
II. English Language Arts Retest

A. Composition

B. Language and Literature

English Language Arts Retest

A. Composition

The Fall 2002 Grade 10 MCAS English Language Arts Composition Retest was based on the learning standards of the Composition strand of the Massachusetts *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework* (2001).

Curriculum Framework Learning Standards

The learning standards for the Composition strand are listed below and are directly quoted from the *Framework*; applicable *Framework* page numbers are shown in parentheses.

Composition (*Framework*, pp. 72–83)

Learning Standard 19

Students will write with a clear focus, coherent organization, and sufficient detail.

Learning Standard 20

Students will write for different audiences and purposes.

Learning Standard 21

Students will demonstrate improvement in organization, content, paragraph development, level of detail, style, tone, and word choice (diction) in their compositions after revising them.

Learning Standard 22

Students will use knowledge of standard English conventions in their writing, revising, and editing.

MCAS Reporting Category

In the *Test Item Analysis Report*, ELA Composition Retest results are reported under the MCAS reporting category of Composition.

MCAS Fall 2002 Common Test Items

ELA Composition Retest

Test Sessions

MCAS ELA Composition Retest Student Test Booklets included 2 separate test sessions, administered on the same day with a short break between sessions. During the first session, each student wrote a first draft of a composition in response to the writing prompt on the next page. During the second session, each student revised his/her first draft and submitted his/her second draft for scoring.

Reference Materials and Tools

At least one dictionary per classroom was provided for student use during ELA Composition Retest sessions. No other reference materials or tools were allowed during either ELA Composition Retest session.

Cross-Reference Information

The shaded bar following the writing prompt indicates this item's MCAS reporting category and which *Framework* learning standards it assesses.

English Language Arts Retest

Retest Writing Prompt

WRITING PROMPT

In literature as in life, conflicts can be resolved in unexpected ways.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, identify a conflict that ends unexpectedly. In a well-developed composition, describe a conflict that ends unexpectedly and explain why this resolution is unexpected.

*Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Writing Prompt: **Composition/Learning Standards 19-22***

English Language Arts Retest

B. Language and Literature

The Fall 2002 MCAS English Language Arts Language and Literature Retest was based on the learning standards of two content strands of the Massachusetts *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework* (2001):

- Language
- Literature

Curriculum Framework Learning Standards

The learning standards for the Language and Literature strands are listed below and are directly quoted from the *Framework*; applicable *Framework* page numbers are shown in parentheses.

Language (*Framework*, pp. 19–26)

Learning Standard 4

Students will understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly in reading and writing.

Learning Standard 5

Students will analyze standard English grammar and usage and recognize how its vocabulary has developed and been influenced by other languages.

Learning Standard 6

Students will describe, analyze, and use appropriately formal and informal English.

Literature (*Framework*, pp. 35–64)

Learning Standard 8

Students will identify the basic facts and main ideas in a text and use them as the basis for interpretation.

Learning Standard 9

Students will deepen their understanding of a literary or non-literary work by relating it to its contemporary context or historical background.

Learning Standard 10

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the characteristics of different genres.

Learning Standard 11

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of theme in a literary work and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Learning Standard 12

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Learning Standard 13

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the purpose, structure, and elements of nonfiction or informational materials and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Learning Standard 14

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the theme, structure, and elements of poetry and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Learning Standard 15

Students will identify and analyze how an author's words appeal to the senses, create imagery, suggest mood, and set tone and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Learning Standard 16

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of myths, traditional narratives, and classical literature and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Learning Standard 17

Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of drama and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

MCAS Reporting Categories

In the *Test Item Analysis Report*, ELA Language and Literature Retest results are reported under the following two MCAS reporting categories:

- Language
- Literature

MCAS Fall 2002 Common Test Items

ELA Language and Literature Retest

Test Sessions

MCAS ELA Language and Literature Retest Student Test Booklets included 3 separate test sessions. Each session included selected readings, followed by multiple-choice and open-response questions.

Reference Materials and Tools

No reference materials or tools were allowed during any ELA Language and Literature Retest session.

Cross-Reference Information

The shaded bar underneath each item indicates the item's MCAS reporting category and which *Framework* learning standard it assesses.

