

# Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program TCAP

## English Language Arts Grade 8 | Practice Test



***Please PRINT all information in the box.***

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_

**All practice test items represent the appropriate grade level/content standards—however, the practice test may contain item types that no longer appear on the operational assessment.**



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**Test Administrator Instructions:**

This practice test has Subpart 1 and Subpart 2. It is recommended that you print one copy of this practice test and pull the answer key before copying and distributing the practice test to your students. The answer key is found at the end of the practice test.

This practice test is representative of the operational test but is shorter than the actual operational test. To see the details about the operational test, please see the blueprints located on the Tennessee Department of Education website.



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## DIRECTIONS

In this subpart of the test, you will read a passage or set of passages, answer some questions, and then write a response to a writing prompt. This prompt gives you an opportunity to demonstrate how well you can organize and express your ideas in written text.

After reading the passage(s) and answering the questions, read the writing prompt. Then take a few minutes to think about the material and to plan what you want to write before you begin to answer. Do your best to write a clear and well-organized response. Be sure to keep in mind your purpose and audience when developing your response.

You may use scratch paper or the prewriting pages in your test booklet for prewriting or to make notes. However, only the response written on lined pages in the test booklet will be scored. **Remember that any work that you do on scratch paper or on the prewriting pages will not be scored.** You must write your response on the lined pages in your test booklet to receive credit.

You will be given 85 minutes to complete the writing prompt. This includes the time for reading the passage(s), answering the questions, and planning and writing your essay. If you finish before the allotted time ends, review your work. Then, close your test booklet and wait for further instructions from your teacher.

There is a sample passage with sample questions on the next page. Wait for your teacher to instruct you to continue.



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Read the sample passage and answer the sample question that follows.

## Excerpt from *Heidi*

by Johanna Spyri

- 1 Heidi, climbing on a chair, took down the dusty book from a shelf. After she had carefully wiped it off, she sat down on a stool.
- 2 "What shall I read, grandmother?"
- 3 "Whatever you want to," was the reply. Turning the pages, Heidi found a song about the sun, and decided to read that aloud. More and more eagerly she read, while the grandmother, with folded arms, sat in her chair. . . . When Heidi had repeated the end of the song a number of times, the old woman exclaimed: "Oh, Heidi, everything seems bright to me again and my heart is light. Thank you, child, you have done me so much good."
- 4 Heidi looked enraptured<sup>1</sup> at the grandmother's face, which had changed from an old, sorrowful expression to a joyous one.

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<sup>1</sup> **enraptured:** very pleased

Excerpt from *Heidi* by Johanna Spyri. September 1998 [Etext #1448]. Copyright © 1998, Gutenberg.org. In the public domain.

**Sample 1: Multiple choice (one correct response)**

- 1** What does the word eagerly mean as it is used in paragraph 3?
- A.** in an excited way
  - B.** with a quiet voice
  - C.** at a hurried pace
  - D.** in a shy tone



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on this page**

Read the passages and answer the questions that follow.

## Passage 1

### Excerpt from “Checking In”

by Hiawatha Bray

- 1        The social-networking site Foursquare was created in 2009 by Dennis Crowley (the maker of an earlier site called Dodgeball, which had been bought by Google before failing) and an Indian-born software engineer named Naveen Selvadurai.
- 2        With Foursquare there is no need to punch your location into the phone. The phone already knows its own latitude and longitude, and Foursquare’s database knows thousands of restaurants and other places you might want to visit. The software app shows you a listing of places nearby. A user who wants to meet up with friends can simply select a place and “check in” with a finger tap. All her Foursquare buddies now know exactly where to find her.
- 3        When Foursquare appeared, it was a handy and fun app for a social butterfly. Yet people had plenty of other ways to keep in touch—using the phone to make a call, for instance. Foursquare would only catch on if it could change the habits of millions of people, by convincing them that the app was a better way to stay in touch.
- 4        So Crowley and Selvadurai made it a game. A Foursquare user who checked in most often at a particular location became the “mayor” of that place. The reward? At first just a little cartoon badge (and bragging rights, of course). Later, Foursquare worked with local businesses to offer discounts and special offers in exchange for check-ins.
- 5        Within two years of launching, Foursquare had more than 6 million registered users, who were checking into the service 1.5 million times per day. Early on, much of the activity was driven by people competing to become the mayor of a favorite dining spot, public landmark, or subway station.
- 6        In Philadelphia in 2010, for instance, Internet developer Andrew Miguelez fought ferociously to hang on to the “mayorship” of Penn’s Landing, a well-known local site. “I was in a heated battle with another daily visitor,” said Miguelez. “The title of mayor bounded back and forth between us every couple of days as one of us would check in earlier than the other, or would check in on a weekend.”



