

PRACTICE TEST

English Language Arts

Grade 4

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Student Name

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School Name

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District Name



# Grade 4 English Language Arts

## PRACTICE TEST

This practice test contains 16 questions.

### **Directions**

Read each passage and question carefully. Then answer each question as well as you can. You must record all answers in your Practice Test Answer Document.

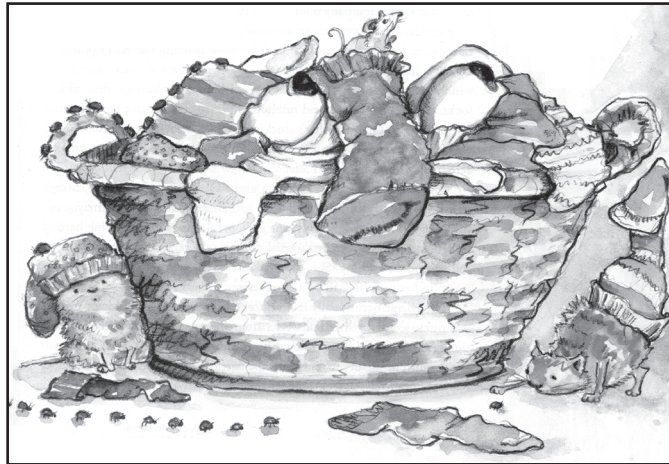
For most questions, you will mark your answers by filling in the circles in your Practice Test Answer Document. Make sure you darken the circles completely. Do not make any marks outside of the circles. If you need to change an answer, be sure to erase your first answer completely.

Some questions will ask you to write a response. Write each response in the space provided in your Practice Test Answer Document. Only responses written within the provided space will be scored.

What happens to socks that are left behind after their matching socks mysteriously go missing? Read the passage "The Village of Left-Behinds." Then answer the questions that follow.

## The Village of Left-Behinds

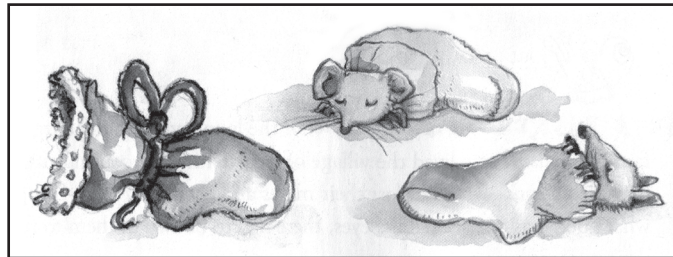
by Ethel Pochocki



- 1 In a basket in a corner of the laundry room of a large family's house, there lived the village of Left-Behinds, a community of bewildered socks who had lost their mates and their reason for being. For what good was one sock? . . .
- 2 The mistress of the house had given them their own place where they could wait for the return of their loved ones. Her sock drawer had become so crowded, she could barely close it, but she was too softhearted to throw the odd ones away. It wasn't *their* fault their mates had vanished suddenly and mysteriously. One moment they were in the washer or dryer or on their way to being folded and put away, and the next, they weren't. It was, she said, one of life's great mysteries.
- 3 Every now and then, but not very often, one of the missing did return, found in an unlikely place—in a lunchbox, under the couch, crumpled in a pants pocket, in a book as a bookmark—and there was great rejoicing as the pair returned to the sock drawer. It gave the remaining Left-Behinds hope that the miracle would happen again.
- 4 You might think such a village would be a sad place, with the socks moping around, remembering stories about the old days and reminiscing about feet they had known, but for the most part, it wasn't. At first, the villagers spent their days learning to get along with one another. In this large family, there were all kinds. Old man socks, usually black, with holes in toes

and worn-out heels; men's itchy wool plaids; Grandmother's brown cotton stockings; little girl socks trimmed in lace; boys' thick white sneaker socks. Thin, colored knee-highs with cats or penguins or balloons scrolled up the sides; baby booties.

- 5 And the mistress put them all to work. Many of the white cotton elders went into kitchen and parlor service—scrubbing faucets or polishing silver, the banisters, the piano, and the pictures on it. Some she would wind around a yardstick to wipe down cobwebs. She filled the little girl socks with dried lavender and rosebuds and tied them with a ribbon to give as sachets. Grandmother's stockings went outside to tie up tomato vines. The mistress also gave one hand-knit sock of many colors to an actress playing a one-footed role.
- 6 One sock the mistress would not give away was her own, a soft, fuzzy, red-and-white striped sock, so lovable and cheery, she was voted mayor of the village. The sock kept everyone as hopeful as possible, working hard to lighten spirits, especially those of the sock elders, who just wanted to roll up and do nothing. She, too, had lost her mate and cried in secret, but it was in her very fiber to be a comforter.