English Language Arts Retest

Session 1, Reading Selection #1

Today we take salt for granted. However, ancient cultures viewed salt as a precious commodity. In the following selection, which contains excerpts from the January 1999 issue of Smithsonian magazine, Steve Kemper discusses the important role salt has played throughout history. Read the selection below and use information from it to answer the questions that follow.

S A L T

We Can't Live Without It.

Salt runs through our language, our history and our veins.

- 1 Not worth his salt. Rub salt in a wound. True to his salt. Salt an invoice. With a grain of salt. Salty wit, salty personality, salty dog. “Salad,” “salsa,” “salami”—there’s salt at the root of those words. In ancient Rome, soldiers were paid in salt—a *salarium* or salary.
- 2 Salt runs through our language in a thick vein—and no wonder, since it runs the same way through history, religion, folktales, superstitions, geology, physiology, and nearly every aspect of daily living, from cosmetics and clothing to gasoline and dinner. For some of us, sprinkling salt on food is as natural as breathing, an instinct that merits no attention whatsoever. And yet salt—sodium chloride (NaCl)—is essential to the health of the planet and every living creature on it.
- 3 The human need for salt has shaped history. Civilizations rose in Africa, China, India and the Middle East around rich salt deposits. The appetite for salt pushed Phoenician trade ships into the Mediterranean and camel caravans into the deserts of Africa and across the Euphrates Valley. Salt . . . at times was traded at a value twice that of gold. Marco Polo discovered that Tibetans used salt cakes stamped with the imperial seal of the great Kublai Khan as money.
* * *
- 4 . . . Humans have collected and made salt since prehistoric times. Those who lived near oceans gathered saline crust from shore rocks and dry tidal pools. With other predators, they hunted the animals drawn to salt springs and licks, and no doubt sought salt at such places themselves. A salty appetite has often been the mother of invention, some of it dubious. The ancient Chinese, for instance, boiled seaweed and evaporated the juice. When Julius Caesar invaded Britain in 55 B.C. he found the natives making salt by pouring brine over hot sticks and scraping off the leftover glaze, a practice that helped confirm them in his mind as barbarians. Caesar always traveled with “salinators” who were skilled at making salt for his troops. Those experts showed the loutish Brits how to boil brine, as the Romans had been doing for centuries.
* * *
- 5 Salt became one of the world’s first commodities not only because people hungered for it, but because of its crucial role in religion. Homer called it divine, and Plato described it as a “substance dear to the gods.” The Israelites were required to include salt with all offerings; ancient Jewish temples included a salt chamber. For hundreds of years, Roman Catholic priests would place a pinch of salt on a baby’s tongue during baptism and say, “Receive the salt of wisdom.” The biblical covenant of salt was a solemn bond of lifelong loyalty, permanent and unbreakable.

English Language Arts Retest

- 6 Salt’s association with longevity spans cultures and probably stems from the mineral’s preservative powers. Jews and Christians, among others, shared the custom of rubbing newborn infants with salt, a symbol of long life (a treatment echoed in the salt rubs popular at modern spas). Arabs made peace and declared friendship with the phrase “There is salt between us,” and considered it treacherous to harm someone with whom they had shared salt. To ensure a long marriage, a Swiss groom would put bread in one pocket and salt in the other, and a German bride would put salt in her shoe. On the other hand, when Lot’s wife disobeyed God and looked back at the destruction of Sodom, she petrified into salt. And spilling salt brings bad luck, a superstition immortalized in Leonardo da Vinci’s painting *The Last Supper*, where Judas has knocked over the saltcellar.*

**saltcellar* — a small dish for holding and dispensing salt

“Salt of the Earth,” © Steve Kemper, published in *Smithsonian* magazine, January 1999. Reprinted by permission of the author.

