

(Q J O L V K ,

Practice Assessment

ENGLISH I

could tell stories about the past and laugh and sing. I imagined my soldier had sacrificed himself for the others, so they could escape. I was sure my soldier was a hero and a true friend. He had to be brave to be outside in the tall weeds by himself for so long, never moving, never shivering, never crying. Even as his paint faded and his gun was lost, he didn't lose faith. Maybe he knew that I'd find him one day. Why be scared when you know you are going to be saved? I imagined the rain falling on him, and the snow, and the bugs crawling over him. And still he didn't move. Had he been there for weeks? Months? Years? How long had he waited for me to show up? How had he known I would come? I didn't know, but I was glad he waited. I'd never saved anyone before, and the responsibility was huge.

- 4 Now look over there, on the other side of my yard, past the small yellow bush, and you'll see the edge of a forest that divides our property from the new development going up across the way. I was afraid my soldier wouldn't like being cooped up in my pocket all day, so I built him a castle. I spent hours and hours building bridges and turrets and tunnels that snaked in and out of the ever-growing fortress of twigs at the edge of this forest. A miniature world rose here, all for my single, lonely, faded soldier, who had nothing in the world except me.

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1 Which word has the same connotation as **steadfast** as it is used in paragraph 3?

" Unwavering

Still

\$ Unresponsive

% Shallow

2 Based on what the narrator imagines, which detail from paragraph 3 supports the key idea that if the soldier were a real person, he would have the qualities to cope with real-life problems?

" The soldier being alone outside for a long time

The stillness of the soldier in cold and wet conditions

\$ The faded paint on the soldier and his missing weapon

% The soldier believing that he would one day be found

- 3 Decide whether each detail develops the theme that relationships come with obligations.

Select ONE correct answer in each row.

	Develops the Theme	Does Not Develop the Theme
Although the soldier is covered in dirt, the narrator immediately treasures him.	"	#
Contemplating the mystery of the soldier's past makes the narrator feel dizzy.	"	#
The narrator imagines the soldier's friends escape.	"	#
The narrator wonders whether the soldier has been there for weeks.	"	#
Because the narrator has never saved anyone before, he takes the responsibility seriously.	"	#

4 Read this sentence from paragraph 4.

A miniature world rose here, all for my single, lonely, faded soldier, who had nothing in the world except me.

What does this sentence convey about the narrator?

- " He intends to search for another soldier to add to the world he created.
- # He worries about what will happen to the soldier in the future.
- \$ He resents the soldier because he believes the soldier has grown too needy.
- % He feels a strong sense of responsibility to the soldier he discovered.

5 What is the most likely reason the author shifts from a descriptive to a chronological structure in paragraphs 1 and 2?

- " To emphasize that the narrator's feelings about the discovery begin to change
- # To create suspense by gradually revealing details about the narrator's discovery
- \$ To describe why the narrator decided to dig in the place the discovery was made
- % To explain how the narrator came to face a conflict as a result of making the discovery

- 6 Which statement best explains the irony in paragraphs 2 and 3?
- " The narrator discovers the soldier in a location that he has already explored many times before.
 - # The narrator fails to recognize the significance of the letters stamped into the base of the soldier.
 - \$ The narrator hates that the soldier was buried for so long, but then he keeps it hidden in his own pocket.
 - % The narrator digs up the soldier completely covered in mud, which enhances his estimation of its value.
-

- 7 Which quotation from the story shows that the narrator is recalling a time from earlier in childhood?
- " over there is the big tree that I now know is going to die in a few years and fall down (paragraph 1)
 - # Come and take a closer look with me. (paragraph 1)
 - \$ I imagined the rain falling on him, and the snow, and the bugs crawling over him. (paragraph 3)
 - % I spent hours and hours building (paragraph 4)

8 Read these quotations from the excerpt.

The ground here is muddy and covered in weeds, and
ZKHQ , ¿ UVW PRYHG LQWR WKLW KR XVH , SOD\HG KHUH
(paragraph 1)

Kneel down in the weeds here. This is exactly where I
was when I found him. I was kneeling, just like you are
now, digging and playing, when I made a most incredible
discovery. (paragraph 2)

How does the author's use of descriptive language in these quotations affect the reader?

- " It captures the narrator's emotional reaction to the discovery.
- # It suggests that the backyard is an ideal place to play.
- \$ It places the reader in the moment with the narrator.
- % It provides hints to the reader about the narrator's later actions.

9 How does the author's use of questions in paragraph 3 contribute to the tone of the story?

- " The questions that have no answer contribute to the introspective tone.
- # The questions about the narrator's arrival contribute to the cooperative tone.
- \$ The questions about the soldier's lack of fear contribute to the triumphant tone.
- % The questions that relate to passing time contribute to the urgent tone.

in action. Manufactured toys do not give the mind the same freedom to imagine as do common objects that do not come with expectations or history.

