
VI. English Language Arts, Grade 7

Grade 7 English Language Arts Test

The spring 2018 grade 7 English Language Arts test was a next-generation assessment that was administered in two formats: a computer-based version and a paper-based version. The test included both operational items, which count toward a student's score, and matrix items. The matrix portion of the test consisted of field-test and equating questions that do not count toward a student's score.

Most of the operational items on the grade 7 ELA test were the same, regardless of whether a student took the computer-based version or the paper-based version. In some instances, the wording of a paper item differed slightly from the computer-based version. In places where a technology-enhanced item was used on the computer-based test, that item was typically replaced with one or more alternative items on the paper test. These alternative items sometimes assessed the same standard as the technology-enhanced item, or other standards from the same reporting category.

This document displays the **paper-based versions** of the 2018 operational items that have been released. The **computer-based versions** of the released items are available on the MCAS Resource Center website at mcas.pearsonsupport.com/released-items.

Test Sessions and Content Overview

The grade 7 ELA test was made up of two separate test sessions. Each session included reading passages, followed by selected-response and essay questions. On the paper-based test, the selected-response questions were multiple-choice items, in which students select the correct answer from among several answer options.

Standards and Reporting Categories

The grade 7 ELA test was based on grades 6–12 learning standards in three content strands of the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy* (2017), listed below.

- Reading
- Writing
- Language

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

ELA test results are reported under three MCAS reporting categories, which are identical to the three framework content strands listed above.

The tables at the conclusion of this chapter provide the following information about each released and unreleased operational item: reporting category, standard(s) covered, item type, and item description. The correct answers for released selected-response questions are also displayed in the released item table.

Reference Materials

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

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This session contains 10 questions.

Directions

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

For most questions, you will mark your answers by filling in the circles in your Student Answer Booklet. 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 Student Answer Booklet. Only responses written within the provided space will be scored.

English Language Arts

In the first half of the 1800s, many girls between the ages of 10 and 14 were sent by their families to work in the large mills in Lowell, Massachusetts. Read the historical article and a passage from a novel about this experience, and then answer the questions that follow.

The article "Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson: Voices of the Mills" describes the true story of two girls who worked in the mills.

Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson: Voices of the Mills Lowell, Massachusetts, 1830s

by Phillip Hoose



"Why it is nothing but fun. It is just like play."

—Lucy Larcom to her family after her first day of work

- 1 *Textile mills sprang up along rivers throughout New England, their noisy rooms filled with girls and young women from New England farms. They were hardworking girls who left home to help their families and to find adventure in the city. A mill girl arrived in a factory town clutching a single carpetbag or "hair trunk" and walked down treeless streets lined with brick boardinghouses that all looked alike, searching for the address that had been written on a scrap of paper. Upon arrival she would check in with the mistress, throw her bag on a bed, introduce herself to six or eight new roommates, and try to get some sleep. She would need it.*

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- 2 Lucy Larcom was eleven when she and her older sister Linda first walked through the gates of the giant mill at Lowell, Massachusetts. Lucy had agreed to apply for a job because she felt guilty that she was another mouth for her mother to feed. Lucy's mother ran a boardinghouse for mill girls and women, but there was never enough money. The mill agent had only one job. He offered it to Lucy because she was taller than Linda and he thought that meant she was older. Both girls kept their mouths shut.
- 3 Lucy's aunt had taught her to read and she loved the time she had spent in school. Still, even as a little child, she always expected that she'd wind up in the mill. "As a small child I got the idea that the chief end of woman was to make clothing for mankind," she later wrote. "I supposed I'd have to grow up and have a husband and put all those little stitches in his coats and pantaloons."
- 4 But, for the sake of the family, Lucy put aside her dreams and took a job as a "bobbin girl" in the spinning room. The windows were nailed shut and the room was hot and damp. Her wage was a dollar a week. Still, she made up her mind to be happy. "I went to my first day's work in the mill with a light heart," she wrote. "And it really was not so hard, just to change the bobbins¹ on the spinning frames² every three-quarters of an hour or so, with half a dozen other girls who were doing the same thing."
- 5 But after a while the fun wore off. Each day started at five in the morning with a bone-rattling blast from the factory whistle. There was barely enough time to splash cold water on her face, stuff breakfast in one pocket and lunch in another, and sprint to the spinning room on the second floor of the mill. Like the others, Lucy pinned her hair up to make sure it didn't get caught in the wheels. Then she faced her machine, reminding herself to be careful about where she put her fingers.
- 6 As the days wore on, Lucy pasted poems on the nearest window and tried to will the noise away. "I defied the machinery to make me its slave," she wrote. "Its incessant discourds³ could not drown the music of my thoughts if I would let them fly high enough." But sometimes it was hard to make thoughts fly so high. "The buzzing and hissing whizzing of pulleys and rollers and spindles and flyers often grew tiresome. I could not see into their complications or feel interested in them . . . When you do the same thing twenty times—a hundred times a day—it is so *dull!*"