English Language Arts Retest

Session 1, Multiple-Choice Questions

- The **main** purpose of this selection is to
- A. inform the reader of the health benefits of salt.
 - ✓ B. reveal how important salt has been to people historically.
 - C. highlight the connection between salt and religion.
 - D. explain the influence of the word *salt* on the English language.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 1: Literature/Learning Standard 10

- In paragraph 1, which of the following does the author use to create an effect?
- A. run-on sentences
 - B. visual imagery
 - C. unconventional spelling
 - ✓ D. sentence fragments

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 2: Literature/Learning Standard 15

- What is the purpose of paragraph 1?
- A. to explain how salt is collected and made
 - B. to emphasize the use of salt in religious practices
 - C. to give the history of salt's importance in various cultures
 - ✓ D. to call attention to the use of the word *salt* in our language

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 3: Literature/Learning Standard 13

English Language Arts Retest

- In the beginning of paragraph 2, the author uses a metaphor to suggest that
- A. people use too much salt in their diets.
 - B. the widespread use of salt is surprising.
 - ✓ C. salt is an essential part of everyone's life.
 - D. the world should discover more uses for salt.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 4: Literature/Learning Standard 15

- The fact that Tibetans used salt cakes stamped with Kublai Khan's imperial seal supports the idea that salt
- A. enhanced food.
 - ✓ B. had great value.
 - C. was easy to produce.
 - D. was consumed only by royalty.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 5: Literature/Learning Standard 8

- What does the word *longevity* **most likely** mean as it is used in paragraph 6?
- ✓ A. duration of life
 - B. cultural practice
 - C. nutritional benefits
 - D. trade among nations

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 6: Language/Learning Standard 4

English Language Arts Retest

Session 1, Open-Response Question

- 7 Explain how salt has been important in the world's history, culture, and religion. Give examples of each. Use relevant and specific information from the excerpt to support your answer.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 7: Literature/Learning Standard 8

English Language Arts Retest

Session 1, Reading Selection #2

Some childhood memories stay with us forever. Eudora Welty grew up in Jackson, Mississippi in the early 1900s. In The Little Store, she remembers a special place from her childhood. Read The Little Store and use information from it to answer the questions that follow.

THE LITTLE STORE

by Eudora Welty

- 1 **O**ur Little Store rose right up from the sidewalk; standing in a street of family houses, it alone hadn't any yard in front, any tree or flower bed. It was a plain frame building covered over with brick. Above the door, a little railed porch ran across on an upstairs level and four windows with shades were looking out. But I didn't catch on to those.
- 2 Running in out of the sun, you met what seemed total obscurity inside. There were almost tangible smells—licorice recently sucked in a child's cheek, dill pickle brine that had leaked through a paper sack in a fresh trail across the wooden floor, ammonia-loaded ice that had been hoisted from wet croker sacks and slammed into the icebox with its sweet butter at the door, and perhaps the smell of still untrapped mice.
- 3 Then through the motes of cracker dust, cornmeal dust, the Gold Dust of the Gold Dust Twins that the floor had been swept out with, the realities emerged. Shelves climbed to high reach all the way around, set out with not too much of any one thing but a lot of things—lard, molasses, vinegar, starch, matches, kerosene, Octagon soap (about a year's worth of octagon-shaped coupons cut out and saved brought a signet ring addressed to you in the mail). It was up to you to remember what you came for, while your eye traveled from cans of sardines to tin whistles to ice cream salt to harmonicas to flypaper (over your head, batting around on a thread beneath the blades of the ceiling fan, stuck with its testimonial catch).
- 4 Its confusion may have been in the eye of its beholder. Enchantment is cast upon you by all those things you weren't supposed to have need for, to lure you close to wooden tops you'd outgrown, boys' marbles and agates in little net pouches, small rubber balls that wouldn't bounce straight, frail, frazzly kite string, clay bubble pipes that would snap off in your teeth, the stiffest scissors. You could contemplate those long narrow boxes of sparklers gathering dust while you waited for it to be the Fourth of July or Christmas, and noisemakers in the shape of tin frogs for somebody's birthday party you hadn't been invited to yet, and see that they were all marvelous.
- 5 You might not have even looked for Mr. Sessions when he came around his store cheese (as big as a doll's house) and in front of the

English Language Arts Retest

counter looking for you. When you'd finally asked him for, and received from him in its paper bag, whatever single thing it was that you had been sent for, the nickel that was left over was yours to spend.

