

The purpose of these practice test materials is to orient teachers and students to the types of questions on paper-based FSA tests. By using these materials, students will become familiar with the types of items and response formats they may see on a paper-based test. The practice questions and answers are not intended to demonstrate the length of the actual test, nor should student responses be used as an indicator of student performance on the actual test. The practice test is not intended to guide classroom instruction.

**Directions for Answering the
ELA Reading Practice Test Questions**

If you don't understand a question, ask your teacher to explain it to you. Your teacher has the answers to the practice test questions.

To offer students a variety of texts on the FSA ELA Reading tests, authentic and copyrighted stories, poems, and articles appear as they were originally published, as requested by the publisher and/or author. While these real-world examples do not always adhere to strict style conventions and/or grammar rules, inconsistencies among passages should not detract from students' ability to understand and answer questions about the texts.

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Read the passages “Beautiful as the Day” and “Pirate Story” and then answer Numbers 1 through 5.

Passage 1: Beautiful as the Day

by E. Nesbit

- 1 “I say, let’s take our spades and dig in the gravel-pits. We can pretend it’s seaside.”
- 2 “Father says it was once,” Anthea said; “he says there are shells there thousands of years old.”
- 3 So they went. Of course they had been to the edge of the gravel-pit and looked over, but they had not gone down into it for fear father should say they mustn’t play there, and it was the same with the chalk-quarry. The gravel-pit is not really dangerous if you don’t try to climb down the edges, but go the slow safe way round by the road, as if you were a cart.
- 4 Each of the children carried its own spade, and took it in turns to carry the Lamb. He was the baby, and they called him that because “Baa” was the first thing he ever said. They called Anthea “Panther,” which seems silly when you read it, but when you say it it sounds a little like her name.
- 5 The gravel-pit is very large and wide, with grass growing round the edges at the top, and dry stringy wildflowers, purple and yellow. It is like a giant’s washbowl. And there are mounds of gravel, and holes in the sides of the bowl where gravel has been taken out, and high up in the steep sides there are the little holes that are the little front doors of the little bank-martins’¹ little houses.
- 6 The children built a castle, of course, but castle-building is rather poor fun when you have no hope of the swishing tide ever coming in to fill up the moat and wash away the drawbridge, and, at the happy last, to wet everybody up to the waist at least.

¹bank-martins: small birds that make their nests in tunnels dug in clay or sand

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- 7 Cyril wanted to dig out a cave to play smugglers in, but the others thought it might bury them alive, so it ended in all spades going to work to dig a hole through the castle to Australia. These children, you see, believed that the world was round, and that on the other side the little Australian boys and girls were really walking wrong way up, like flies on the ceiling, with their heads hanging down into the air.
- 8 The children dug and they dug and they dug, and their hands got sandy and hot and red, and their faces got damp and shiny. The Lamb had tried to eat the sand, and had cried so hard when he found that it was not, as he had supposed, brown sugar, that he was now tired out, and was lying asleep in a warm fat bunch in the middle of the half-finished castle. This left his brothers and sisters free to work really hard, and the hole that was to come out in Australia soon grew so deep that Jane . . . begged the others to stop.
- 9 "Suppose the bottom of the hole gave way suddenly," said she, "and you tumbled out among the little Australians, all the sand would get in their eyes."
- 10 "Yes," said Robert; "and they would hate us, and throw stones at us, and not let us see the kangaroos, or opossums, . . . or Emu Brand birds, or anything."
- 11 Cyril and Anthea knew that Australia was not quite so near as all that, but they agreed to stop using the spades and to go on with their hands. This was quite easy, because the sand at the bottom of the hole was very soft and fine and dry, like sea-sand. And there were little shells in it.
- 12 "Fancy it having been wet sea here once, all sloppy and shiny," said Jane, "with fishes and conger-eels and coral and mermaids."
- 13 "And masts of ships and wrecked Spanish treasure. I wish we could find a gold doubloon, or something," Cyril said.
- 14 "How did the sea get carried away?" Robert asked.
- 15 "Not in a pail, silly," said his brother.
- 16 "Father says the earth got too hot underneath, as you do in bed sometimes, so it just hunched up its shoulders, and the sea had to slip off, like the blankets do us, and the shoulder was left sticking out, and turned into dry land. Let's go and look for shells; I think that little cave looks likely, and I see something sticking out there like a bit of wrecked ships anchor, and it's beastly hot in the Australian hole."