- 7 Competition is occasionally so intense that users cheat by checking into a location even when they are nowhere near it. Foursquare had to start using software to spot and cancel fake check-ins.
- 8 By the beginning of 2013, Foursquare had 30 million subscribers, with half of them signed up in the previous year. Since its founding, users have posted more than 3 billion check-ins.
- 9 Although each check-in may be valuable to your curious friends, they may someday be much, much more valuable to Foursquare. Taken together, these check-ins let the company track your movements—not only through the physical world, but through the economy. People who check in regularly are leaving a series of breadcrumbs that could let marketers figure out where they like to spend money—and what other nearby businesses they might want to know about.
- 10 Stores can learn even more by pooling the check-in data from millions of people and looking for patterns. For example, they might find out that Foursquare users who often check in at art museums also like to shop at fancy clothing stores. Now art lovers who launch the app might be greeted with an ad from an upscale clothing chain.
- 11 Foursquare has earned hardly any money in its brief life. But the company is hoping that someday, this kind of advertising targeted to your location will bring in plenty of cash. Other social networking sites—Foursquare’s rivals—agree, and they’ve moved quickly to add location features. The billion or so members of Facebook can now attach their exact location to their posts, and so can the half-billion users of the messaging service Twitter.

Excerpt from “Checking In,” by Hiawatha Bray, from *Muse*. Published by ePals Media.  
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## Passage 2

### Your Life: The Game

by Stephanie Warren Drimmer

12 You're at home, doing push-ups on the living room floor. Each time you lift your body upwards, a small device in your pocket records the movement. Your physical activity is building up virtual points on a website called Zamzee. If you get enough, you can trade them in for real prizes.

13 Zamzee is part of a business trend called gamification. "The basic idea of gamification is that you take something that's not fun, and you make it fun," says Dan Botwinick, Zamzee's vice president of marketing. Zamzee and other gamified businesses borrow techniques from games — like competition and rewards for high scores — to make tasks like exercising as much fun as playing.

#### Head Games

14 Gamification can help motivate people to do activities that are usually boring or frustrating. Think of learning a new language. The average person spends two years studying a foreign language in school, but fewer than one in 100 actually learns to speak it. "Language education is a drag," says Gina Gotthilf. She's the head of marketing for Duolingo, a company that is using gamification as a strategy to perk up the process.

15 Duolingo teaches language by asking students to translate text. Beginners start with a single word; advanced students get complex sentences. The text is from real online documents, such as news articles. Duolingo combines answers from its 50 million users to translate the Web, bit by bit.

16 The software rewards students by filling a strength bar when they translate text correctly and leveling them up when they learn a new skill set. Like a game, Duolingo breaks down the process of learning a language into small steps and gives users encouragement as they accomplish each one.

17 Quirky is a business that uses game-inspired techniques to create products. Users submit ideas for new inventions. The Quirky community votes on which ideas it likes best. Top ideas become real products, like Porkfolio, a piggy bank that keeps track of how much change you've collected.

18 Quirky users are involved in every step of product development, voting on everything from colors to the best way to solve a design problem. Competing to come up with the best ideas keeps users hooked on creating.

## Why Are Games Fun?

- 19 In 2012, Zamzee studied two groups of kids. Both groups used their activity tracking device, but only one had access to the Zamzee website with points and rewards. The gamified Zamzee users exercised 59 percent more than the others. This shows Zamzee really does get kids moving, the company claims. What makes gamification work?
- 20 Jamie Madigan is a psychologist who studies games. He says that there are three psychological needs that games satisfy. Businesses that successfully use gamification fulfill all three.
- 21 “The first psychological need is the need to feel competent,” says Madigan, “like you’re making things happen.” To fulfill this need, most gamified businesses use rewards. In Duolingo, you can use points to dress up Duo, the game’s owl mascot. In Zamzee, you can trade in points for real prizes, like electronics or gift cards.
- 22 Another need is autonomy, says Madigan — giving people choices. Zamzee, for example, lets users choose how to earn points: they can walk the dog, run in place, or another activity — whatever sounds the most fun.
- 23 The third need is relatedness, or feeling that what you’re doing matters to other people. Gamified businesses accomplish this with leaderboards that allow users to compare their progress with their friends’.

## Gamify Your Life

- 24 Imagine if doing your homework were as much fun as playing a video game. By borrowing ideas from gamification, Madigan says, it could be.
- 25 First, break down your goal into small steps. If you have a science project due, make a list of tasks to accomplish: do research online, gather supplies for your experiment, print out pictures for your poster, and so on. Give yourself flexibility so that you can choose which task to do next.
- 26 Next, you need rewards. Choose things that you know will motivate you — like downloading a new song, or reading the new Muse. Each time you complete a task, you get a reward.
- 27 Finally, make your challenge social. Get your science project partners to join you. Make the challenge competitive by having rewards for doing the most tasks, or completing a task fastest.
- 28 Any time you think of a way to bring the fun to an unfun activity, consider — should I get some investors for my new gamification business?

“Your Life: The Game,” by Stephanie Warren Drimmer, from *Muse*. Published by ePals Media. Copyright © 2015. Used by permission of the publisher via Copyright Clearance Center.