- 6 Down at a child's eye level, inside those glass jars with mouths in their sides through which the grocer could run his scoop or a child's hand might be invited to reach for a choice, were wine-balls, all-day suckers, gumdrops, peppermints. Making a row under the glass of a counter were the Tootsie Rolls, Hershey bars, Goo Goo Clusters, Baby Ruths. And whatever was the name of those pastilles that came stacked in a cardboard cylinder with a cardboard lid? They were thin and dry, about the size of tiddledy-winks, and in the shape of twisted rosettes. A kind of chocolate dust came out with them when you shook them out in your hand. Were they chocolate? I'd say, rather, they were brown. They didn't taste of anything at all, unless it was wood. Their attraction was the number you got for a nickel.
- 7 Making up your mind, you circled the store around and around, around the pickle barrel, around the tower of Crackerjack boxes; Mr. Sessions had built it for us himself on top of a packing case like a house of cards.
- 8 If it seemed too hot for Crackerjacks, I might get a cold drink. Mr. Sessions might have already stationed himself by the cold-drinks barrel, like a mind reader. Deep in ice water that looked black as ink, murky shapes—that would come up as Coca-Colas, Orange Crushes, and various flavors of pop—were all swimming around together. When you gave the word, Mr. Sessions plunged his bare arm in to the elbow and fished out your choice, first try. I favored a locally bottled concoction called Lake's Celery. (What else could it be called? It was made by a Mr. Lake out of celery. It was a popular drink here for years but was not known universally, as I found out when I arrived in New York and ordered one in the Astor bar.) You drank on the premises, with feet set wide apart to miss the drip, and gave him back his bottle and your nickel.
- 9 But he didn't hurry you off. A standing scales was by the door, with a stack of iron weights and a brass slide on the balance arm, that would weigh you up to three hundred pounds. Mr. Sessions, whose hands were gentle and smelled of carbolic, would lift you up and set your feet on the platform, hold your loaf of bread for you, and taking his time while you stood still for him, he would make certain of what you weighed today. He could even remember what you weighed the last time, so you could subtract and announce how much you'd gained. That was goodbye.

Reprinted by the permission of Russell and Volkening as agents for the author. Copyright © 1975 by Eudora Welty.

English Language Arts Retest

Session 1, Multiple-Choice Questions

- The word *tangible* is based on the Latin word *tangere*, meaning “to touch.” In paragraph 2, how does the author describe “tangible smells”?
- A. by letting the scent of objects stay hidden
 - B. by suggesting that the sun weakens an object’s natural smell
 - C. by concentrating on sweet-smelling items
 - ✓ D. by associating a smell with an action

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 8: *Literature/Learning Standard 15*

- In paragraph 3, what does the author mean when she writes, “It was up to you to remember what you came for”?
- A. The author has a hard time remembering lists.
 - ✓ B. The many different items in the store are distracting.
 - C. The store would usually not have the item you came for.
 - D. Mr. Sessions would try to sell you items you did not need.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 9: *Literature/Learning Standard 13*

- In paragraph 4, the author uses words such as *enchantment*, *lure*, and *marvelous* in order to
- ✓ A. convey her fascination with the store.
 - B. contrast the store with her mother’s kitchen at home.
 - C. foreshadow the fact that she plans to run her own store.
 - D. refer to the variety of forgotten products.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 10: *Literature/Learning Standard 15*

English Language Arts Retest

In paragraph 8, the author indicates that Mr. Sessions stood beside the cold-drinks barrel because

- A. he knew she wanted a drink.
B. he was checking inventory.
C. he was thirsty himself.
D. he wanted to restock the barrel.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 11: *Literature/Learning Standard 8*

According to the selection, why does the author buy the pastilles?

- A. She likes the way they taste.
B. They are her friend's favorite candy.
 C. She gets more for her money.
D. They can be used in games of tiddledy-winks.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 12: *Literature/Learning Standard 8*

Which definition **most closely** matches the meaning of *slide* as it is used in paragraph 9?