- 4 A child engaged in open-ended play is making more choices than a child whose play and activities are directed. Learning to make choices and creating opportunities to succeed in these choices are essential skills for adults. The Association for Childhood Education International, in their statement on creative thought, focused on the importance of having a workforce of people capable of being more than parts in a machine. Productive adults can think for themselves, make choices, and solve problems. Open-ended play supports and develops problem-solving thinking.

Promoting Physical Health

- 5 Open-ended play promotes physical development and good health. This is especially true when children are playing outdoors where they can run, jump, and climb. Both open-ended and organized activities can help children become more confident while developing motor skills and general fitness. However, open-ended active play also has the advantage of being child directed. Kids are making the decisions, determining the rules, and learning to negotiate with their peers.

The Value of Mistakes

- 6 Obviously, adult-directed activities are more controlled and more predictable, and often shield children from making mistakes. Open-ended play allows children to follow their interests and to make mistakes. With parents playing a more passive role, children are responsible for these mistakes. This allows for more chances to solve problems and creates opportunities for children to be successful, building confidence in their ability to reason.

The Value of Boredom

- 7 Kids do not always immediately choose open-ended play when they are provided with the time for it. Sometimes children get bored. However, boredom is not necessarily a bad thing—it can be a useful state of mind. A bored child must think her way out of boredom. She must observe her surroundings, consider her options, and then decide for herself what will make her feel

better. According to education professor Michael Patte, kids can learn to find happiness when fighting boredom.

- 8 The reality of modern life is that much of children's lives will be structured. But it does not all have to be, nor should it be. When parents, teachers, and caregivers take a step back, they open the door wider for children to create and learn.



13 Which sentence best states the author’s claim about open-ended play?

- " The outcome of open-ended play varies according to the choices that children make.
 - # Open-ended play should begin with children finding the right toy to fit the chosen activity.
 - \$ Children who engage in open-ended play will frequently make mistakes.
 - % Children should be given the freedom to engage in open-ended play so that they can imagine and problem solve.
-

14 What is the most likely reason the author uses the heading “Loose Parts” for paragraph 2?

- " To contrast the main features of open-ended play and traditional play
- # To show the creative process involved in open-ended play
- \$ To emphasize the variety of objects that can be used during open-ended play
- % To introduce key features of the toys used during open-ended play

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

Part A

Read the next two selections. Then answer the questions.

The Cowboy's Home on Wheels

by LeeAnn Blankenship

- 1 Texas rancher Charles Goodnight had a problem. He needed skilled cowboys to drive his herd of two thousand longhorn cattle to New Mexico to be sold. He couldn't offer high wages. He couldn't promise easy jobs or even nice weather. But he decided that decent, warm meals might entice men to work for him.
- 2 In the mid- to late 1800s, cattle drives sometimes took three to four months, and once the drive began, there were no stores for hundreds of miles. All the food and supplies needed for the trip were carried on two-wheeled carts. Usually, the cowboy's food was boring and unappetizing.
- 3 Goodnight went to work and solved the problem. His invention of a mobile kitchen, the chuck wagon, got its name from the cowboy word for food, "chuck."
- 4 Goodnight took a surplus Army wagon and rebuilt it with chuck wa272.59 fro72.59 cowboTd (, got its98 91night to,)jis2r

- 7 The wagon also had a canvas top and room not only for bulky food items but also for extra clothing and bedrolls.
- 8 The first chuck wagon was an instant success. Eighteen cowhands joined Goodnight and his partner, Oliver Loving, to drive the cattle to New Mexico for a handsome profit. The route they took—later called the Goodnight-Loving Trail—became one of the most heavily used cattle trails in the Southwest.
- 9 The chuck wagon soon was the backbone of all successful cattle drives. Other ranchers created their own moving kitchens, and eventually the Studebaker Company produced chuck wagons that sold for \$75 to \$100 apiece, about [\$1,900 to

occasional pie, stewed tomatoes sweetened with sugar, or dried fruit such as apples, peaches, or prunes.

- 16 The need for long drives lessened by the 1890s, when railroads started running through cattle country. By then, Charles Goodnight's chuck wagon had found its place in history and in the hearts of thousands.

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The U-S-U Range

A traditional American cowboy ballad

O come cowboys and listen to my song,

You work hard all day and come in at night,
And turn your horse loose, for they say it's all right,
25 And set down to supper and begin to complain
Of the chuck that you eat on the U-S-U range.

The grub that you get is beans and cold rice
And U-S-U steak cooked up very nice;
And if you don't like that you needn't complain,
30 For that's what you get on the U-S-U range.

Now, kind friends, I must leave you, I no longer can remain,
I hope I have pleased you and given you no pain.
But when I am gone, don't think me strange,
For I have been a cow-puncher ² on the U-S-U range.

