
II. English Language Arts, Grade 3

Grade 3 English Language Arts Test

Test Sessions and Content Overview

The spring 2016 grade 3 English Language Arts test was made up of three separate sections:

- Session 1 included three reading selections, followed by multiple-choice, short-response, and open-response questions.
- Session 2A included two reading selections, followed by multiple-choice and short-response questions.
- Session 2B, the Narrative Writing section, included a single reading selection, followed by four evidence-based selected-response items and a narrative writing response. The items in Session 2B were developed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Students' performance on Session 2B will **not** be factored into their MCAS scores.

Session 1 and Session 2A contained the common test items on which each student's 2016 MCAS ELA score will be based. Some reading selections from these sessions are shown on the following pages, along with approximately half of the common test items. The selections and items are shown as they appeared in test & answer booklets.

The reading selection and items from Session 2B, the PARCC Narrative Writing section, are not being released in this document. The Department will post information about these items to the Student Assessment webpage in a separate document. See page 4 of the Introduction to this document for more information about the inclusion of PARCC items in the 2016 MCAS tests.

Standards and Reporting Categories

The items in Session 1 and Session 2A of the grade 3 ELA test assessed Pre-K–5 learning standards in two content strands of the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy* (March 2011), listed below.

- Reading (*Framework*, pages 13–19)
- Language (*Framework*, pages 33–40)

The *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy* is available on the Department website at www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html.

ELA test results are reported under two MCAS reporting categories, **Reading** and **Language**, which are identical to the two framework content strands listed above.

The tables at the conclusion of this chapter indicate each released and unreleased common item's reporting category and the standard it assesses. The correct answers for released multiple-choice questions are also displayed in the released item table.

Standards and reporting categories for the PARCC items in Session 2B will be listed in a separate document, which will be posted to the Student Assessment webpage.

Reference Materials

During all ELA test sessions, the use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries was allowed for current and former English language learner students only. No other reference materials were allowed during any ELA test session.

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DIRECTIONS

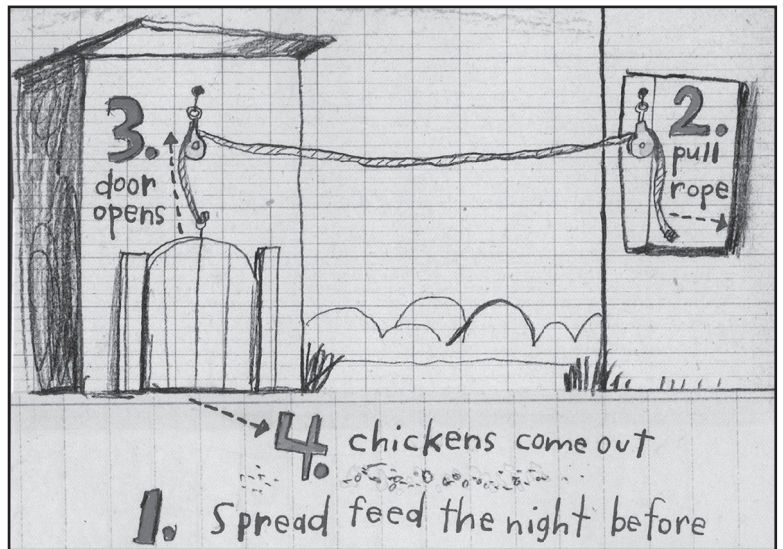
This session contains two reading selections with multiple-choice, short-response, and open-response questions. For multiple-choice questions, mark your answers by filling in the circle next to the best answer. For short-response and open-response questions, write your answer in the space below the question.

Tony Sarg was a puppet maker who worked with marionettes, small wooden puppets that are moved by strings. Read the passage about Tony Sarg, and then answer the questions that follow.

BALLOONS OVER BROADWAY

by Melissa Sweet

- F**rom the time he was a little boy, Tony Sarg loved to figure out how to make things move. He once said he became a marionette man when he was only six years old.
- His father had asked him to feed their chickens at six-thirty in the morning—every day. Tony had an idea—what if he could feed the chickens without leaving his bed?
- He rigged up some pulleys and ran rope from the chicken coop door to his bedroom window. That night, he spread chicken feed outside the chicken coop door.
- The next morning . . . Tony pulled on the rope, and the door to the chicken coop opened! The chickens ate their breakfast, Tony stayed snug in his bed, and his dad, so impressed, never made Tony do another chore.