- A. a flat piece of glass on which an object is mounted for microscopic examination
 B. a movable piece that slips smoothly back and forth along another part
C. the descent of earth, rock, or snow down a mountainside
D. a piece of playground equipment with a slippery surface for rapid downward motion

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 13: *Language/Learning Standard 4*

English Language Arts Retest

Session 2, Reading Selection #1

*What will you do when you grow up? In this excerpt from *Life on the Mississippi*, written in 1883, Mark Twain describes what boys in his town want to do when they grow up. Read the excerpt below, and use the information from it to answer the questions that follow.*

The Boys' Ambition

from *Life on the Mississippi*

by Mark Twain

1 My father was a justice of the peace, and I supposed he possessed the power of life and death
2 over all men and could hang anybody that offended him. This was distinction enough for me as a
3 general thing; but the desire to be a steamboatman kept intruding, nevertheless. I first wanted to be a
4 cabin-boy, so that I could come out with a white apron on and shake a table-cloth over the side,
5 where all my old comrades¹ could see me; later I thought I would rather be the deck-hand who stood
6 on the end of the stage-plank with the coil of rope in his hand, because he was particularly
7 conspicuous. But these were only day-dreams,—they were too heavenly to be contemplated as real
8 possibilities. By and by one of our boys went away. He was not heard of for a long time. At last he
9 turned up as apprentice engineer or “striker” on a steamboat. This thing shook the bottom out of all
10 my Sunday-school teachings. That boy had been notoriously worldly, and I just the reverse; yet he
11 was exalted to this eminence, and I left in obscurity and misery. There was nothing generous about
12 this fellow in his greatness. He would always manage to have a rusty bolt to scrub while his boat
13 tarried at our town, and he would sit on the inside guard and scrub it, where we could all see him and
14 envy him and loathe him. And whenever his boat was laid up he would come home and swell around
15 the town in his blackest and greasiest clothes, so that nobody could help remembering that he was a
16 steamboatman; and he used all sorts of steamboat technicalities in his talk, as if he were so used to
17 them that he forgot common people could not understand them. He would speak of the “labboard”
18 side of a horse in an easy, natural way that would make one wish he was dead. And he was always
19 talking about “St. Looy” like an old citizen; he would refer casually to occasions when he “was
20 coming down Fourth Street,” or when he was “passing by the Planter’s House,” or when there was a
21 fire and he took a turn on the brakes² of “the old Big Missouri;” and then he would go on and lie
22 about how many towns the size of ours were burned down there that day. Two or three of the boys
23 had long been persons of consideration among us because they had been to St. Louis once and had a
24 vague general knowledge of its wonders, but the day of their glory was over now. They lapsed into a
25 humble silence, and learned to disappear when the ruthless “cub”-engineer approached. This fellow
26 had money, too, and hair oil. Also an ignorant silver watch and a showy brass watch chain. He wore
27 a leather belt and used no suspenders. If ever a youth was cordially admired and hated by his
28 comrades, this one was. No girl could withstand his charms. He “cut out” every boy in the village.
29 When his boat blew up at last, it diffused a tranquil contentment among us such as we had not
30 known for months. But when he came home the next week, alive, renowned, and appeared in church
31 all battered up and bandaged, a shining hero, stared at and wondered over by everybody, it seemed to
32 us that the partiality of Providence for an undeserving reptile had reached a point where it was open
33 to criticism.

34 This creature’s career could produce but one result, and it speedily followed. Boy after boy
35 managed to get on the river. The minister’s son became an engineer. The doctor’s and the
36 post-master’s sons became “mud clerks,” the wholesale liquor dealer’s son became a bar-keeper on a
37 boat; four sons of the chief merchant, and two sons of the county judge, became pilots. Pilot was the
38 grandest position of all. The pilot, even in those days of trivial wages, had a princely salary—from a
39 hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty dollars a month, and no board to pay. Two months of his
40 wages would pay a preacher’s salary for a year. Now some of us were left disconsolate. We could not
41 get on the river—at least our parents would not let us.

In the public domain.

¹ comrades — friends

² brakes — an area thickly overgrown with brush

English Language Arts Retest

Session 2, Multiple-Choice Questions

- The boys' ambition referred to in the title of the excerpt was to
- A. find jobs in St. Louis.
 - B. make a lot of money.
 - ✓ C. work as steamboatmen.
 - D. become famous doctors.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 14: Literature/Learning Standard 8

- According to the excerpt, the narrator believes that the most desirable job on the river is that of
- ✓ A. pilot.
 - B. striker.
 - C. engineer.
 - D. cabin boy.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 15: Literature/Learning Standard 8

- In lines 14-15, what does the phrase "swell around the town" suggest?
- A. The town had grown larger.
 - B. The apprentice had grown taller.
 - C. The town was a good place to live.
 - ✓ D. The apprentice was boasting to everyone.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 16: Literature/Learning Standard 15

