Passage 1 signals the narrator recollecting an earlier time?

- Ⓐ “They looked like gashes torn by grizzly’s claws . . .” (paragraph 3)
- Ⓑ “On the level land the tracks had almost disappeared—were mere shadings in the grass . . .” (paragraph 3)
- Ⓒ “I had only to close my eyes to hear the rumbling of the wagons in the dark . . .” (paragraph 4)
- Ⓓ “I had the sense of coming home to myself . . .” (paragraph 4)

Points Possible: 1

Content Strand: Craft and Structure

Content Standard: Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

Scoring Guidelines

Rationale for Option A: This is incorrect. Although the narrator paints an image, this is not a recollection of an earlier time.

Rationale for Option B: This is incorrect. Although the word “disappeared” may suggest a recollection, there is no earlier time here.

Rationale for Option C: **Key** – This sentence signals that the reader is recalling a memory of the past.

Rationale for Option D: This is incorrect. Although this expresses a sense of looking inside oneself, this does not signal memory.

Sample Response: 1 point

Which sentence from Passage 1 signals the narrator recollecting an earlier time?

- ☐ Ⓐ “They looked like gashes torn by grizzly’s claws . . .” (paragraph 3)
- ☐ Ⓑ “On the level land the tracks had almost disappeared—were mere shadings in the grass . . .” (paragraph 3)
- ☒ Ⓒ “I had only to close my eyes to hear the rumbling of the wagons in the dark . . .” (paragraph 4)
- ☐ Ⓓ “I had the sense of coming home to myself . . .” (paragraph 4)

Grade 6
English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Item Release

Question 3

Question and Scoring Guidelines

Question 3

In paragraph 3 of Passage 1, what is the impact of the phrase “gashes torn by a grizzly’s claws” on the meaning of the passage?

- Ⓐ It implies that the prairie is a dangerous place.
- Ⓑ It implies that the narrator is fearful for his life.
- Ⓒ It suggests that there is a harshness to the landscape.
- Ⓓ It suggests that bad things happen when the land is uncared for.

Points Possible: 1

Content Strand: Craft and Structure

Content Standard: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Scoring Guidelines

Rationale for Option A: This is incorrect. Although the mention of a grizzly suggests danger, the phrase is referring to the appearance of the wheel ruts in the earth.

Rationale for Option B: This is incorrect. Although the narrator might be afraid if he encountered a grizzly, this is a literal interpretation of the phrase, which is referring to the wheel ruts, not a real bear.

Rationale for Option C: **Key** – The use of this language to describe the wheel ruts is in sharp contrast to the other descriptions in the text, which stress beauty and peacefulness.

Rationale for Option D: This is incorrect. Although the ruts may be seen as a negative consequence, there is no indication that the land is uncared for.

Sample Response: 1 point

In paragraph 3 of Passage 1, what is the impact of the phrase “gashes torn by a grizzly’s claws” on the meaning of the passage?

- ☐ Ⓐ It implies that the prairie is a dangerous place.
- ☐ Ⓑ It implies that the narrator is fearful for his life.
- ☒ Ⓒ It suggests that there is a harshness to the landscape.
- ☐ Ⓓ It suggests that bad things happen when the land is uncared for.

Grade 6
English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Item Release

Question 4

Question and Scoring Guidelines

Question 4

Based on the prefix “pre-,” what does the word predetermined mean in paragraph 4 of Passage 1?

- Ⓐ not decided
- Ⓑ decided again
- Ⓒ almost decided
- Ⓓ decided in advance

Points Possible: 1

Content Strand: Vocabulary

Content Standard: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

Scoring Guidelines

Rationale for Option A: This is incorrect. This is not the correct meaning of the prefix.

Rationale for Option B: This is incorrect. This is not the correct meaning of the prefix.

Rationale for Option C: This is incorrect. This is not the correct meaning of the prefix.

Rationale for Option D: **Key** – This is the correct meaning of the prefix.

Sample Response: 1 point

Based on the prefix “pre-,” what does the word predetermined mean in paragraph 4 of Passage 1?

- ☐ Ⓐ not decided
- ☐ Ⓑ decided again
- ☐ Ⓒ almost decided
- ☒ Ⓓ decided in advance

Grade 6
English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Item Release

Question 5

Question and Scoring Guidelines

Question 5

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

How does the narrator in Passage 1 feel during his prairie walk?

- Ⓐ disappointed
- Ⓑ helpless
- Ⓒ reflective
- Ⓓ restless

Part B

Which sentence from Passage 1 supports the answer in Part A?

- Ⓐ “I took a long walk north of the town, out into the pastures . . .” (paragraph 1)
- Ⓑ “Russian thistles were blowing across the uplands and piling against the wire fences like barricades.” (paragraph 1)
- Ⓒ “I had escaped from the curious depression that hangs over little towns, and my mind was full of pleasant things . . .” (paragraph 1)
- Ⓓ “The rains had made channels of the wheel-ruts and washed them so deeply that the sod had never healed over them.” (paragraph 3)

Points Possible: 1

Content Strand: Key Ideas and Details

Content Standard: Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

Scoring Guidelines

Part A

Rationale for Option A: This is incorrect. Although the narrator sees changes in the land, there is no indication that he is disappointed by them.