- 1** What does the word pooling mean as it is used in paragraph 10?
- A.** recalling
  - B.** collecting
  - C.** exaggerating
  - D.** forgetting
- 2** What does the word autonomy mean as it is used in paragraph 22?
- M.** exercise
  - P.** motivation
  - R.** information
  - S.** independence

- 3 Which set of statements **best** expresses each author's point of view regarding the use of game design in software applications?
- A. The author of passage 1 views the competitive component of games as a fun way to bring people together. The author of passage 2 views the ability to make choices in games as an effective way to meet individual needs.
  - B. The author of passage 1 views competition as a main source for the problem of cheating. The author of passage 2 views the competitive element of games as the best way to motivate people to learn.
  - C. The author of passage 1 views games as a promising way for businesses to engage consumers and encourage them to share spending habits. The author of passage 2 views games as an enjoyable way to engage learners and make learning more effective.
  - D. The author of passage 1 views games as a smart way for businesses and consumers to work together. The author of passage 2 views games as a creative way for business and education to work together and improve learning.

## Writing Prompt

Write an informational essay comparing and contrasting how the two passages explore the role of games in people's lives. Develop your essay by providing textual evidence from **both** passages.

Manage your time carefully so that you can

- plan your essay and do some prewriting using your scratch paper.
- write your essay on the lined pages in your test booklet.

Be sure to

- use evidence from **both** passages.
- avoid over-relying on one passage.

Your written response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph informational essay.

Write your essay on the lined pages of your test booklet. **Anything you write that is not on the lined pages in your test booklet will NOT be scored.**

**Use the prewriting pages to make notes and plan your writing**

- Make sure that you write your response on the lined pages provided in the answer document.
- Writing on this page will **not** be scored.

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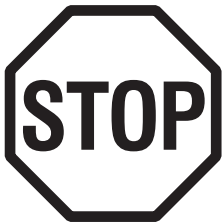


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Read the sample passage and answer the sample questions that follow.

## Excerpt from *Black Beauty*

by Anna Sewell

- 1 The first place that I can well remember was a pleasant meadow with a pond of clear water in it. Over the hedge on one side we looked into a plowed field, and on the other we looked over a gate at our master's house, which stood by the roadside. While I was young I lived upon my mother's milk, as I could not eat grass. In the daytime I ran by her side, and at night I lay down close by her. When it was hot we used to stand by the pond in the shade of the trees, and when it was cold we had a warm shed near the grove.
- 2 There were six young colts in the meadow beside me; they were older than I was. I used to run with them, and had great fun; we used to gallop all together round the field, as hard as we could go. Sometimes we had rather rough play, for they would bite and kick, as well as gallop.

Excerpt from *Black Beauty*, by Anna Sewell. January 16, 2006 [EBook #271]. Copyright © 2006, Gutenberg.org. In the public domain.

### Sample 1: Multiple choice (one correct response)

1 What does the word pleasant mean in paragraph 1?

- A. nice
- B. large
- C. open
- D. empty



**Sample 2: Multiple select (multiple correct responses)**

- 2** Which **two** sentences from the passage describe the narrator's life in the meadow?
- M.** "The first place that I can well remember was a pleasant meadow with a pond of clear water in it." (paragraph 1)
  - P.** "Over the hedge on one side we looked into a plowed field, and on the other we looked over a gate at our master's house, which stood by the roadside." (paragraph 1)
  - R.** "While I was young I lived upon my mother's milk, as I could not eat grass." (paragraph 1)
  - S.** "In the daytime I ran by her side, and at night I lay down close by her." (paragraph 1)
  - T.** "I used to run with them, and had great fun; we used to gallop all together round the field, as hard as we could go." (paragraph 2)

**Sample 3: Two-part multiple choice (with evidence responses)**

- 3** The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

**Part A**

How does the narrator describe life in the meadow?

- A.** The narrator was unhappy.
- B.** The narrator felt very lonely.
- C.** The narrator enjoyed himself.
- D.** The narrator was eager to leave.

**Part B**

Which detail from the story supports the correct answer in Part A?

- M.** The narrator could not eat grass at first.
- P.** The narrator had great fun with the other colts.
- R.** The narrator looked over the gate at the house.
- S.** The narrator stayed in a shed when it was cold.

**Sample 4: Editing task**

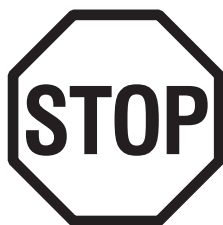
There are one or more underlined parts in the passage. They may contain errors to be corrected, or they may need to be changed for better wording. If a change is needed, select the correct replacement. If no change is needed, select “No change.”

The creator of Mickey Mouse was born December 5, 1901, in Chicago. His name was Walter Disney. He began drawing pictures when he were a young boy. His first drawings were of his neighbor’s horse, Rupert.

- 4** Which change, if any, is needed to the underlined text?

were

- A.** is
- B.** was
- C.** am
- D.** No change



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Read the passage and answer Questions 1 through 7.