English Language Arts Retest

- In line 15, the boy returns home from his job wearing his “greasiest clothes” because he
- A. does not have clean clothes to wear.
 - B. has to wear his apprentice’s uniform.
 - C. prefers to wear comfortable work clothes at home.
 - ✓ D. wants to remind everyone he works on the river.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 17: Literature/Learning Standard 13

- In line 32, the phrase “an undeserving reptile” refers to the
- A. minister’s son.
 - ✓ B. steamboat striker.
 - C. narrator’s father.
 - D. county judge.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 18: Literature/Learning Standard 13

- The **main** purpose of the last paragraph is to
- A. show that ministers do not make a good living.
 - B. inform the reader about jobs in St. Louis.
 - ✓ C. describe the effect of the apprentice’s success.
 - D. tell readers how to become steamboatmen.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 19: Literature/Learning Standard 13

English Language Arts Retest

- Terms such as “striker,” “cub,” “mud clerks,” and “labboard” could **best** be described as
- A. formal English.
 - B. foreign words.
 - ✓ C. occupational jargon.
 - D. scientific language.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 20: *Language/Learning Standard 6*

- In line 40, what does the word *disconsolate* mean?
- A. satisfied
 - B. hopeful
 - C. confused
 - ✓ D. sorrowful

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 21: *Language/Learning Standard 4*

English Language Arts Retest

Session 2, Open-Response Question

- 22 Twain describes the first boy to go away and work on the river as being both “admired and hated by his comrades.” Explain these opposite reactions to the boy. Use information from the excerpt to support your answer.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 22: Literature/Learning Standard 13

English Language Arts Retest

Session 2, Reading Selection #2

Who would ever have thought that an ancient language could help in a war? Yet that is exactly what happened in World War II. In Navajo Code Talkers, Jack Hitt discusses a little-known but important aspect of America's military history. Read Hitt's article below and use information from it to answer the questions that follow.

Navajo Code Talkers by Jack Hitt

Students read a selection titled "Navajo Code Talkers" and then answered questions 23 through 29 that follow on the next pages of this document.

Due to copyright restrictions the passage cannot be released to the public over the Internet. For more information, see the copyright citation below.

From AMERICAN GREATS by ROBERT WILSON. Copyright © 1999 by Robert Wilson. Reprinted by permission of PublicAffairs, a member of Perseus Books, L.L.C.

English Language Arts Retest

Session 2, Multiple-Choice Questions

- This article is **mainly** about
- A. how the Marines were victorious at Iwo Jima.
 - ✓ B. how some Navajos helped win World War II.
 - C. why a new code was needed in the war.
 - D. why Navajos traveled with bodyguards.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 23: Literature/Learning Standard 13

- According to the article, what was the problem with standard codes that had been used before Navajo?
- ✓ A. The enemy easily deciphered the codes.
 - B. The codes were based on too many languages.
 - C. The Americans had trouble understanding the codes.
 - D. The codes could only be used over secure lines.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 24: Literature/Learning Standard 8

- According to the article, how did the Japanese cryptographers feel about the Navajo language?
- A. They were entranced by its musical qualities.
 - B. They were pleased that they understood it.
 - C. They were puzzled by its complex vocabulary.
 - ✓ D. They were frustrated by the way it sounded.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 25: Literature/Learning Standard 8

English Language Arts Retest

- According to the article, the Navajo language had a vocabulary based on
- ✓ A. simple words from everyday life.
- B. specialized words for military ideas.
- C. unique pronunciations of military terms.
- D. borrowed words from other languages.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 26: *Literature/Learning Standard 13*

- According to the article, the Code Talker program was made public
- A. immediately after it was used in the Korean War.
- B. when a Code Talker told a reporter about the program.
- C. at the end of World War II, after the Japanese surrendered.
- ✓ D. when the military decided that it would not be needed again.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 27: *Literature/Learning Standard 8*

- Which of the following does the word *neologisms* **most likely** mean as it is used in paragraph 5?
- A. new soldiers
- B. word games
- ✓ C. new words
- D. war games

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 28: *Language/Learning Standard 4*

English Language Arts Retest

Session 2, Open-Response Question

- 29** Explain why the Navajo language was a good choice for a military code. Use relevant and specific information from the article to support your answer.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 29: Literature/Learning Standard 13

English Language Arts Retest

Session 3, Reading Selection #1

The subject of this poem is how one man earns his living. Read the poem below by noted New England poet Donald Hall. Use the information from the poem to answer the questions that follow.