¹bobbins—spools that hold yarn for sewing or weaving

²spinning frames—machines that twist fibers into yarn

³discourds—unpleasant noises

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- 7 Lowell mill girls got a fifteen-minute breakfast break and another thirty minutes for lunch at noon. Most stood all day. The little ones often fell asleep standing up. But the machines never slept. Mill owners convinced themselves that they were helping children build character through hard work. They fired men and replaced them with women and children, who worked for lower wages. Soon whole families began to live off the wages of their exhausted children.
- 8 In the 1830s, the mill women and girls began to stand up for themselves, organizing strikes for more pay and shorter hours. Eleven-year-old Harriet Hanson, also the daughter of a rooming-house keeper, was one of fifteen hundred girls who walked out of the Lowell mill in 1836. They were protesting the company's plan to raise the fees the workers had to pay to sleep in a company-owned boardinghouse like the one run by Harriet's mother.
- 9 Because the company controlled virtually every part of a mill girl's life, it took a lot of courage to even think about "turning out," as they called striking. For weeks, Harriet listened as girls and women on her floor discussed just that, and then, finally, made up their minds to walk out. When the strike day came and the signal to stop working was passed around, so many workers on the upper floors spilled out chanting into the street that the entire mill was shut down. But the girls in Harriet's spinning room remained frozen in place, glancing nervously at one another and wondering what to do. What if they lost their jobs? What would the company do to them?
- 10 Harriet was disgusted. After all their talk about oppression,⁴ how could they even think about staying inside? For long minutes they stood indecisively at their looms, whispering among themselves. Finally Harriet faced them. "I don't care what you do," she said firmly. "I am going to turn out whether anyone else does or not."
- 11 With that, Harriet marched toward the door, eyes straight ahead. In the next moment she heard a great shuffling of feet. She looked back to see the entire floor lining up behind her. Everyone was turning out. As expected, the company punished Harriet by taking the boardinghouse away from her mother. "Mrs. Hanson," the agent lectured, "you could not prevent the older girls among your boarders from turning out, but your daughter is a child, and her you could control."

⁴oppression—a situation in which a group of people are unfairly forced to do something

- 12 Harriet never regretted what she did. Many years later she said that leading that walkout was the best moment of her life. "As I looked back on the long line that followed me," she later wrote, "I was more proud than I have ever been since."

WHAT HAPPENED TO LUCY LARCOM AND HARRIET HANSON?

- 13 Lucy left Lowell and went west with her sister and brother-in-law. She never stitched a husband's pantaloons, choosing a life of teaching and writing over marriage. She became a well-known writer and poet. Harriet continued to lead and to fight. She eventually married a newspaper editor, and together they worked to convince people to oppose slavery. In 1882, Harriet became one of the first women to testify before Congress in favor of the right of women to vote.

"Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson: Voices of the Mills" by Phillip Hoose, from *We Were There Too!: Young People in U.S. History*. Text copyright © 2001 by Phillip Hoose. Reprinted by permission of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, LLC. Photograph courtesy of the Library of Congress.