- 17 The others agreed, but Anthea went on digging. She always liked to finish a thing when she had once begun it. She felt it would be a disgrace to leave that hole without getting through to Australia.

Excerpt from "Beautiful as the Day" by E. Nesbit. In the public domain.

Passage 2: Pirate Story

by Robert Louis Stevenson

- 1 Three of us afloat in the meadow by the swing,
 Three of us aboard in the basket on the lea.
Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring,
 And waves are on the meadow like the waves there are at sea.
- 5 Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat,
 Wary of the weather and steering by a star?
Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the boat,
 To Providence, or Babylon, or off to Malabar?
- 10 Hi! but here's a squadron a-rowing on the sea—
 Cattle on the meadow a-charging with a roar!
Quick, and we'll escape them, they're as mad as they can be,
 The wicket is the harbour and the garden is the shore.

"Pirate Story" by Robert Louis Stevenson. In the public domain.

Now answer Numbers 1 through 5. Base your answers on the passages "Beautiful as the Day" and "Pirate Story."

1. Select the sentence from Passage 1 that supports the idea that the children are imaginative.
- Ⓐ "'Father says it was once,' Anthea said; 'he says there are shells there thousands of years old.'" (paragraph 2)
 - Ⓑ "'Of course they had been to the edge of the gravel-pit and looked over, but they had not gone down into it for fear father should say they mustn't play there, and it was the same with the chalk-quarry.'" (paragraph 3)
 - Ⓒ "'The children dug and they dug and they dug, and their hands got sandy and hot and red, and their faces got damp and shiny.'" (paragraph 8)
 - Ⓓ "'Fancy it having been wet sea here once, all sloppy and shiny,' said Jane, 'with fishes and conger-eels and coral and mermaids.'" (paragraph 12)
2. What is the effect of the personification in paragraph 16?
- Ⓐ It shows that the gravel pit is very large.
 - Ⓑ It explains why the children chose to dig in the gravel pit.
 - Ⓒ It explains why the children's father wants them to avoid the gravel pit.
 - Ⓓ It gives a picture of what caused the sea to disappear from the gravel pit.

3. How does the description of the setting in paragraph 5 affect the overall meaning of Passage 1?

- Ⓐ Describing the gravel pit as “like a giant’s washbowl” creates a sense of adventure.
- Ⓑ Mentioning the shape of the gravel pit explains that there used to be a beach there.
- Ⓒ Using words like “large and wide” to describe the gravel pit shows that the children must be careful.
- Ⓓ Giving the location of the gravel pit helps the reader understand how far the children walk to get there.

4. Select **two** lines from Passage 2 that develop the speaker’s desire for adventure.

- Ⓐ “Three of us afloat in the meadow by the swing,” (line 1)
- Ⓑ “Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring,” (line 3)
- Ⓒ “And waves are on the meadow like the waves there are at sea.” (line 4)
- Ⓓ “Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the boat,” (line 7)
- Ⓔ “Quick, and we’ll escape them, they’re as mad as they can be,” (line 11)

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

Part A

Which sentence states a theme that is shared by both Passage 1 and Passage 2?

- Ⓐ Creativity helps children learn.
- Ⓑ Safety is more important than having fun.
- Ⓒ Imagination makes everyday life more exciting.
- Ⓓ It is important to work at a task until it is complete.

Part B

Select **two** quotations that support the answer in Part A.

- Ⓐ "The gravel-pit is not really dangerous if you don't try to climb down the edges, but go the slow safe way round by the road, as if you were a cart." (Passage 1, paragraph 3)
- Ⓑ "Cyril wanted to dig out a cave to play smugglers in, but the others thought it might bury them alive, so it ended in all spades going to work to dig a hole through the castle to Australia." (Passage 1, paragraph 7)
- Ⓒ "Cyril and Anthea knew that Australia was not quite so near as all that, but they agreed to stop using the spades and to go on with their hands." (Passage 1, paragraph 11)
- Ⓓ "Three of us afloat in the meadow by the swing," (Passage 2, line 1)
- Ⓔ "Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring," (Passage 2, line 3)
- Ⓕ "Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat," (Passage 2, line 5)

Read the passage “What on Earth are Moon Trees?,” listen to the audio clip “In Search of Moon Trees,” and then answer Numbers 6 through 12.