Rationale for Option B: This is incorrect. Although the text mentions the thistles piling up like barricades, there is no indication that the narrator feels helpless because of this.

Rationale for Option C: **Key** – The narrator thinks about his memories and the travel he had planned to do.

Rationale for Option D: This is incorrect. Although the idea of a walk might suggest that the narrator is restless, this idea is not developed in the text.

Part B

Rationale for Option A: This is incorrect. This might be thought to support the idea of restlessness.

Rationale for Option B: This is incorrect. This might be thought to support the idea of helplessness.

Rationale for Option C: **Key** – This supports the idea that the narrator was reflective, thinking about many things.

Rationale for Option D: This is incorrect. This might be thought to support the idea of disappointment.

Grade 6
English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Item Release

Question 5

Sample Responses

Sample Response: 1 point

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

How does the narrator in Passage 1 feel during his prairie walk?

- ☐ Ⓐ disappointed
- ☐ Ⓑ helpless
- ☒ Ⓒ reflective
- ☐ Ⓓ restless

Part B

Which sentence from Passage 1 supports the answer in Part A?

- ☐ Ⓐ “I took a long walk north of the town, out into the pastures . . .” (paragraph 1)
- ☐ Ⓑ “Russian thistles were blowing across the uplands and piling against the wire fences like barricades.” (paragraph 1)
- ☒ Ⓒ “I had escaped from the curious depression that hangs over little towns, and my mind was full of pleasant things . . .” (paragraph 1)
- ☐ Ⓓ “The rains had made channels of the wheel-ruts and washed them so deeply that the sod had never healed over them.” (paragraph 3)

Notes on Scoring

This response receives full credit (1 point) because the correct answer is selected in both Part A and Part B. To receive full credit for this item, the student must select the correct answer in both Part A and Part B.

Sample Response: 0 points

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

How does the narrator in Passage 1 feel during his prairie walk?

- ☐ Ⓐ disappointed
- ☐ Ⓑ helpless
- ☒ Ⓒ reflective
- ☐ Ⓓ restless

Part B

Which sentence from Passage 1 supports the answer in Part A?

- ☒ Ⓐ "I took a long walk north of the town, out into the pastures . . ." (paragraph 1)
- ☐ Ⓑ "Russian thistles were blowing across the uplands and piling against the wire fences like barricades." (paragraph 1)
- ☐ Ⓒ "I had escaped from the curious depression that hangs over little towns, and my mind was full of pleasant things . . ." (paragraph 1)
- ☐ Ⓓ "The rains had made channels of the wheel-ruts and washed them so deeply that the sod had never healed over them." (paragraph 3)

Notes on Scoring

This response receives no credit (0 points) because the correct answer choice was selected for Part A, but not for Part B. The student may have been able to understand how the narrator in Passage 1 feels about his prairie walk, but was unable to support that inference with the correct evidence from the text. To receive full credit for this item, the student must select the correct answer in both Part A and Part B.

Sample Response: 0 points

This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

How does the narrator in Passage 1 feel during his prairie walk?

- ☒ disappointed
- ☐ helpless
- ☐ reflective
- ☐ restless

Part B

Which sentence from Passage 1 supports the answer in Part A?

- ☐ (A) "I took a long walk north of the town, out into the pastures . . ." (paragraph 1)
- ☐ (B) "Russian thistles were blowing across the uplands and piling against the wire fences like barricades." (paragraph 1)
- ☐ (C) "I had escaped from the curious depression that hangs over little towns, and my mind was full of pleasant things . . ." (paragraph 1)
- ☒ (D) "The rains had made channels of the wheel-ruts and washed them so deeply that the sod had never healed over them." (paragraph 3)

Notes on Scoring

This response receives no credit (0 points) because the student selected an incorrect answer for both Part A and Part B. To receive full credit for this item, the student must select the correct answer in both Part A and Part B.

Grade 6
English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Item Release

Question 6

Question and Scoring Guidelines

Question 6

Which quality is emphasized by the poet's use of "roam" and "play" in stanza 1 of Passage 2?

- Ⓐ disobedience
- Ⓑ forcefulness
- Ⓒ freedom
- Ⓓ humor

Points Possible: 1

Content Strand: Craft and Structure

Content Standard: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

Scoring Guidelines

Rationale for Option A: This is incorrect. Although roaming and playing may be associated with disobedient behavior, the context does not support this interpretation.

Rationale for Option B: This is incorrect. Although roaming and playing might suggest the power of the animals, the context does not support this interpretation.

Rationale for Option C: **Key** – The buffalo roaming and the antelope playing both suggest freedom.

Rationale for Option D: This is incorrect. Although the word "play" might suggest humor, this interpretation is not supported by the context.

Sample Response: 1 point

Which quality is emphasized by the poet's use of "roam" and "play" in stanza 1 of Passage 2?

- ☐ Ⓐ disobedience
- ☐ Ⓑ forcefulness
- ☒ Ⓒ freedom
- ☐ Ⓓ humor

The Ohio Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability in employment or the provision of services.

Copyright © 2016 by the Ohio Department of Education. All rights reserved.