In the passage from the novel *Lyddie*, Lyddie and Diana are two girls who work in the mills in Lowell. They live away from their families in a boardinghouse run by Mrs. Bedlow.

from *Lyddie*

by Katherine Paterson

- 1 The four-thirty bell clanged the house awake. From every direction, Lyddie could hear the shrill voices of girls calling to one another, even singing. Someone on another floor was imitating a rooster. From the other side of the bed Betsy groaned and turned over, but Lyddie was up, dressing quickly in the dark as she had always done in the windowless attic of the inn.
- 2 Her stomach rumbled, but she ignored it. There would be no breakfast until seven, and that was two and a half hours away. By five the girls had crowded through the main gate, jostled their way up the outside staircase on the far end of the mill, cleaned their machines, and stood waiting for the workday to begin.
- 3 "Not too tired this morning?" Diana asked by way of greeting.
- 4 Lyddie shook her head. Her feet were sore, but she'd felt tired after a day behind the plow.
- 5 "Good. Today will be something more strenuous, I fear. We'll work all three looms together, all right? Until you feel quite sure of everything."
- 6 Lyddie felt a bit as though the older girl were whispering in church. It seemed almost that quiet in the great loom room. The only real noise was the creaking from the ceiling of the leather belts that connected the wheels in the weaving room to the gigantic waterwheel in the basement.
- 7 The overseer came in, nodded good morning, and pushed a low wooden stool under a cord dangling from the assembly of wheels and belts above his head. His little red mouth pursed, he stepped up on the stool and pulled out his pocket watch. At the same moment, the bell in the tower above the roof began to ring. He yanked the cord, the wide leather belt above him shifted from a loose to a tight pulley, and suddenly all the hundred or so silent looms, in raucous concert, shuddered and groaned into fearsome life. Lyddie's first full day as a factory girl had begun.
- 8 Within five minutes, her head felt like a log being split to splinters. She kept shaking it, as though she could rid it of the noise, or at least the pain, but both only seemed to grow more intense. If that weren't trial enough, a few hours of standing in her proud new boots and her feet had swollen so that the laces cut into her flesh. She bent down quickly to loosen them, and when she found the right lace was knotted, she nearly burst into tears. Or perhaps the tears were caused by the swirling dust and lint.

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- 9 Now that she thought of it, she could hardly breathe, the air was so laden with moisture and debris. She snatched a moment to run to the window. She had to get air, but the window was nailed shut against the April morning. She leaned her forehead against it; even the glass seemed hot. Her apron brushed the pots of red geraniums crowding the wide sill. They were flourishing in this hot house. She coughed, trying to free her throat and lungs for breath.
- 10 Then she felt, rather than saw, Diana. "Mr. Marsden has his eye on you," the older girl said gently, and put her arm on Lyddie's shoulder to turn her back toward the looms. She pointed to the stalled loom and the broken warp thread that must be tied. Even though Diana had stopped the loom, Lyddie stood rubbing the powder into her fingertips, hesitating to plunge her hands into the bowels of the machine. Diana urged her with a light touch.
- 11 I stared down a black bear, Lyddie reminded herself. She took a deep breath, fished out the broken ends, and began to tie the weaver's knot that Diana had shown her over and over again the afternoon before. Finally, Lyddie managed to make a clumsy knot, and Diana pulled the lever, and the loom shuddered to life once more.
- 12 How could she ever get accustomed to this inferno? Even when the girls were set free at 7:00, it was to push and shove their way across the bridge and down the street to their boardinghouses, bolt down their hearty breakfast, and rush back, stomachs still churning, for "ring in" at 7:35. Nearly half the mealtime was spent simply going up and down the staircase, across the mill yard and bridge, down the row of houses—just getting to and from the meal. And the din in the dining room was nearly as loud as the racket in the mill—thirty young women chewing and calling at the same time, reaching for the platters of flapjacks and pitchers of syrup, ignoring cries from the other end of the table to pass anything.
- 13 Her quiet meals in the corner of the kitchen with Triphena, even her meager bowls of bark soup in the cabin with the seldom talkative Charlie, seemed like feasts compared to the huge, rushed, noisy affairs in Mrs. Bedlow's house. The half hour at noonday dinner with more food than she had ever had set before her at one time was worse than breakfast.
- 14 At last the evening bell rang, and Mr. Marsden pulled the cord to end the day. Diana walked with her to the place by the door where the girls hung their bonnets and shawls, and handed Lyddie hers. "Let's forget about studying those regulations tonight," she said. "It's been too long a day already."
- 15 Lyddie nodded. Yesterday seemed years in the past. She couldn't even remember why she'd thought the regulations important enough to bother with.