"The U-S-U Range"—Public Domain

²Cow-puncher is another word for cowboy.

- 18 Which sentence about the article “The Cowboy’s Home on Wheels” best represents the thesis of the article?
- " Chuck wagons stopped being useful once cattle drives no longer occurred.
 - # Chuck wagons were places where men gathered for companionship.
 - \$ Chuck wagons improved living conditions on cattle drives.
 - % Chuck wagons were important ways for companies to make money.
-

- 19 Based on paragraph 1 of the article “The Cowboy’s Home on Wheels,” the reader can infer that ranchers —
- " required cowboys only once every year for cattle drives
 - # tended to lose money driving their cattle to market
 - \$ often drove the cattle without the help of others
 - % struggled to get cowboys to work for them on cattle drives
-

21 In paragraph 1 of the article “The Cowboy’s Home on Wheels,” what does the word entice mean?

" To focus

To require

\$ To treat

% To attract

22 What is the most likely reason the author includes the information in paragraph 2 of the article “The Cowboy’s Home on Wheels”?

" To suggest that only those with few other options became cowboys

To explain the challenges that had to be overcome by Goodnight

\$ To suggest that cattle drives were longer than they needed to be

% To explain why Goodnight could only offer cowboys low wages



A large rectangular box containing 25 horizontal lines for writing.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Elijah wrote the following paper to present his argument for learning to play a musical instrument. Read Elijah's paper and look for revisions he needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.

The Benefits of Learning to Play a Musical Instrument

(1) People play musical instruments to express themselves, to relax, or even to impress friends and family. (2) As you can see, there are many reasons to learn to play a musical instrument.

(3) First, learning to play an instrument can significantly speed up the amount of time it takes an individual to react to a stimulus or event. (4) According to a study published in the scientific journal *Brain and Cognition*, musicians had faster reaction times than non-musicians. (5) Through years of practice with their instruments, musicians have trained their mind to respond quickly to the next note on the page. (6) They have also learned to continually adjust their playing to blend in with a band or orchestra. (7) Participating in sports, driving a car, and response to emergency situations can all benefit from these sharpened reaction times.

(8) Musicians have also been found to have better memory than non-musicians. (9) Researchers at the Chinese University of Hong Kong conducted a study. (10) It showed that students who were involved in their school's orchestra for one to five years significantly outperformed students with no musical training when it came to word recall. (11) The scientists believe that the process of learning to play an instrument exercises the same region of the brain that humans use for memory. (12) When people are training to become musicians, they are also training their memory. (13) But the benefits of playing an instrument don't stop with reaction times and memory. (14) Playing an instrument can also build brain power.

(15) When comparing the brains of amateur musicians, professional musicians, and non-musicians, researchers found that the amount of "gray matter" in the brain increases with musical ability. (16) The study found that professional musicians have the most gray matter, as reported in *The Journal of Neuroscience*. (17) Amateur musicians have the second most amount of gray matter, and non-musicians

information. (19) The amount present in the brain is believed to be an indicator of intelligence.

(20) While there are many benefits to learning to play an instrument, some people may never try. (21) One of the main barriers is the misconception that playing a musical instrument is too costly. (22) However, there are inexpensive ways to be introduced to an instrument. (23) For example, students entering middle school might choose to join their school's band or orchestra. (24) Instruments can be borrowed or rented for a nominal fee, and consistent instruction is free. (25) Furthermore, people today can find free lessons on the internet for almost any instrument.

(26) When learning a new instrument, some people become sad at their lack of progress and give up. (27) It is true that learning something new takes dedication and patience. (28) The rewards, however, are great for those who persevere. (29) With the right plan and the appropriate investment of time, anyone can learn to play an instrument. (30) Those who do will benefit from the process and develop a skill they can enjoy for many years to come.





(19) After hours of tossing and turning in the uncomfortable confines of the back seat, Becca was startled awake by her mother's excited proclamation: "We're heeere!" (20) Becca groggily raised her head and then bolted upright. (21) They were just inside Big Bend National Park, yet she could've sworn her dad had missed a turn and erroneously navigated to Colorado. (22) Glorious, tall, colorful mountains surrounded them at every bend as they meandered down a slow, winding road to the lodge where they would stay. (23) After rounding a hairpin turn, they confronted an incredible vista of a deep canyon overshadowed by steep, rocky cliffs. (24) Gazing wide-eyed into the canyon, Becca suddenly spotted a large animal crouched on a rock ledge. (25) "Dad, look!" she yelled.

(26) After a while Becca thought about the opinions her friend Shayla had shared with her. (27) "Whooooaaa, Rabbit, would you look at that? (28) You spotted a mountain lion! (29) Amazing." (30) The three of them gaped in astonishment at the majestic cat serenely surveying his domain. (31) Becca could barely speak.