## Excerpt from *Emma*

by Jane Austen

- 1 Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; and had lived nearly twenty-one years in the world with very little to distress or vex her.
- 2 She was the youngest of the two daughters of a most affectionate, indulgent father; and had, in consequence of her sister's marriage, been mistress of his house from a very early period. Her mother had died too long ago for her to have more than an indistinct remembrance of her caresses; and her place had been supplied by an excellent woman as governess, who had fallen little short of a mother in affection.
- 3 Sixteen years had Miss Taylor been in Mr. Woodhouse's family, less as a governess than a friend, very fond of both daughters, but particularly of Emma. Between *them* it was more the intimacy of sisters. Even before Miss Taylor had ceased to hold the nominal<sup>1</sup> office of governess, the mildness of her temper had hardly allowed her to impose any restraint; and the shadow of authority being now long passed away, they had been living together as friend and friend very mutually attached, and Emma doing just what she liked; highly esteeming<sup>2</sup> Miss Taylor's judgment, but directed chiefly by her own.
- 4 The real evils, indeed, of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself; these were the disadvantages which threatened alloy<sup>3</sup> to her many enjoyments. The danger, however, was at present so unperceived, that they did not by any means rank as misfortunes with her.
- 5 Sorrow came — a gentle sorrow — but not at all in the shape of any disagreeable consciousness. — Miss Taylor married. It was Miss Taylor's loss which first brought grief. It was on the wedding-day of this beloved friend that Emma first sat in mournful thought of any continuance. The wedding over, and the bride-people gone, her father and herself were left to dine together, with no prospect of a third to cheer a long evening. Her father composed himself to sleep after dinner, as usual, and she had then only to sit and think of what she had lost.

- 6 The event had every promise of happiness for her friend. Mr. Weston was a man of unexceptionable character, easy fortune, suitable age, and pleasant manners; and there was some satisfaction in considering with what self-denying, generous friendship she had always wished and promoted the match; but it was a black morning's work for her. The want of Miss Taylor would be felt every hour of every day. She recalled her past kindness — the kindness, the affection of sixteen years — how she had taught and how she had played with her from five years old — how she had devoted all her powers to attach and amuse her in health — and how nursed her through the various illnesses of childhood. A large debt of gratitude was owing here; but . . . the last seven years, the equal footing and perfect unreserve which had soon followed Isabella's<sup>4</sup> marriage, on their being left to each other, was yet a dearer, tenderer recollection. She had been a friend and companion such as few possessed: intelligent, well-informed, useful, gentle, knowing all the ways of the family, interested in all its concerns, and peculiarly interested in herself, in every pleasure, every scheme of hers — one to whom she could speak every thought as it arose, and who had such an affection for her as could never find fault.
- 7 How was she to bear the change? — It was true that her friend was going only half a mile from them; but Emma was aware that great must be the difference between a Mrs. Weston, only half a mile from them, and a Miss Taylor in the house; and with all her advantages, natural and domestic, she was now in great danger of suffering from intellectual solitude. She dearly loved her father, but he was no companion for her. He could not meet her in conversation, rational or playful.
- 8 The evil of the actual disparity in their ages (and Mr. Woodhouse had not married early) was much increased by his constitution and habits; for having been a valetudinarian<sup>5</sup> all his life, without activity of mind or body, he was a much older man in ways than in years; and though everywhere beloved for the friendliness of his heart and his amiable temper, his talents could not have recommended him at any time.

<sup>1</sup> **nominal:** in name only

<sup>2</sup> **esteeming:** regarding highly

<sup>3</sup> **alloy:** dilute; reduce the purity of

<sup>4</sup> **Isabella:** Emma's older sister

<sup>5</sup> **valetudinarian:** someone overly anxious about his or her health

Excerpt from *Emma* by Jane Austen. January 21, 2010 [EBook #158]. Copyright © 2010, Gutenberg.org. In the public domain.

1 In paragraph 3, what does the phrase “shadow of authority” suggest about the relationship between Emma and Miss Taylor?

- A. Miss Taylor had kept constant watch over Emma.
- B. Miss Taylor had been saddened by Emma’s attitude.
- C. Miss Taylor had little control of Emma’s behavior.
- D. Miss Taylor had been jealous of Emma’s carefree life.

2 How does the author’s choice of words in paragraph 4 impact the tone of the passage?

- M. They create a judgemental tone by implying that Emma is uncaring and believes her character is superior to others.
- P. They support an expectant and mildly suspenseful tone by implying that Emma is likely to have her character tested.
- R. They create a reassuring tone by indicating that Emma’s strong sense of self will help her overcome challenges.
- S. They support a conceited tone by indicating that Emma’s upbringing will ensure her a place in high society.