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- 10 What is the **most likely** reason the author included paragraph 1 of “Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson”?
- A. to illustrate that many mill workers came from selfish families
 - B. to demonstrate that many mill workers had negative attitudes
 - C. to emphasize that many mill workers had similar experiences
 - D. to highlight that many mill workers lived with supportive roommates
- 11 Which sentence from “Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson” **best** shows Lucy’s unwillingness to give in to the difficulties of life in the mill?
- A. “Still, even as a little child, she always expected that she’d wind up in the mill.” (paragraph 3)
 - B. “But, for the sake of the family, Lucy put aside her dreams. . . .” (paragraph 4)
 - C. “‘I defied the machinery to make me its slave,’ . . .” (paragraph 6)
 - D. “‘The buzzing and hissing whizzing of pulleys and rollers and spindles and flyers often grew tiresome.’” (paragraph 6)

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- 12 Read the sentences from paragraph 7 of “Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson” in the box.

The little ones often fell asleep standing up. But the machines never slept.

What is the **main** effect of the author’s use of personification?

- A. It suggests competition between the child workers and the machines.
 - B. It emphasizes a contrast between the child workers and the machines.
 - C. It demonstrates the advantages that the child workers had over the machines.
 - D. It shows that child workers were important to the proper functioning of the machines.
- 13 In “Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson,” why did the company take the boardinghouse away from Harriet’s mother?
- A. Harriet had not paid a fine to the agent.
 - B. Harriet’s mother had not let Harriet complete her work.
 - C. Harriet had not allowed the older girls to leave for the day.
 - D. Harriet’s mother had not stopped Harriet from taking action.

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14 Based on “Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson,” how was Harriet’s life **mostly** affected by her actions?

- A. She was fired by the mill owners.
- B. She decided to fight for equality for others.
- C. She was determined to demand more money in future jobs.
- D. She was motivated by her experience to start her own business.

15 **Part A**

What does the word *trial* mean as it is used in paragraph 8 of *Lyddie*?

- A. a scientific test
- B. a court process
- C. a serious challenge
- D. a surprising change

Part B

Which phrase from paragraph 8 **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- A. “Within five minutes . . .”
- B. “. . . her head felt like a log being split. . . .”
- C. “. . . proud new boots . . .”
- D. “She bent down quickly. . . .”

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- 16 Read the description from paragraph 9 of *Lyddie* in the box.

Now that she thought of it, she could hardly breathe, the air was so laden with moisture and debris. She snatched a moment to run to the window. She had to get air, but the window was nailed shut against the April morning. She leaned her forehead against it; even the glass seemed hot.

What is the **main** purpose of the description?

- A. to reveal an important theme
 - B. to foreshadow a future event
 - C. to illustrate how a character resolves a conflict
 - D. to show the impact of the setting on a character
- 17 Read the sentence from paragraph 15 of *Lyddie* in the box.

Yesterday seemed years in the past.

Based on the passage, what does the sentence **mainly** suggest about Lyddie?

- A. She is impressed by the machinery at the mill.
- B. She realizes her life has changed significantly.
- C. She misses her family more than she expected.
- D. She is unable to remember working on the farm.

18 Part A

What does the author of “Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson” **mainly** suggest about working in the mills?

- A. It taught the workers to be dependable.
- B. It was a miserable experience for the workers.
- C. It was an easy way for the workers to earn money.
- D. It helped the workers learn skills they could use on their farms.

Part B

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

- A. “From every direction, Lyddie could hear the shrill voices of girls calling to one another, even singing.” (paragraph 1)
- B. “Lyddie’s first full day as a factory girl had begun.” (paragraph 7)
- C. “Or perhaps the tears were caused by the swirling dust and lint.” (paragraph 8)
- D. “She pointed to the stalled loom and the broken warp thread that must be tied.” (paragraph 10)

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

- Present and develop a central idea.
 - Provide evidence and/or details from the passage(s).
 - Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- 19** Write an essay identifying a central idea of **both** “Lucy Larcom and Harriet Hanson” and *Lyddie*, and explain how it is developed throughout each text. Be sure to use information from **both** the article and the passage to develop your essay.