Ox Cart Man

In October of the year,
he counts potatoes dug from the brown field,
counting the seed, counting
the cellar's¹ portion out,
5 and bags the rest on the cart's floor.

He packs wool sheared in April, honey
in combs, linen, leather
tanned from deerhide,
and vinegar in a barrel
10 hooped by hand at the forge's fire.

He walks by his ox's head, ten days
to Portsmouth Market, and sells potatoes,
and the bag that carried potatoes,
flaxseed, birch brooms, maple sugar, goose
15 feathers, yarn.

When the cart is empty he sells the cart.
When the cart is sold he sells the ox,
harness and yoke,² and walks
home, his pockets heavy
20 with the year's coin for salt and taxes,

and at home by fire's light in November cold
stitches new harness
for next year's ox in the barn,
and carves the yoke, and saws planks
25 building the cart again.

—Donald Hall

¹ *cellar* — a room used for storage, usually beneath the ground or under a building

² *yoke* — wooden bar with two U-shaped pieces that fit around the necks of a team of oxen

Originally printed in *The New Yorker*, 1977.

English Language Arts Retest

Session 3, Multiple-Choice Questions

- Based on the poet's description, which word **best** characterizes the ox cart man?
- A. lonely
 - B. careless
 - C. well-known
 - ✓ D. hardworking

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 30: Literature/Learning Standard 14

- In line 4, the phrase "the cellar's portion" refers to the potatoes that will be
- A. planted next year.
 - B. sold at the market.
 - ✓ C. stored over the winter.
 - D. given to his poor parents.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 31: Literature/Learning Standard 14

- According to the poem, the ox cart man takes all of the following to market **except**
- A. vinegar.
 - B. honey.
 - C. flaxseed.
 - ✓ D. salt.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 32: Literature/Learning Standard 8

English Language Arts Retest

- 33 According to the poem, why is it necessary for the ox cart man to have “coin”?
- A. He wants to build a barn and a larger house.
 - ✓ B. He uses it to buy supplies and pay taxes.
 - C. He uses it to pay last year’s debts.
 - D. He must buy a cart for next year.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 33: Literature/Learning Standard 8

Session 3, Reading Selection #2

The desire to learn is as important as the information to be learned. In this excerpt from The Autobiography of Malcolm X, the author writes about what motivated him to learn and the strategies he used. Read the excerpt below to find out more about Malcolm X's determination to educate himself. Use information from the excerpt to answer the questions that follow.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X

by Malcolm X as told to Alex Haley

- 1 **I**t was because of my letters that I happened to stumble upon starting to acquire some kind of a homemade education.
- 2 I became increasingly frustrated at not being able to express what I wanted to convey in letters that I wrote, especially those to Mr. Elijah Muhammad. In the street, I had been the most articulate hustler out there—I had commanded attention when I said something. But now, trying to write simple English, I not only wasn't articulate, I wasn't even functional. How would I sound writing in slang, the way I would *say* it, something such as, "Look, daddy, let me pull your coat about a cat, Elijah Muhammad—"
- 3 Many who today hear me somewhere in person, or on television, or those who read something I've said, will think I went to school far beyond the eighth grade. This impression is due entirely to my prison studies.
- 4 It had really begun back in the Charlestown Prison, when Bimbi first made me feel envy of his stock of knowledge. Bimbi had always taken charge of any conversations he was in, and I had tried to emulate him. But every book I picked up had few sentences which didn't contain anywhere from one to nearly all of the words that might as well have been in Chinese. When I just skipped those words, of course, I really ended up with little idea of what the book said. So I had come to the Norfolk Prison Colony still going through only book-reading motions. Pretty soon, I would have quit even these motions, unless I had received the motivation that I did.
- 5 I saw that the best thing I could do was get hold of a dictionary—to study, to learn some words. I was lucky enough to reason also that I should try to improve my penmanship. It was sad. I couldn't even write in a straight line. It was both ideas together that moved me to request a dictionary along with some tablets and pencils from the Norfolk Prison Colony school.
- 6 I spent two days just riffling uncertainly through the dictionary's pages. I'd never realized so many words existed! I didn't know *which* words I needed to learn. Finally, just to start some kind of action, I began copying.
- 7 In my slow, painstaking, ragged handwriting, I copied into my tablet everything printed on that first page, down to the punctuation marks.
- 8 I believe it took me a day. Then, aloud, I read back, to myself, everything I'd written on the tablet. Over and over, aloud, to myself, I read my own handwriting.
- 9 I woke up the next morning, thinking about those words—immensely proud to realize that not only had I written so much at one time, but I'd