3 Which set of statements **best** summarizes the passage?

- A. Emma is pleased that her governess has married and has every promise of happiness. However, after the wedding Emma is saddened by the prospect of having only her father to dine with in the evenings.
- B. Emma is pretty, clever, rich, and happy. The wedding of Miss Taylor, her governess, prompts Emma to recall with fondness the loving care and attention Miss Taylor provided over the years.
- C. Emma is a privileged, happy young woman who has had a carefree life. She is faced with the prospect of feeling lonely, perhaps for the first time, when her governess and good friend marries and leaves the household.
- D. Emma is very close to her governess, Miss Taylor, who has been a good friend since Emma was a young child. After Miss Taylor marries, Emma worries about how she will get along with her father, whose personality is very different from Emma’s.



- 4** The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

**Part A**

What does the reader understand about Emma that she does not understand about herself?

- M.** She is self-centered and somewhat spoiled.
- P.** She resents having to be the mistress of her father's house.
- R.** Miss Taylor is her good friend only because Emma's father pays her.
- S.** Her fears of being lonely are unfounded.

**Part B**

Select the quote from the passage that **best** supports the correct answer to Part A.

- A.** "Emma Woodhouse, handsome, clever, and rich, with a comfortable home and happy disposition, seemed to unite some of the best blessings of existence; . . ." (paragraph 1)
- B.** "The wedding over, . . . her father and herself were left to dine together, with no prospect of a third to cheer a long evening." (paragraph 5)
- C.** "She recalled her past kindness — the kindness, the affection of sixteen years — how she had taught and how she had played with her from five years old — . . ." (paragraph 6)
- D.** "[Miss Taylor] had been a friend and companion such as few possessed: . . . peculiarly interested in herself, in every pleasure, every scheme of hers — . . ." (paragraph 6)

- 5** Read this sentence from paragraph 6.

**Mr. Weston was a man of unexceptionable character, easy fortune, suitable age, and pleasant manners; and there was some satisfaction in considering with what self-denying, generous friendship she had always wished and promoted the match; but it was a black morning's work for her.**

What does this sentence reveal about Emma's character?

- M.** She is jealous of her friend's marriage.
- P.** She thinks her friend has made a mistake.
- R.** She is determined to remain close to her friend.
- S.** She feels she has sacrificed for her friend's happiness.

- 6** What does the word disparity mean as it is used in paragraph 8?

- A.** doubt
- B.** disapproval
- C.** difference
- D.** deceit

- 7** The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

**Part A**

Which sentence **best** states a theme of this passage?

- M.** Adjusting to new circumstances can be difficult.
- P.** Close friendships take time to develop.
- R.** Memories of long ago can often be inaccurate.
- S.** Loneliness finds everyone at times.

**Part B**

How does Miss Taylor's approach to her work as Emma's governess relate to the theme of this passage?

- A.** Miss Taylor's permissive style leaves Emma unprepared to handle her leaving.
- B.** Miss Taylor's changing relationship with Emma reflects Emma's growing maturity.
- C.** Miss Taylor's many years of loyal service provide an example to Emma about friendship.
- D.** Miss Taylor's decision to marry gives Emma a chance to grow stronger and more independent.

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

## Excerpt from “The Lord of the Forest: the American Chestnut”

- 1        The American chestnut ruled our forests for centuries, but a killer blight made up of microscopic spores needed only 50 years to wipe the giant from the face of North America. But we still have buildings made from it, and we still have people pulling for it. An organization based in Asheville wants to bring it back from memory and make the chestnut stand tall again.
- 2        We have to imagine it — there is no other way. Once, the springtime canopies of western North Carolina forests were an unmatched floral display, thanks to a tree that nearly vanished. The American chestnut rose 100, sometimes 120, feet above the loamy forest floor. Most were nearly barren of branches for 50 feet or better, living up to what would become their nickname, “the redwood of the East.” These were massive trunks, some 16 feet in diameter. And they lorded over the forest. In most places, every fourth tree was a chestnut, and along vast ridges, fully 7 out of 10 trees would have been of the tribe *Castanea dentata*. All told, perhaps 4 billion chestnut trees grew from southern Maine to Georgia, and they put on a pageant. . . .
- 3        Chestnut made things. You could rock a baby in a chestnut cradle and bury a loved one in a chestnut coffin. You could wear leather gloves cured with the tannins from chestnut bark. You could eat chestnut bread and chestnut-stuffed wild turkey and bear fattened on the mast. You could fall asleep to a chestnut-log fire. You could roast wild, pure-strain American chestnuts on it.
- 4        No longer. For now, we must conjure it all in our minds. We can read about the magnificent chestnut forests and gaze at the old photographs of monstrous trees rising like furrowed cliff sides toward a sky blotted out with their serrated leaves and wonder what it was like. But we can witness it no longer. “All words about the American chestnut are now but an elegy for it . . . gone down like a slaughtered army,” wrote the naturalist Donald Culross Peattie.
- 5        For now.
- 6        But there may come a day.
- 7        The demise of the American chestnut is woven into the nation’s lore like the tragic wartime death of a beloved family member. The killing fungus — *Cryphonectria parasitica* — was first discovered in 1904 on a chestnut growing in the New York Zoological Park. Originating in Asia, the blight had little effect on Asiatic chestnuts that evolved with it, but American chestnuts were defenseless to it. The fungus entered the tree through cracks in the bark, creating sunken, orange-black cankers on the trunk. Vast networks of unseen, threadlike filaments

encircled the tree, choking off water and nutrients, killing each one down to the ground.