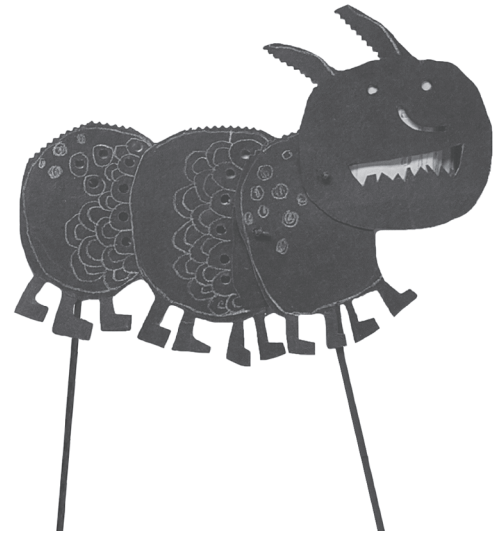


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- 5 When Tony grew up he moved to London, where he discovered that no one was making marionettes for kids anymore. So out of wood, cloth, and strings, Tony began to make puppets. He figured out ways to make his marionettes' movement so lifelike that they performed as if they were real actors. Word soon spread about Tony's amazing marionettes. When Tony moved to New York City, the Tony Sarg Marionettes began performing on Broadway.
- 6 In the heart of New York City, in Herald Square, was "the biggest store on earth": R. H. Macy's department store. Macy's had heard about Tony's puppets and asked him to design a "puppet parade" for the store's holiday windows. So Tony made new puppets based on storybook characters, then attached them to gears and pulleys to make them move.
- 7 In Macy's "Wondertown" windows, Tony's mechanical marionettes danced across the stage as if by magic. All day long they performed to shoppers jostling for a better look.
- 8 But Macy's had an even bigger job in store for Tony.
- 9 Many of the people working at Macy's were immigrants, and as the holidays approached, they missed their own holiday traditions. . . . Macy's agreed to put on a parade for their employees, and they hired Tony to help.
- 10 Tony too was an immigrant. . . . He loved the idea of creating a parade based on street carnivals from all over the world. He made costumes and built horse-drawn floats, and Macy's even arranged to bring in bears, elephants, and camels from the Central Park Zoo.
- 11 The animals joined hundreds of Macy's employees on Thanksgiving Day, 1924, winding their way from Harlem to Herald Square. It was a dazzling parade!
- 12 In fact, Macy's first parade was such a success that they decided to have one every year on Thanksgiving Day—to celebrate America's own holiday.
- 13 Each year the parade grew. But when Macy's brought in lions and tigers—in addition to the bears, elephants, and camels—the animals roared and growled and frightened the children.
- 14 Macy's asked Tony to replace the animals.

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- 15 Tony hoped to replace the animals with some kind of puppets, but his marionettes were less than three feet tall. He would have to make much larger puppets in order for them to be seen in the parade. And how could he make them strong enough to hold up in bad weather yet light enough to move up and down the streets?
- 16 Tony knew of a company in Ohio that made blimps* out of rubber—the perfect material for any weather. When he called the company and showed them his sketches, they agreed to make what Tony wanted.
- 17 Still, how would Tony make his big puppets *move*?
- 18 Then Tony had an idea—from an Indonesian rod puppet in his toy collection.
- 19 On Thanksgiving Day, Tony's creatures, some as high as sixteen feet, spilled into the streets, and the crowds cheered wildly.
- 20 Part puppet, part balloon, the air-filled rubber bags wobbled down the avenues, propped up by wooden sticks.
- 21 But now the sidewalks were so packed with people that only those in the first few rows could really see the parade. Tony realized his puppets would have to be even bigger and higher off the ground. And though the sticks helped to steer the puppets, they were stiff and heavy. Tony wanted his balloons to *articulate*—to move and gesture—more like puppets. But how?
- 22 With a marionette, the controls are above and the puppet hangs down . . .