- 7 The village occasionally had visitors from away, and every happening was discussed and relived for weeks after the event. There was the convention of ladybugs, who came down from the attic for a holiday to bask in the warmth of the dryer vent. And the friendly raid of mouse mothers for baby booties to use as buntings for their newborns. And, the most recent, the mother cat who decided the village was the best place to have her kittens, and so she did—five of them! All sock work plans were laid aside in the immediate need to keep the mother and children comfortable. When the kittens were old enough to climb out of the basket and go into the world, the socks were a little sad. The kittens had become part of the village. They were born there, after all.
- 8 And so the days passed, and the socks came and went. Now that it was spring, with cleaning and gardening in full force, every sock was needed. Soon there was only one left—the pretty, cheery, fuzzy red-and-white striped mayor. She sat at the bottom of the basket with nothing to do,

no one to comfort. Still, she held on to the hope that had kept her cheerful—that her mate would return. It could happen, she told herself each day.

- 9 And—what do you know—it did! Outside, the snowdrifts that covered the backyard melted into the earth, and the dirty, icy crusts turned to mud. The mistress hung her sheets out in the first crisp spring air, and her heart leaped up as she watched them billow into the sky. As she started back to the house, she slipped in the mud and fell face first into a pile of wet brown leaves.
- 10 Her nose touched something soft and fuzzy; she hoped it wasn't an animal. When she saw what it was, she laughed in delight. She pulled up the dirty, soggy red-and-white striped sock and exclaimed, "Well, *there* you are!" It must have slipped out of the basket when she brought in the laundry last fall.
- 11 The mistress washed the sock and dried it by the wood stove, fluffing it up before reuniting the couple. She wore the socks the very next day, which made all three of them very happy.
- 12 Now the basket was empty, the village of Left-Behinds deserted. Not a thread or shred of lace remained to show it had ever existed. Then, three days later, a pink bunny slipper-sock was dropped into the basket, followed by a ladies' black leather glove. And on the next day—
- 13 But that's another story.

"The Village of Left-Behinds" by Ethel Pochocki, illustrated by Jennifer Black Reinhardt, from *Cricket* Magazine (November/December 2011). Copyright © 2011 by Carus Publishing Company d/b/a Cricket Media. Reprinted by permission of Cricket Media, Inc.

- 1 Reread paragraph 1. Based on the paragraph, what is a sock's **main** purpose?
- A. to keep feet clean
  - B. to keep feet warm
  - C. to be part of a pair
  - D. to be used for a job
- 2 Based on paragraph 2, with which statement would the author **most likely** agree?
- A. Things can change very quickly.
  - B. Things are always as they seem.
  - C. Making decisions can be difficult.
  - D. Working hard brings great results.
- 3 According to the passage, which question does the mistress believe is "one of life's great mysteries"?
- A. Why do all socks look different?
  - B. How do so many socks disappear?
  - C. How do people find missing socks?
  - D. Why do people need to wear socks?

- 4 How does the setting change in paragraphs 8 and 9?
- A. Day becomes night.
  - B. Winter becomes spring.
  - C. Spring becomes summer.
  - D. Morning becomes afternoon.
- 5 In "The Village of Left-Behinds," who is telling the story?
- A. a sock
  - B. a visitor
  - C. the narrator
  - D. the mistress
- 6 Read the sentence from paragraph 12 in the box.

Now the basket was empty, the village of Left-Behinds deserted.

Which word from the sentence helps readers understand the meaning of **deserted**?

- A. now
- B. basket
- C. empty
- D. village

**7 Part A**

Which statement **best** describes how the mistress and the red-and-white socks feel about each other at the end of the passage?

- A. They feel safer together.
- B. They feel tired of one another.
- C. They feel pleased to be with one another.
- D. They feel unsure if they will stay together.

**Part B**

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

- A. "Now that it was spring, with cleaning and gardening in full force, every sock was needed." (paragraph 8)
- B. "The mistress washed the sock and dried it by the wood stove, fluffing it up before reuniting the couple." (paragraph 11)
- C. "She wore the socks the very next day, which made all three of them very happy." (paragraph 11)
- D. "Not a thread or shred of lace remained to show it had ever existed." (paragraph 12)



For this question, you will write a story based on the passage. Write your story in the space provided in your Practice Test Answer Document. Your writing should:

- Use characters, settings, events, and other details from the passage.
- Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

- 8 Based on the passage, write a story that tells what will most likely happen next to the pink bunny slipper and the leather glove that were dropped into the basket. Use what you know about the characters, settings, and events from the passage to write your story.