Passage 1: What on Earth are Moon Trees?

by Elaine M. Marconi

- 1 Anything having to do with the moon is still an unfolding mystery. And “Moon Trees” are part of that lunar mystique.
- 2 Are there actually trees on the moon? Not really . . . but tree seeds flown into space by NASA astronaut Stuart Roosa on the Apollo 14 mission in 1971, now grow strong and tall out of the Earth’s soil.
- 3 It all began after Roosa was selected to pilot the Apollo 14 command module. As a former smoke jumper with the U.S. Forest Service, he was contacted by then chief of the Forest Service, Ed Cliff, and asked if he would be willing to take tree seeds into space.
- 4 As his way of paying tribute to the Forest Service, Roosa agreed and packed hundreds of seeds from redwood, loblolly pine, sycamore, Douglas fir and sweet gum trees into his personal travel kit. Roosa and his seeds orbited the moon 34 times while stationed in the command module “Kitty Hawk.”
- 5 Scientists were curious to know if the seeds, after their journey into the microgravity of space, would sprout and look the same as Earth-grown trees. In the early 70s there were very few experiments done in space.
- 6 Unfortunately, after returning to Earth the seed canister burst open during the decontamination process¹ and all the different species of seeds, not only were mixed together, but thought to be no longer useful and able to germinate.
- 7 After being shipped to the Forest Service labs, it was found that most of the seeds did survive and ultimately were planted.
- 8 After 20 years of growing side-by-side with their Earth-bound equivalent as controls, no one could tell the difference.

¹decontamination process: the procedure through which astronauts (and some objects) were cleansed of any potentially harmful material they may have carried back from space

- 9 The seedlings, now known as Moon Trees, were planted across the United States and throughout the world. Many were planted as part of the nation's bicentennial celebration in 1976 and grow at national landmarks, such as the White House, Independence Square in Philadelphia, state capitols and university campuses.
- 10 There also was a "Moon Tree 1976" planting ceremony at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida on June 25 during the center's Bicentennial Expo on Science and Technology. That tree still thrives at the center.
- 11 Second-generation trees, called "half-moon" trees, have been planted from seeds or cuttings from an original Moon Tree and are thriving as well.
- 12 Roosa passed away in December of 1994, but the Moon Trees continue to flourish—a tribute to our first visits to the moon and a memorial to Roosa.
- 13 A moon sycamore graces Roosa's grave at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

"What on Earth are Moon Trees?" by Elaine M. Marconi. In the public domain.

Passage 2 Audio Clip: In Search of Moon Trees



Raise your hand so your test administrator can provide you access to this audio passage.

This audio clip describes what happened to the "Moon Tree" seeds after the return of the Apollo 14 mission. Alan Shepard and Ed Mitchell were astronauts on the mission. Stan Krugman was the U.S. Forest Service research director who chose the seeds that traveled to the moon.

Listen to the audio clip.

"In Search of Moon Trees" by NASA. In the public domain.

Now answer Numbers 6 through 12. Base your answers on the passage “What on Earth are Moon Trees?” and the audio clip “In Search of Moon Trees.”

6. Fill in the circle **before** the sentence from Passage 1 that supports the inference that Stuart Roosa had a positive experience with the U.S. Forest Service.

- 3 Ⓐ It all began after Roosa was selected to pilot the Apollo 14 command module. Ⓑ As a former smoke jumper with the U.S. Forest Service, he was contacted by then chief of the Forest Service, Ed Cliff, and asked if he would be willing to take tree seeds into space.
- 4 Ⓒ As his way of paying tribute to the Forest Service, Roosa agreed and packed hundreds of seeds from redwood, loblolly pine, sycamore, Douglas fir and sweet gum trees into his personal travel kit. Ⓓ Roosa and his seeds orbited the moon 34 times while stationed in the command module “Kitty Hawk.”

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

Part A

How does Passage 1 introduce the importance of the “Moon Trees”?

- Ⓐ by discussing the challenges faced by the scientists after returning
- Ⓑ by listing the types of seeds that were chosen for this experiment
- Ⓒ by presenting how rare experiments in space were at the time
- Ⓓ by describing the process of getting the seeds into space

Part B

Which paragraph from Passage 1 supports the answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ Paragraph 4
- Ⓑ Paragraph 5
- Ⓒ Paragraph 6
- Ⓓ Paragraph 7

8. Read the following sentence from Passage 1.

"After 20 years of growing side-by-side with their Earth-bound equivalent as controls, no one could tell the difference." (paragraph 8)

What does the word equivalent suggest about the two groups of trees?