- 8        Once affected, a single tree became a spore-producing blight factory, infecting its neighbors. Spores hitched a ride on the wind. Insects and birds picked up blight spores on their wings and legs, and carried the disease to distant forests. The blight raced across the Appalachian range at an average rate of 50 miles a year. Within eight years, it swept New England.
- 9        To halt the genocide, a mile-wide chestnut blight “firebreak” was carved across Pennsylvania, but to no avail — the fungus leapt this botanical Maginot Line. It showed up in North Carolina as early as 1912, and by 1925, the fungus had invaded 75 percent of the chestnut’s North American range. A few decades later, perhaps 4 billion chestnut trees stood dying or lay dead.
- 10       The American chestnut forest was erased from the face of the planet. It was an unnatural cataclysm, a complete victory of an alien invader, and it changed forever the forests of North Carolina and much of the eastern United States. Gone was the tree that nurtured Native Americans, passenger pigeons, and pioneer communities. Gone was the forest that had evolved over millennia. In its place, there are oaks and hickories and poplars, but these trees are stand-ins, substitutes for the native chestnuts whose grandeur can only be imagined. . . .
- 11       The tree was critical to the building of America and beloved by early horticulturists. Philadelphia botanists John and William Bartram listed the American chestnut in the first American nursery catalog, published in 1783. They sent chestnuts to George Washington’s Mount Vernon and Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello.
- 12       Chestnut wood was used for furniture, interior paneling, charcoal, and telegraph and then telephone poles. In 1919, North Carolina produced 70 million board feet of chestnut lumber — trailing only West Virginia and Pennsylvania. Chestnut bark is rich in tannins, and untold tons of bark were shipped to tanneries, where it was chipped and boiled and then used to soften the hides of deer and bear that had, themselves, fattened on its nuts. In a single year — 1909 — 100,000 cords of chestnut fed five large tanneries in the Asheville region alone. . . .
- 13       Here’s the curiosity: You can still find American chestnut trees. A few escaped the blight, and hang on. In North Carolina, several hundred mature chestnuts still stand, but their future is precarious. And throughout the high country, young trees are fairly common. You can find them along the Appalachian Trail, in sunny clearings along the Blue Ridge Parkway, in state parks and private woodlots. One of the more insidious aspects to chestnut blight was that its cankers choked the trees to death down to the ground but left stumps and roots grasping tenuously to life. All these years later, these ancient stumps still sprout. The young trees shoot for the sky, saw-toothed leaves catching the sun, by every indication a sapling on the way to grand stature. It is a short-lived exuberance. The rare

tree might grow large enough to produce a few flowers and prickly seed burs, but chestnut blight fungus still lives in the bark of blight-resistant oaks and ash. It infects and kills most young chestnuts before they are more than a few inches in diameter.

- 14 But at this very moment, on farms and woodlots scattered across North Carolina and the rest of the native range of the species, an army of volunteers is working on perhaps the most audacious conservation project of our time: bringing back the American chestnut. While state and federal agencies take part in restoration research and fieldwork, most of these workers are part of The American Chestnut Foundation, founded in 1983 by a trio of plant scientists. TACF, which is headquartered in Asheville, now has chapters in 16 states.
- 15 The premise behind this dream is a bit of botany 101. Chinese chestnuts evolved with the blight and carry blight-resistant genes, which American-strain trees lack. By crossing an American chestnut with a Chinese chestnut, you end up with a tree that has half the genetic material of each. Cross the progeny of that tree back to an American chestnut, and nuts from that tree will carry 75 percent of the genetics of a true American chestnut. By continuing this backcrossing for generation after generation, ACF hopes to produce trees with all the characteristics of American chestnuts, and the blight resistance of the Chinese trees.

Excerpt from "The Lord of the Forest: the American Chestnut." Our State Magazine, 2017. <https://www.ourstate.com/american-chestnut/>. In the public domain.

8 What is the meaning of the word cataclysm as it is used in paragraph 10?

- M. disaster
- P. strategy
- R. process
- S. triumph

**9** In paragraph 13, the author states that the chestnut trees' "future is precarious." Which detail in paragraph 13 supports this claim?

- A.** "Here's the curiosity: You can still find American chestnut trees."
- B.** "And throughout the high country, young trees are fairly common."
- C.** "The young trees shoot for the sky, saw-toothed leaves catching the sun, by every indication a sapling on the way to grand stature."
- D.** "It infects and kills most young chestnuts before they are more than a few inches in diameter."

**10** The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

**Part A**

Based on the passage, what is the author's point of view regarding the loss of the American chestnut?

- M.** The disappearance of the American chestnut is a great tragedy.
- P.** The loss of the chestnut is just one result of a natural process.
- R.** The American chestnut had its time in history, but it is now best forgotten.
- S.** Botanists and horticulturists did not do enough to save the American chestnut.