Read the article “Musical Plumbing” about an inventor named John Kovac, and then answer the questions that follow.

## Musical Plumbing

by Laura Biggs

- 1 When plumbing makes funny noises, it’s not always a good sign. But John Kovac, a harpist from Virginia, likes the pipes to sing. He thinks plumbing pipes make good musical instruments.
- 2 Kovac has made standard harps out of wood for more than 20 years. He says he feels a special thrill when he creates an instrument with his hands and uses it to make music come alive. But it takes years of training and special tools to make a traditional musical instrument. Kovac wanted to share the joy of making instruments with people who might not have the time or money to do it. So he decided to find an easier way.

### **The Music of PVC**

- 3 Plumbing was the answer. Kovac found PVC pipes at a local hardware store. PVC stands for *polyvinyl chloride*. It’s the white tubing that many plumbers use. You might find it in your house under a sink or in the basement.
- 4 Kovac says that PVC pipes are great for making instruments because they are inexpensive, come in many shapes and sizes, and fit together perfectly.
- 5 Kovac makes harps, guitars, violins, and cellos out of PVC pipes. He also makes uncommon instruments like the *udu* (a curved drum) from Nigeria, the *cuíca* (a friction drum) from Brazil, and the *Rührtrommel* (a stir drum) from Germany.
- 6 His instruments may look as if they come from outer space, but they really work. He and some of his music students and friends even started a band called the East Coast PVC Band.



When Kovac “stirs” the mallet around this *Rührtrommel*, it makes a clip-clopping sound.

### Jamming with Pipes

- 7 Sally Seabright is a violin teacher who plays PVC violin with the band. At first, the rounded shape of the PVC violin made it difficult to hold between her chin and shoulder, but Kovac modified the violin by adding a piece that fits perfectly under her chin.
- 8 That kind of adaptability is what Kovac admires about PVC. He says, “I know it’s not easy for the average person to make a musical instrument, but I hope to enable anyone who has ever dreamed of making a violin, harp, or guitar to fulfill his or her dreams.”
- 9 So if you think making an instrument sounds like fun, try using PVC pipes or other household materials to experiment with different sounds and creations. You could even call a few friends and form your own band! With homemade instruments, you, too, can make the pipes sing.



John Kovac plays his PVC harp.

“Musical Plumbing” by Laura Biggs, from *Highlights for Children* (February 2010). Copyright © 2010 by Highlights for Children, Inc. Text and photographs reprinted by permission of Highlights for Children, Inc.

- 9 What is the **main** purpose of paragraph 2?
- A. to explain how to join a PVC band
  - B. to describe how PVC instruments are made
  - C. to explain why Kovac came up with his idea
  - D. to describe the different instruments Kovac makes

- 10 Read the sentence from paragraph 6 in the box.

His instruments may look as if they come from outer space, but they really work.

What does the sentence **mostly** show about the instruments?

- A. They are different than expected.
  - B. They are large like the planets.
  - C. They are heard from far away.
  - D. They are made in dark colors.
- 11 Based on the article, the **most likely** reason the author chose the title “Musical Plumbing” is that the article
- A. describes a group of plumbers who formed a band.
  - B. explains why pipes are shaped like musical instruments.
  - C. describes musical sounds heard from the pipes under a house.
  - D. explains how plumbing materials can make musical instruments.

**Write your response to this question in the space provided in your Practice Test Answer Document.**

- 12** A creative person is someone who uses imagination to come up with new ideas. Based on the article, write a paragraph to explain why John Kovac could be called a creative person. Support your response with important information from the article.

**Read the article and folktale about fear. Then answer the questions that follow.**

Read the article "Fear Factors" about the causes of fear.

## Fear Factors

*by Jeanna Bryner*

- 1 What gives you the creeps? Does the sight of a mouse cause you to break into a sweat? Does the thought of the dentist's office send shivers up your spine?
- 2 Fears come in many varieties. At times, everyone feels afraid. In fact, about 6.3 million people in the United States have specific fears called phobias (FOE-bee-ahz). Scientists are still trying to figure out what causes phobias. One thing they do know: All fears cause a series of reactions inside your body.
- 3 Let's take a closer look at what's happening inside your body as your hair stands on end.