(32) "Uh, Mom, Dad," Becca finally uttered as the cat slunk off into some tall brush. (33) "I didn't know Big Bend was so beautiful or that mountain lions resided here. (34) I can hardly believe what I am seeing!"

(35) "Well, Becca," her dad said, "you have to keep your mind open to things. (36) You'll often be surprised!"

(37) "The lodge looks so nice," Becca's mom added, "and this will be a vacation to remember. (38) This park is home to a tremendous variety of wildlife, including black bears!"

(39) Becca didn't know how to answer. (40) "Well, what are we waiting for? (41) Let's hurry to the lodge and put our things away so we can start exploring! (42) I'm so excited!"

(43) Becca's parents smiled knowingly. (44) They had been confident all along that their Rabbit would feel right at home in this environment of stunning natural beauty and wildlife.

39 How should Arya revise sentence 5 to avoid repeating ideas?

- " As the family prepared to leave for their trip one early morning, contrasting sharply with her apprehensiveness were the necessary things they did to get ready and Becca's parents' bubbly enthusiasm.
 - # As the family prepared to leave for their trip one early morning, Becca's parents' bubbly enthusiasm contrasted sharply with her apprehensiveness.
 - \$ As the family prepared to leave for their trip one early morning, they did the necessary things to get ready that contrasted sharply with Becca's parents' bubbly enthusiasm and her apprehensiveness.
 - % As the family prepared and got ready to leave for their trip one early morning, Becca's apprehensiveness and her parents' bubbly enthusiasm contrasted.
-

40 What revision, if any, is needed in sentence 7?

- " Becca had always loved animals because one silly encounter, being with a rabbit in the backyard, had made an enormous impression on her family.
- # Becca had always loved animals and with a rabbit in the backyard, one silly encounter had made an enormous impression on her family.
- \$ Becca had always loved animals, but one silly encounter had made an enormous impression on her family with a rabbit in the backyard.
- % No change is needed.

41 Arya has included a sentence in the fourth paragraph (sentences 12–15) that repeats information. Which sentence should be removed from this paragraph?

" Sentence 12

Sentence 13

\$ Sentence 14

% Sentence 15

42 What is the most effective way to combine sentences 17 and 18?

" After climbing reluctantly into the back seat, she rested her head against a pillow and promptly fell into a deep slumber.

She climbed reluctantly into the back seat, and she rested her head against a pillow, and she promptly fell into a deep slumber.

\$ As she climbed reluctantly into the back seat, she rested her head against a pillow that promptly fell into a deep slumber.

% She climbed reluctantly into the back seat, she rested her head against a pillow and promptly fell into a deep slumber.

43 Which sentence can replace sentence 26 and improve the transition between the sixth paragraph (sentences 19–25) and the seventh paragraph (sentences 26–31)?

" Becca thought that her dad had not heard her.

Becca's dad smiled and slowed the car to a halt.

\$ Becca didn't know where her dad was going.

% Becca's dad appeared to be somewhat confused.

44 Arya wants a more effective topic sentence for the eleventh paragraph (sentences 39–42). Which sentence should replace sentence 39?

" Becca was anxious to get into the lodge.

Becca looked hesitant.

\$ Becca knew very little about bears.

% Becca was finally convinced.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Rohan is writing a paper to tell about a famous hiking trail. Read these paragraphs from the body of Rohan's paper and look for corrections he needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.

Thru-Hiking the Pacific Crest Trail

(1) This rugged hike spans 2,650 miles and goes through 26 national forests and seven national parks. (2) Hikers who complete the entire trail pass through varied types of wilderness, including scrubby desert lands, forested hills, and jagged peaks. (3) As they hike, they experience a range of elevations from just above sea level to 13,150 feet at the trail's highest point.

(4) The PCT dates back to 1932. (5) At that time a hiker named Clinton C. Clarke dreams of linking existing trails to make one long trail. (6) It would stretch all the way from Mexico to Canada. (7) Clarke mobilized different groups, including youth scouts and outdoor clubs. (8) Together they mapped the route and constructed the trails. (9) The project got a boost when President Lyndon B. Johnson designated the PCT as one, of two national trails in 1968. (10) Despite this, the task was so big that the PCT was not officially completed until 1993.

(11) In recent years the number of thru-hikers on the PCT have skyrocketed. (12) This may be due to a best-selling book and subsequent movie in which a woman described her experiences hiking the trail. (13) More people seem willing to brave the potential obstacles, which include loneliness, treacherous weather, and wild-animal encounters.

49 What change needs to be made in sentence 2?

" Insert a comma after Hikers

Change who to that

\$ Change pass pass \$ Change what changes to pass

52 What change, if any, is needed in sentence 11?

" Change recent to resent

Insert a comma after thru-hikers

\$ Change have skyrocketed to has skyrocketed

% No change is needed.



STAAR

PRACTICE