**Part B**

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

- A.** "But we still have buildings made from it, and we still have people pulling for it." (paragraph 1)
- B.** "The demise of the American Chestnut is woven into the nation's lore like the tragic wartime death of a beloved family member." (paragraph 7)
- C.** "The blight raced across the Appalachian range at an average rate of 50 miles per year." (paragraph 8)
- D.** "The tree was critical to the building of America and beloved by early horticulturists." (paragraph 11)

**11** In paragraph 8, how does the phrase “spore-producing blight factory” help the reader understand the fungus?

- M.** It explains how the fungus originated.
- P.** It indicates how fast the fungus could spread.
- R.** It illustrates how the spores moved from tree to tree.
- S.** It gives a picture of how birds and insects spread the fungus.

**12** Which statement is a central idea of the passage?

- A.** The American chestnut has disappeared, but it has been replaced with forests of oak, hickory, and poplar trees.
- B.** Despite many efforts to save the American chestnut, millions of trees have died in forests from Georgia to Maine.
- C.** The American chestnut had many uses, but a fungus from Asia ruined the chestnut wood and made the chestnuts inedible.
- D.** Although the American chestnut was nearly wiped out about 100 years ago by a fungus, some scientists are working to bring the tree back.



- 13** How does paragraph 9 connect to the rest of the passage?
- M.** It underscores how quickly the blight spread in the eastern states.
  - P.** It illustrates how a spore is spread from tree to tree.
  - R.** It describes a major effort that failed to stop the spread of the fungus.
  - S.** It describes the destruction of chestnut trees like a battle in World War II.
- 14** Which **two** sentences contain information that should be included in a summary of the passage?
- A.** “The American chestnut ruled our forests for centuries, but a killer blight made up of microscopic spores needed only 50 years to wipe the giant from the face of North America.” (paragraph 1)
  - B.** “Once, the springtime canopies of western North Carolina forests were an unmatched floral display, thanks to a tree that nearly vanished.” (paragraph 2)
  - C.** “Gone was the tree that nurtured Native Americans, passenger pigeons, and pioneer communities.” (paragraph 10)
  - D.** “In a single year — 1909 — 100,000 cords of chestnut fed five large tanneries in the Asheville region alone.” (paragraph 12)
  - E.** “But at this very moment, on farms and woodlots scattered across North Carolina and the rest of the native range of the species, an army of volunteers is working on perhaps the most audacious conservation project of our time: bringing back the American chestnut.” (paragraph 14)

There are seven underlined parts in the passage. They may contain errors to be corrected, or they may need to be changed for better wording. If a change is needed, select the correct replacement. If no change is needed, select "No change."

Nathaniel tightened the laces on his left skate and used his hockey stick for balance as he climbed to his feet. Eyeing the practice goal at the far end of the frozen pond he slipped a puck from his coat pocket and dropped it to the ice.

If the world were to fall away, Nathaniel would be happy as long as the glassy surface of the pond remained. The only sound was the *kishkish* of his skates scratching the ice he pushed the previous evening's playoff game from his mind. Nathaniel forgot about his missed penalty shot, his teammate's disappointed faces, and his coach's promise of a championship the following year.

Out here Nathaniel was not the mediocre player who had botched the more important shot of the game. No, out here he was an ice hockey superstar. The pond was a professional ice hockey arena. The squirrels and birds nestled in the nearby trees were fans screaming for his autograph. His substitute goalie, an overturned garbage can, mocked him like a real-life opponent.

Gathering speed, Nathaniel went around the back part of the goal and then moved toward center ice. With the puck now in position, he pulled back his stick and swung down with all his might.

- 15** Which change, if any, is needed to the underlined text?

**Eyeing the practice goal at the far end of the frozen pond he slipped**

- M.** Eyeing the practice goal, at the far end of the frozen pond he, slipped
- P.** Eyeing the practice goal, at the far end of the frozen pond he slipped
- R.** Eyeing the practice goal at the far end of the frozen pond, he slipped
- S.** No change

- 16** Which change, if any, is needed to the underlined text?

**If the world were to fall away,**

- A.** If the world will fall away
- B.** If the world is falling away
- C.** If the world falls away
- D.** No change

- 17** Which change, if any, is needed to the underlined text?

**ice he**

- M.** ice, but he
- P.** ice, he
- R.** ice. He
- S.** No change

- 18** Which change, if any, is needed to the underlined text?

**teammate's disappointed faces**

- A.** teammates disappointed face's
- B.** teammates' disappointed faces
- C.** teammate's disappointed faces'
- D.** No change

- 19** Which change, if any, is needed to the underlined text?