### **Fight or Flight**

- 4 Believe it or not, fear can be good for you. Fear is your body's way of protecting you from dangerous situations. "Mother Nature gave us all an alarm system. And that alarm system is fear," says Michael Telch, the director of the Laboratory for the Study of Anxiety Disorders at the University of Texas.
- 5 How could fear be healthy? When you spot a growling dog, your body gets prepared for a fast escape. First, a small area in your brain called the amygdala (uh-MIG-duh-luh) sends out an "emergency siren" to your body.
- 6 Right away, your heart begins to beat faster. A racing heart sends more blood to your muscles. That way, you can run from that angry dog more easily. You will even start breathing heavily so your body takes in more oxygen—giving your muscles an extra boost.
- 7 Plus, you break out in a sweat. This sweat helps cool off your body, so you won't get overheated. Your sweat is full of certain "fear" chemicals. And dogs can smell these chemicals. So dogs really can smell fear!
- 8 Sometimes you get frightened in situations that are not dangerous. For instance, some teens are deathly afraid of speaking in public. If this fear

of public speaking keeps you from going out with friends, it is a type of phobia. "When you have fear of something that's no threat and it interferes with your life, then it's called a phobia," says Telch.

- 9 What causes a person to have a phobia? Some scientists think that childhood experiences could be partly to blame for some phobias. A memory of a scary childhood event would get stored in your amygdala, in your brain. That grape-size area in the brain is considered the fear center. When you recall a past memory, your body prepares to flee.
- 10 "At times, that alarm system can go off when you're not in any danger or harm," says Telch.

### **Fear Not**

- 11 Scientists and doctors are coming up with effective ways to help you overcome your phobias. If a person is very fearful of heights, the doctor will gradually have that person climb to a higher floor of a building.
- 12 "The person might be encouraged to go to the second floor and look over the railing," explains Telch.
- 13 Over time, the person would realize that it's not so scary to be up high.
- 14 Getting over your fears is a slow and complicated process.

"Fear Factors" by Jeanna Bryner, from *Scholastic Action* (October 23, 2006). Copyright © 2006 by Scholastic Inc. Reprinted by permission of Scholastic Inc.



Read the folktale "Conquering Fear" about a boy who tries to conquer his fears.

CONQUERING  
FEAR  
AN ETHIOPIAN FOLKTALE



- 1 Once upon a time in an Ethiopian village, there lived a boy who was so shy and fearful of the world around him that his family called him Miobe, frightened one.
- 2 "Why do you call me that?" the boy asked his grandfather.
- 3 The old man laughed. "Because you are afraid."
- 4 The boy's grandmother, his mother, his father, and the neighbors said the same thing. Miobe pondered these words and decided he must find a way to conquer fear. So when everyone was asleep, he packed a sack and set off into the world to find out what he feared and to conquer it.
- 5 That night he slept under the wide umbrella of sky and stared up at the darkness. Before drifting off, he whispered to himself, "I see you, but I will conquer you, fear."
- 6 At midnight the wolves began to howl. The sound woke Miobe, but instead of running away, he walked toward the sound, saying aloud, "I will conquer you, fear."
- 7 He walked until the sun began to rise, and when he saw its golden orb, he smiled with relief, for he had survived the first night. "I am becoming brave," he said as he walked on.

- 8 Soon he came to a village. For a moment he thought, "I don't know these people at all. They might be unkind to a stranger." But he straightened up and walked right into the village, saying aloud, "I will conquer you, fear."
- 9 He walked into the village square, and there he found the village elders gathered, muttering among themselves. As Miobe came near, they looked up and sneered, "Who are you?"
- 10 "I'm traveling the world to become brave."
- 11 The elders laughed. "Fool! No one can find bravery where it does not exist."
- 12 "What do you mean?" Miobe asked.
- 13 The elders sighed unhappily. "We are finished," said one old man. "Our village is threatened by a monster up on the mountain." Miobe followed the man's gaze to the top of the mountain. "See him, there," the old man said. Miobe squinted. He did not want to insult the man, but he saw nothing there.
- 14 "Look," said another man. "See? It has the head of a crocodile. A monstrous crocodile!"
- 15 "And his body is as horrible as a hippopotamus. A gigantic hippopotamus!"
- 16 "It's like a dragon!" another man cried, "with fire shooting from its snout!"
- 17 Now Miobe began to see the monster. He began to see the smoke and fire, the wrinkled skin, the fiery eyes. "I see," he said, but silently he promised himself he would not be afraid. So he walked away from the elders, into the village proper.
- 18 Everywhere people cowered. The little children hid inside, refusing to go to school. "If the children go outside," the women said, "the monster will come down from the mountain and eat them. Everyone knows monsters eat children."
- 19 The farmers hovered inside their doorways, hoes and rakes in hand; outside their horses stood unharnessed. "We cannot work," they told Miobe. "If we go into the fields, the monster will come down and get us."
- 20 Miobe saw wandering goats, sheep, and cows out at the edge of the village; no one came to milk them or tend to them. No one planted crops. Few left their homes, preferring to hide indoors. "The monster is as big as 10 barges!"<sup>1</sup> they whispered among themselves as Miobe listened. "The monster is going to destroy us!"