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Spring 2018 Released Operational Items:
Reporting Categories, Standards, Item Descriptions, and Correct Answers

PBT Item No.*	Page No.	Reporting Category	Standard	Item Type**	Description	Correct Answer (SR)***
10	97	<i>Reading</i>	RI.7.5	SR	Identify the purpose of the first paragraph of an article.	C
11	97	<i>Reading</i>	RI.7.2	SR	Identify evidence from an article to support a given trait of a historical figure.	C
12	98	<i>Reading</i>	RI.7.4	SR	Analyze the effect of a specific use of figurative language in an article.	B
13	98	<i>Reading</i>	RI.7.3	SR	Analyze why an event happens in the life of a historical figure in an article.	D
14	99	<i>Reading</i>	RI.7.3	SR	Determine the effects of a historical figure's actions in an article.	B
15	99	<i>Language</i>	L.7.4	SR	Use context to determine the correct meaning of a word with multiple definitions; select evidence from provided details from the passage to support the definition.	C;B
16	100	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.5	SR	Analyze the purpose of descriptive sentences in a passage.	D
17	100	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.1	SR	Make an inference about a character in a passage.	B
18	101	<i>Reading</i>	RI.7.8	SR	Analyze the argument of an article; identify evidence from details provided from a related literary passage to support analysis.	B;C
19	102	<i>Language, Writing</i>	L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.3, W.7.2, W.7.4	ES	Write an essay identifying and analyzing the development of a main idea in an article and passage on the same topic; cite evidence from both the article and the passage to support the essay.	

* "PBT Item Number" refers to the position of the item on the operational paper-based test. This is the item number that DESE refers to when reporting student results for a PBT item.

** ELA item types are: selected-response (SR), constructed-response (CR), and essay (ES).

***Answers are provided here for selected-response items only. Sample responses and scoring guidelines for any constructed-response and essay items will be posted to the Department's website later this year.

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Spring 2018 Unreleased Operational Items:
Reporting Categories, Standards, and Item Descriptions

PBT Item No.*	Reporting Category	Standard	Item Type**	Description
1	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.5	SR	Analyze how specific paragraphs in a passage establish an important contrast.
2	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.2	SR	Make an inference about the relationship between characters in a passage.
3	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.6	SR	Analyze how details in an internal monologue help readers understand a character in a passage; select evidence from provided details from the passage to support the analysis.
4	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.3	SR	Make an inference about a character based on his actions in a passage.
5	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.6	SR	Analyze a narrator's use of figurative language in a passage to determine her point of view on a topic.
6	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.6	SR	Analyze how a line of dialogue from a passage develops a character's point of view.
7	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.5	SR	Analyze how specific paragraphs contribute to the meaning of a passage.
8	<i>Language</i>	L.7.4	SR	Use context to determine the meaning of a word.
9	<i>Language, Writing</i>	L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.3, W.7.3, W.7.4	ES	Write a narrative that continues the story from the point of view of a character other than the narrator; use details from the passage to support the narrative.
20	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.1	SR	Make an inference about a character in a passage from evidence in an internal monologue.
21	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.2	SR	Determine how specific sentences contribute to the central idea of a passage.
22	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.6	SR	Analyze how specific sentences from a passage reveal a character's point of view.
23	<i>Language</i>	L.7.5	SR	Use context to determine the connotation of a word with multiple meanings in a passage.
24	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.1	SR	Make an inference about how characters from two different passages are similar.
25	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.6	SR	Determine how the points of view of characters in two different passages are similar.
26	<i>Reading</i>	RL.7.2	SR	Identify a common theme of two passages.
27	<i>Language, Writing</i>	L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.3, W.7.2, W.7.4	ES	Write an essay that analyzes the effect that one character has on two other characters in different passages from the same source; cite evidence from both passages and explain how it supports the essay.

* "PBT Item Number" refers to the position of the item on the operational paper-based test. This is the item number that DESE refers to when reporting student results for a PBT item.

** ELA item types are: selected-response (SR), constructed-response (CR), and essay (ES).