**more important**

- M.** most important
- P.** fully important
- R.** best important
- S.** No change

- 20 Which change, if any, is needed to the underlined text?

goalie, an overturned garbage can, mocked him like a real-life opponent

- A. goalie mocked him like a real-life opponent, an overturned garbage can
- B. goalie mocked him, an overturned garbage can, like a real-life opponent
- C. goalie mocked him like an overturned garbage can, a real-life opponent
- D. No change

- 21 Which change, if any, is needed to the underlined text?

went around the back part of the goal and then moved

- M. went near the goal and then went
- P. drifted to the rear of the goal and then coasted
- R. raced behind the goal and then skated
- S. No change



**This is the end of the test.**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Subpart 1 Practice Test Questions**1.     ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D2.     ☐ M   ☐ P   ☐ R   ☐ S3.     ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D**Subpart 2 Practice Test Questions**1.     ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D2.     ☐ M   ☐ P   ☐ R   ☐ S3.     ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D4.     **Part A:** ☐ M   ☐ P   ☐ R   ☐ S       **Part B:** ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D5.     ☐ M   ☐ P   ☐ R   ☐ S6.     ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D7.     **Part A:** ☐ M   ☐ P   ☐ R   ☐ S       **Part B:** ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D8.     ☐ M   ☐ P   ☐ R   ☐ S9.     ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D10.    **Part A:** ☐ M   ☐ P   ☐ R   ☐ S       **Part B:** ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D11.    ☐ M   ☐ P   ☐ R   ☐ S12.    ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D13.    ☐ M   ☐ P   ☐ R   ☐ S14.    ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C   ☐ D   ☐ E   (select **two**)

- 15.**    Ⓐ    Ⓑ    Ⓒ    Ⓓ
- 16.**    Ⓐ    Ⓑ    Ⓒ    Ⓓ
- 17.**    Ⓐ    Ⓑ    Ⓒ    Ⓓ
- 18.**    Ⓐ    Ⓑ    Ⓒ    Ⓓ
- 19.**    Ⓐ    Ⓑ    Ⓒ    Ⓓ
- 20.**    Ⓐ    Ⓑ    Ⓒ    Ⓓ
- 21.**    Ⓐ    Ⓑ    Ⓒ    Ⓓ





## Subpart 1 Practice Test Questions

1.    ☐ A    ☒    ☐ C    ☐ D
2.    ☐ M    ☐ P    ☐ R    ☒
3.    ☐ A    ☐ B    ☒    ☐ D

## Subpart 2 Practice Test Questions

1.    ☐ A    ☐ B    ☒    ☐ D
2.    ☐ M    ☒    ☐ R    ☐ S
3.    ☐ A    ☐ B    ☒    ☐ D
4.    **Part A:** ☒    ☐ P    ☐ R    ☐ S  
**Part B:** ☐ A    ☐ B    ☐ C    ☒
5.    ☐ M    ☐ P    ☐ R    ☒
6.    ☐ A    ☐ B    ☒    ☐ D
7.    **Part A:** ☒    ☐ P    ☐ R    ☐ S  
**Part B:** ☒    ☐ B    ☐ C    ☐ D
8.    ☒    ☐ P    ☐ R    ☐ S
9.    ☐ A    ☐ B    ☐ C    ☒
10. **Part A:** ☒    ☐ P    ☐ R    ☐ S  
**Part B:** ☐ A    ☒    ☐ C    ☐ D
11. ☐ M    ☒    ☐ R    ☐ S
12. ☐ A    ☐ B    ☐ C    ☒
13. ☒    ☐ P    ☐ R    ☐ S
14. ☒    ☐ B    ☐ C    ☐ D    ☒ (select **two**)

15.   Ⓐ   Ⓑ   ●   Ⓓ
16.   Ⓐ   Ⓑ   Ⓒ   ●
17.   Ⓐ   Ⓑ   ●   Ⓓ
18.   Ⓐ   ●   Ⓒ   Ⓓ
19.   ●   Ⓑ   Ⓓ   Ⓓ
20.   Ⓐ   Ⓑ   Ⓒ   ●
21.   Ⓐ   Ⓑ   ●   Ⓓ

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**TCAP Practice Test Standards Alignment and Key – ELA Grade 8  
(2019–2020)**

Subpart 1	Key	Standard
1	B	8.RI.CS.4
2	D or S	8.RI.CS.4
3	C	8.RI.CS.6
	Prompt	8.W.TTP.2
Subpart 2		
1	C	8.RL.CS.4
2	B or P	8.RL.CS.4
3	C	8.RL.KID.2
4	A   D or M   D	8.RL.CS.6
5	D or S	8.RL.KID.3
6	C	8.RL.CS.4
7	A   A or M   A	8.RL.KID.2
8	A or M	8.RI.CS.4
9	D	8.RI.KI.8
10	A   B or M   B	8.RI.CS.6
11	B or P	8.RI.CS.4
12	D	8.RI.KID.2
13	A or M	8.RI.KID.3
14	A,E	8.RI.KID.2
15	C or R	8.L.CSE.2
16	D	8.L.CSE.1
17	C or R	8.L.CSE.2
18	B	8.L.CSE.2
19	A or M	8.L.CSE.1
20	D	8.L.CSE.1
21	C or R	8.L.KL.3

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English Language Arts Grade 8 |  
Practice Test