- Ⓐ They were mixed together.
- Ⓑ They had similar characteristics.
- Ⓒ They were both experimented on.
- Ⓓ They came from the same collection of seeds.

9. Read the following sentence from Passage 1.

"Are there actually trees on the moon?" (paragraph 2)

How does this sentence help develop the author's explanation of "Moon Trees"?

- Ⓐ It introduces the definition of the trees.
- Ⓑ It shows where the trees originally grew.
- Ⓒ It describes the experiments that were done with trees.
- Ⓓ It gives an example of trees that were included in experiments.

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

Part A

What perspective is shared by the author of Passage 1 and the speaker of Passage 2?

- Ⓐ Scientific experiments can be hard to predict.
- Ⓑ The “Moon Trees” were significant to the public.
- Ⓒ It is important for scientists to conduct more experiments in space.
- Ⓓ The U.S. Forest Service did not keep track of the locations of the “Moon Trees.”

Part B

Fill in the circle **before** the sentence from Passage 1 that supports the answer in Part A.

- 7 Ⓐ After being shipped to the Forest Service labs, it was found that most of the seeds did survive and ultimately were planted.
- 8 Ⓑ After 20 years of growing side-by-side with their Earth-bound equivalent as controls, no one could tell the difference.
- 9 Ⓒ The seedlings, now known as Moon Trees, were planted across the United States and throughout the world. . . .

11. How does Passage 2 help develop the ideas in Passage 1?

- Ⓐ by explaining where the “Moon Trees” came from
- Ⓑ by giving details about the growth of the “Moon Trees”
- Ⓒ by giving biographical information about the astronauts on Apollo 14
- Ⓓ by describing how the U.S. Forest Service kept records of its experiments

12. Which **two** sentences from Passage 1 support the claim that “Moon Trees” are part of what makes the moon mysterious?

- Ⓐ “Roosa and his seeds orbited the moon 34 times while stationed in the command module ‘Kitty Hawk.’” (paragraph 4)
- Ⓑ “Scientists were curious to know if the seeds, after their journey into the microgravity of space, would sprout and look the same as Earth-grown trees.” (paragraph 5)
- Ⓒ “In the early 70s there were very few experiments done in space.” (paragraph 5)
- Ⓓ “After being shipped to the Forest Service labs, it was found that most of the seeds did survive and ultimately were planted.” (paragraph 7)
- Ⓔ “Many were planted as part of the nation’s bicentennial celebration in 1976 and grow at national landmarks, such as the White House, Independence Square in Philadelphia, state capitols and university campuses.” (paragraph 9)

FSA ELA Reading Practice Test Questions

Choose the correct word or phrase to fill in each blank in the passage. For each blank, fill in the circle **before** the word or phrase that is correct.

- 13.** When people see a bird land on a branch or telephone wire, they may not think about where that bird is going. Birds are some of the most well-traveled species on Earth. Some _____ [☐ A migretory ☐ B migritory ☐ C migrotory ☐ D migratory] birds, like the painted bunting, travel as little as a few hundred miles per year. Others, like the Arctic tern, travel up to 22,000 miles annually.
- 14.** Birds do not make these long and tiring journeys just to avoid cold weather. They travel for food, which can be hard to find in winter. Some birds even fly to another hemisphere to make sure they'll have enough to eat. Most do not return north until the spring or summer, when _____ [☐ A food is ☐ B winter is ☐ C that is ☐ D it is] much more abundant. That is when there are new caterpillars, insects, and tree blossoms to eat.
- 15.** Birds may fly different distances and at a variety of speeds. The red knot spends spring and summer in northern _____ [☐ A Canada, where its breeding grounds are located ☐ B Canada where its breeding grounds are located, ☐ C Canada, where its breeding grounds are located, ☐ D Canada where its breeding grounds are located] and winters as far south as the southern tip of South America. It is a shore bird and can fly up to 60 miles an hour. The _____ [☐ A wood thrush, a type of songbird ☐ B wood thrush, a type of songbird, ☐ C wood thrush a type of songbird ☐ D wood thrush a type of songbird,] travels from Central America to the Mid-Atlantic States, such as Maryland and Virginia. Songbirds fly at a speed of about 10–30 miles per hour.



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