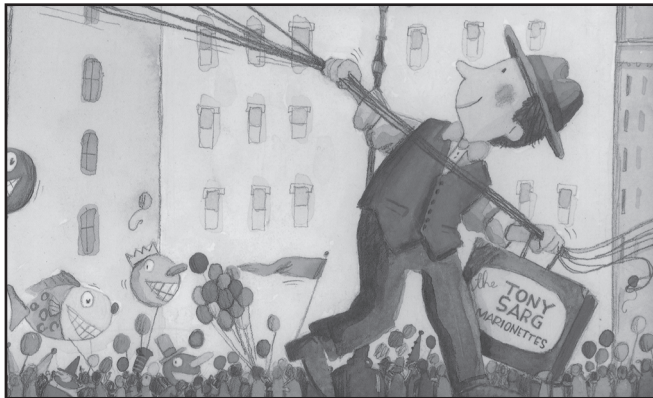
An Indonesian rod puppet



*blimps — large, balloon-like aircraft

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- 23 But what if the controls were below and the puppet could rise up?
- 24 During the next year, Tony set his new idea into motion.
- 25 This time, he asked the company in Ohio to make balloons out of rubberized silk—as strong as rubber but lighter than rubber alone.
- 26 Most important, Tony ordered the balloons to be filled not just with air but with helium too. Since helium is lighter than air, it would make the balloons rise.
- 27 Once the puppets were completed, they were deflated and shipped back to Tony in New York.
- 28 Tony did not know if everything would go as planned . . .
- 29 It was still dark on Thanksgiving morning when Tony filled the balloons with helium, tethering them down with sandbags.
- 30 By one p.m. the sidewalks were packed with people ready for the parade. Then, one by one, Tony cut the lines to the sandbags . . .
- 31 **LET’S have a PARADE!**



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Mark your choices for multiple-choice questions 1 through 10 by filling in the circle next to the best answer.

1 Based on the passage, why was Tony interested in marionettes?

- A He liked to watch big parades.
- B He wanted to take care of animals.
- C He was curious about how things moved.
- D He was interested in writing puppet shows.

2 Based on paragraphs 2–4, what does the diagram **mainly** show?

- A how the invention was like a puppet
- B why feeding chickens was a hard chore
- C how the invention was supposed to work
- D why feeding chickens was done in the morning

3 Read the sentence from paragraph 5 in the box below.

Word soon spread about Tony's amazing marionettes.

What does the sentence suggest about Tony's marionettes?

- A They became very popular.
- B They became very expensive.
- C They were changed over the years.
- D They were copied by other people.

4 Based on the passage, why did Macy's decide to use puppets instead of live animals in the parade?

- A Live animals bored some people.
- B Live animals scared some people.
- C Live animals cost too much to use.
- D Live animals became too tired to walk.

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5 Based on paragraph 21, why did Tony think the puppets needed to be bigger and fly higher?

- (A) so that the puppets would look more real
- (B) so that people could see the puppets better
- (C) so that people could stand under the puppets
- (D) so that the puppets would look more beautiful

6 What does the question in paragraph 23 **mainly** show?

- (A) what Tony wrote
- (B) that Tony was upset
- (C) what Tony wondered
- (D) that Tony was confused

7 In paragraph 28, how did Tony **most likely** feel?

- (A) lonely
- (B) nervous
- (C) grumpy
- (D) disappointed

8 Read the sentence from paragraph 30 in the box below.

Then, one by one, Tony cut the lines to the sandbags . . .

Based on the passage, what did Tony's action show?

- (A) The parade was late.
- (B) Tony was going home.
- (C) The parade was beginning.
- (D) Tony was popping the balloons.

9 In paragraph 7, what does “danced across the stage as if by magic” suggest about the marionettes?

- (A) They seemed tired.
- (B) They seemed alive.
- (C) They moved loudly.
- (D) They moved quickly.

10 Read paragraph 12 in the box below.

In fact, Macy’s first parade was such a success that they decided to have one every year on Thanksgiving Day—to celebrate America’s own holiday.

In the paragraph, which of the following words is a **noun**?

- (A) such
- (B) decided
- (C) every
- (D) holiday

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Question 11 is an open-response question.

- Read the question carefully.
- Explain your answer.
- Add supporting details.
- Double-check your work.

Write your answer to question 11 in the lined space below.

11 Based on the passage, explain how the author shows that Tony was a clever person. Support your answer with important information from the passage.

Read the article and the poem about penguins, and then answer the questions that follow.

Penguins

by Melvin and Gilda Berger



- 1 Penguins live on the ice of the Antarctic. They have wings—yet they can't fly! But the penguins are terrific swimmers and divers. They plunge into the icy ocean to catch their meals of fish, squid, and krill. Some can stay underwater for up to six minutes.
- 2 After a long dive, penguins shoot up out of the water. They look like rockets being launched. The birds gulp a quick breath of air. Then they splash back down into the water.
- 3 Sometimes the penguins leap onto the ice. Once there, penguins are slow and clumsy walkers. But they have a way to move quickly. They drop onto their bellies and push themselves forward with feet and flippers. *ZOOM!* Away they go, sliding across the ice!
- 4 The biggest penguins of all are the emperor penguins. They are about as tall and heavy as third graders! Like other penguins, they spend most of their time diving for food. When it is time to nest, they jump out of the water and plop on the ice.