<sup>1</sup>barges—huge boats used to carry goods

- 21 Finally Miobe decided it was up to him to destroy the monster. "I wish to conquer fear," he announced, "and so I shall go slay the monster!"
- 22 "No, son, don't do it!" the elders cried. "You will die."
- 23 Miobe shivered and his heart fluttered, but he was determined.
- 24 "I must conquer fear!" he said, and he set off.
- 25 At the base of the mountain, he looked up and felt a chill. The monster looked bigger and more fiery than any dragon, fiercer than a pack of wolves or a nest of snakes. He remembered the days when he had been afraid. He took a deep breath and began to climb.
- 26 As he climbed, he looked up, but now he saw the monster seemed to be smaller. "How peculiar," he said aloud. "My eyes are deceiving me."
- 27 He continued to climb. When he was halfway up, he looked again. He squinted, shielding his eyes, but the monster's eyes no longer seemed so fierce, and the flames no longer shot from its snout.
- 28 "The closer I get, the smaller he looks," Miobe said, puzzled. He continued to climb, though now he pulled his dagger from his sack so that he would be prepared.
- 29 As he came around a bend in the path, he saw the summit before him.
- 30 He gasped. The monster had disappeared.
- 31 Miobe looked behind him. Surely the creature would sneak up from behind to attack. But when he turned, he saw nothing. He heard nothing. He held his breath.
- 32 He looked left. He looked right.
- 33 He continued to climb. At last he reached the summit and all was empty and quiet. Nothing was there. Suddenly he heard a sound at his feet. He looked down and saw a little creature—a toad with wrinkled skin and round, frightened eyes.
- 34 He bent down. "Who are you?" he asked. "How did you become so small?" The monster said nothing, so he cradled it in his hand and walked down the mountain.
- 35 When he reached the village, the people cried, "He's safe!" and they surrounded him. Miobe held out his hand and showed them the tiny wrinkled toad. "This is the monster," he said. . . .

- 13 Read the questions from paragraph 1 of the article in the box.

Does the sight of a mouse cause you to break into a sweat? Does the thought of the dentist's office send shivers up your spine?

What is the **most likely** reason the author included the questions?

- A. to explain what fear is
  - B. to give examples of fears
  - C. to show that fears can be good
  - D. to explain why fear is important
- 14 What does paragraph 25 of the folktale **mainly** show about Miobe?
- A. He is feeling very cold.
  - B. He is standing up to his fear.
  - C. He thinks the monster is imaginary.
  - D. He wishes an elder had come with him.
- 15 Reread the section "Fight or Flight" in the article. Which sentence from the folktale **best** supports the information from the section?
- A. "Miobe pondered these words and decided he must find a way to conquer fear." (paragraph 4)
  - B. "He did not want to insult the man, but he saw nothing there." (paragraph 13)
  - C. "He began to see the smoke and fire, the wrinkled skin, the fiery eyes." (paragraph 17)
  - D. "Miobe shivered and his heart fluttered, but he was determined." (paragraph 23)

For this question, you will write an essay based on the passage(s). Write your essay in the space provided in your Practice Test Answer Document. Your writing should:

- Present and develop a central idea.
- Provide evidence and/or details from the passage(s).
- Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

- 16 Based on the article **and** the folktale, write an essay to explain how fear can affect people. Be sure to use information from the article and the folktale to develop your essay.

**MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

Grade 4 English Language Arts  
Practice Test Answer Document

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

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

Last Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

**MARKING INSTRUCTIONS**

- Use a No. 2 pencil only.
- Do not use ink, ballpoint, or felt-tip pens.
- Make solid marks that fill the circles completely.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.
- Do not make any stray marks on this form.
- Do not fold, tear, or damage this form.

1. (A) (B) (C) (D)
2. (A) (B) (C) (D)
3. (A) (B) (C) (D)
4. (A) (B) (C) (D)
5. (A) (B) (C) (D)
6. (A) (B) (C) (D)
7. **Part A** (A) (B) (C) (D)  
**Part B** (A) (B) (C) (D)