English Language Arts Retest

written words that I never knew were in the world. Moreover, with a little effort, I also could remember what many of these words meant. I reviewed the words whose meanings I didn't remember. Funny thing, from the dictionary first page right now, that "aardvark" springs to my mind. The dictionary had a picture of it, a long-tailed, long-eared, burrowing African mammal, which lives off termites caught by sticking out its tongue as an anteater does for ants.

10 I was so fascinated that I went on—I copied the dictionary's next page. And the same experience came when I studied that. With every succeeding page, I also learned of people and places and events from history. Actually the dictionary is like a miniature encyclopedia. Finally the dictionary's A section had filled a whole tablet—and I went on into the B's. That was the way I started copying what eventually became the entire dictionary. It went a lot faster after so much practice helped me to pick up handwriting speed. Between what I wrote in my tablet, and writing letters, during the rest of my time in prison I would guess I wrote a million words.

11 I suppose it was inevitable that as my word-base broadened, I could for the first time pick up a book and read and now begin to understand what the book was saying. Anyone who has read a great deal can imagine the new world that opened. Let me tell you something: from then until I left that prison, in every free moment I had, if I was not reading in the library, I was reading on my bunk. You couldn't have gotten me out of books with a wedge. Between Mr. Muhammad's teachings, my correspondence, my visitors—usually Ella and Reginald—and my reading of books, months passed without my even thinking about being imprisoned. In fact, up to then, I never had been so truly free in my life.

Copyright © 1964 by Alex Haley, Malcolm X. Reprinted by permission of John Hawkins & Associates, Inc.

English Language Arts Retest

Session 3, Multiple-Choice Questions

- According to the excerpt, what inspired Malcolm X to educate himself?
- ✓ A. He wanted his letters to be more eloquent.
- B. He wanted to become a great leader.
- C. He wanted to get a job in education.
- D. He wanted his family to be proud of him.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 34: Literature/Learning Standard 8

- According to the excerpt, Malcolm X began to use a dictionary to
- ✓ A. acquire new vocabulary and write more neatly.
- B. impress his relatives and keep himself busy.
- C. improve his conversations with his friends.
- D. assist him in understanding legal documents.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 35: Literature/Learning Standard 8

- In paragraph 4, the word *emulate* means
- A. admire.
- B. agitate.
- ✓ C. imitate.
- D. betray.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 36: Language/Learning Standard 4

English Language Arts Retest

- In paragraph 11, Malcolm X uses the metaphor, “You couldn’t have gotten me out of books with a wedge,” to
- A. show that his task was overwhelming.
 - ✓ B. emphasize his love of reading.
 - C. suggest that prison was too confining.
 - D. appeal to the reader’s sympathy.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 37: Literature/Learning Standard 15

- What irony is expressed in the last two sentences of the excerpt?
- A. Malcolm X disliked having visitors in prison.
 - B. Few people knew anything about Malcolm X.
 - C. Elijah Muhammad joined Malcolm X in prison.
 - ✓ D. Malcolm X found a type of freedom in prison.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 38: Literature/Learning Standard 13

- The author uses italics in paragraph 6 to
- A. identify a direct quote.
 - B. introduce a contrast.
 - C. set off a title.
 - ✓ D. emphasize a word.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 39: Language/Learning Standard 5

English Language Arts Retest

Session 3, Open-Response Question

- 40 Explain how Malcolm X's method of self-education in prison helped him achieve his goal. Use relevant and specific information from the excerpt to support your answer.

Reporting Category/Learning Standard for Item 40: Literature/Learning Standard 13