- 5 Each female lays a single egg on the ice. Then she heads back to the water. Her mate rolls the egg onto his feet and covers it with a flap of skin. Then he joins other males in a large circle. They huddle together to keep warm.
- 6 The males keep the eggs on their feet for a couple of months. During that time they do not eat. They lose about half their weight. Finally, the eggs hatch and the chicks are born.
- 7 By now, the females are back. They take over the care of the chicks. The males march off to the ocean. There, they fill their empty stomachs with food.
- 8 In a few weeks, the males return with food. Now both parents feed and protect their chicks. Six months later, the offspring are fully grown. Off they go. They're big enough to care for themselves.



My Father's Feet

To keep myself up off the ice,
I find my father's feet are nice.
I snuggle in his belly fluff,
And that's how I stay warm enough.

- 5 But when my father takes a walk,
My cozy world begins to rock.
He shuffles left, I hold on tight.

Oh no! He's wobbling to the right.
Not left again! Oops, here he goes.

- 10 Do you suppose my father knows
I'm hanging on to his warm toes?

—Judy Sierra

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"My Father's Feet" by Judy Sierra, from *Antarctic Antics: A Book of Penguin Poems*. Text copyright © 1998 by Judy Sierra. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Photograph copyright © iStockphoto/KeithSzafranski.

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Mark your choices for multiple-choice questions 12 through 16 by filling in the circle next to the best answer.

12 Based on paragraph 2 of the article, why do penguins “shoot up out of the water”?

- (A) to hide
- (B) to hunt
- (C) to breathe
- (D) to exercise

13 Based on the article, which would be the **best** heading for paragraphs 1–3?

- (A) Big Birds
- (B) On the Move
- (C) On Their Own
- (D) A Meal Fit for a King

14 Based on the article, which of the following happens **last**?

- (A) The female penguin lays an egg.
- (B) The male penguin goes to the ocean to eat.
- (C) The male penguin protects the egg with his feet.
- (D) The female penguin comes back from the ocean.

- 15 Based on the article and the poem, why do male penguins put their eggs and chicks on their feet?

- (A) The ice is very cold.
- (B) The sun is very bright.
- (C) The young penguins are shy.
- (D) The other penguins are dangerous.

- 16 Read the sentence from paragraph 1 of the article in the box below.

They plunge into the icy ocean to catch their meals of fish, squid, and krill.

Based on the article, which word could be used instead of *plunge*?

- (A) fly
- (B) turn
- (C) dive
- (D) look

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Question 17 is a short-response question. Write your answer to question 17 in the lined space below.

17 In “My Father’s Feet,” explain how the young penguin’s feelings change throughout the poem.

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Spring 2016 Released Items:
Reporting Categories, Standards, and Correct Answers*

Item No.	Page No.	Reporting Category	Standard	Correct Answer (MC)*
1	11	<i>Reading</i>	3	C
2	11	<i>Reading</i>	7	C
3	11	<i>Reading</i>	2	A
4	11	<i>Reading</i>	3	B
5	12	<i>Reading</i>	2	B
6	12	<i>Reading</i>	1	C
7	12	<i>Reading</i>	3	B
8	12	<i>Reading</i>	3	C
9	13	<i>Language</i>	5	B
10	13	<i>Language</i>	1	D
11	14	<i>Reading</i>	2	
12	17	<i>Reading</i>	2	C
13	17	<i>Reading</i>	5	B
14	17	<i>Reading</i>	3	B
15	18	<i>Reading</i>	3	A
16	18	<i>Language</i>	4	C
17	19	<i>Reading</i>	3	

* Answers are provided here for multiple-choice items only. Sample responses and scoring guidelines for short-response and open-response items, which are indicated by the shaded cells, will be posted to the Department's website later this year.

**Grade 3 English Language Arts
Spring 2016 Unreleased Common Items:
Reporting Categories and Standards**

Item No.	Reporting Category	Standard
18	<i>Reading</i>	3
19	<i>Reading</i>	3
20	<i>Reading</i>	1
21	<i>Reading</i>	5
22	<i>Reading</i>	5
23	<i>Language</i>	2
24	<i>Reading</i>	2
25	<i>Reading</i>	3
26	<i>Reading</i>	8.a
27	<i>Reading</i>	3
28	<i>Reading</i>	3
29	<i>Reading</i>	3
30	<i>Reading</i>	1
31	<i>Reading</i>	2
32	<i>Language</i>	4
33	<i>Language</i>	5
34	<i>Language</i>	4
35	<i>Reading</i>	3
36	<i>Reading</i>	3
37	<i>Reading</i>	3
38	<i>Language</i>	5
39	<i>Reading</i>	2
40	<i>Reading</i>	8.a
41	<i>Language</i>	4