

VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING

GRADE 7
READING

2024 English Standards of Learning

Practice Item Set

Property of the Virginia Department of Education

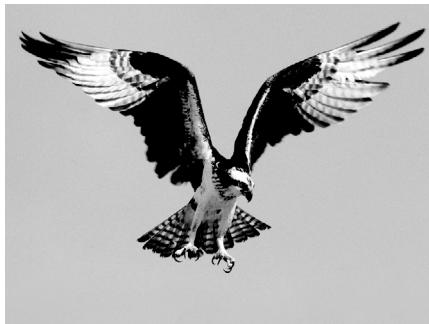
Copyright © 2025 by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Virginia Department of Education, P.O. Box 2120, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120. All rights reserved. Except as permitted by law, this material may not be reproduced or used in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright owner. Send all written requests to the Virginia Department of Education at the above address or by email to: Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov.

Printed in the United States of America.

Directions: Read the article and answer the questions that follow.

Magnificent Divers

- 1 If you were a fish, one of the last birds you would want to see flying overhead is a hungry osprey. These majestic birds of prey average two feet in length and may have an incredible six-foot wingspan. These enormous predators are also equipped with long, sharp talons for snagging a meal swimming in the water below.
- 2 Ospreys, also known as fish hawks or fishing eagles, have short, hooked beaks and wings that taper to rounded tips. Their coloring ranges from white to dark brown. The white feathers on ospreys' heads look like little caps, and their wings include a mixture of white and dark brown feathers. Their chests, bellies, and chins are white, and their tails are marked with several white bands, or stripes. Ospreys in flight are easy to identify, thanks to their distinctive plumage, or feathers. Not surprisingly, these birds are related to eagles, hawks, and even vultures. They can live a long time; the average life span in the wild is 18 years. The oldest known osprey lived to be 25 years old.



Courtesy of NASA

- 3 Ospreys fly fast and dive at amazing speeds. Soaring one hundred feet above the water, their sharp eyes watch the surface carefully for any tell-tale signs of fish. Ospreys hover over the water and wait for some indication of activity. Once prey is spotted, the birds fold their wings to their sides and begin a steep dive, plunging nearly straight down at blazing speeds. Usually, ospreys hit the water feet first, plunging completely underwater to catch their food. Water sprays in all directions as the birds reach underwater to grab a fish. They have been seen diving as much as three feet underwater to capture their prey! Once a fish has been snagged in its sharp claws, an osprey soars back up into the sky, pausing in flight just long enough to shake the water from its feathers before flying away to enjoy its meal. To help ospreys hold on to their catch, each of their feet has a unique reversible front toe.

- 4 Since their diet is almost entirely fish, ospreys make their homes near water. They live on islands and around bays, such as the Chesapeake Bay between Virginia and Maryland. The birds spend summers in Alaska, Canada, and northwestern parts of the United States. During the colder months, they stay in warmer places like the Caribbean and Central and South America. The Chesapeake Bay is home to the largest nesting population of ospreys in the world. Observers have counted as many as 2,000 pairs. The area has even been called "the osprey garden."
- 5 Like other birds, ospreys like to build their nests where people are unlikely to approach them. In some coastal communities, ospreys have built nests on top of electric power poles and towers. This is dangerous and can result in power failures. Some cities build nesting platforms for the big birds to use instead. In other regions, ospreys build nests high in trees or on rocky cliffs. Osprey nests have even been found on channel markers and buoys on the water.
- 6 Ospreys use their nests repeatedly. When ospreys return to their nests, they spend time repairing them before laying their eggs. Most ospreys lay three eggs at a time. They are about the same size as chicken eggs and take approximately five weeks to hatch. If anything threatening approaches the nest, the ospreys' usual call of *cheep-cheep-cheep* turns into an angry *cheereek, cheereek*. The call means "Get away immediately!"
- 7 When the eggs crack open, the chicks, which weigh only about two ounces, crawl out. In less than two months, these tiny birds will have grown enough to take their first flight. It will not be long before a new generation of ospreys is ready to imitate their parents and head out for a tasty meal.
- 8 With their beautiful coloring, threatening size, and natural ability to bolt out of the sky at high speeds, there is little doubt that ospreys are remarkable birds. Imagine these majestic birds soaring from the heights of the sky and plunging into the depths of the water. It is no surprise that this amazing scene draws attention from people who see it. Ospreys will continue to populate the skies for future generations.

1 The name “the osprey garden” in paragraph 4 gives the reader the impression of —

- A** fields of flowers eaten by ospreys
- B** colorful ospreys that look like flowers
- C** fields filled with flowers and ospreys
- D** ospreys living together as thickly as flowers

2 Which sentence from the article contains a comparison?

- F** Usually, ospreys hit the water feet first, plunging completely underwater to catch their food.
- G** Like other birds, ospreys like to build their nests where people are unlikely to approach them.
- H** When the eggs crack open, the chicks, which weigh only about two ounces, crawl out.
- J** In less than two months, these tiny birds will have grown enough to take their first flight.

3 Which detail about ospreys should be included in a summary of the article?

- A** The osprey has a wingspan of up to six feet across, and it has a distinctive mix of brown and white feathers.
- B** The diet of the osprey consists mainly of fish, so it builds its nest in areas near large bodies of water.
- C** The average life span of an osprey in the wild is around 18 years, but the oldest bird of this type lived to be 25 years old.
- D** The osprey typically migrates from Alaska to the Caribbean for the winter, so it has a long journey each fall and spring.

Directions: Read the story and answer the questions that follow.

Opening New Doors

- 1 "Want a piece of tangerine? It's for luck." Wen peeled off a section of the fruit and offered it to his friend Brady as they rode home on the school bus.
- 2 Brady accepted the piece of tangerine and popped it into his mouth. "Why is it for luck?"
- 3 "That's one of our Chinese beliefs. Oranges have meaning too; they symbolize wealth," Wen explained. "You should spend the weekend over at my house for the Chinese New Year. My family and I will show you how we celebrate."
- 4 Wen elaborated on the traditional Chinese festival while Brady listened intently. Wen described the holiday as a special day representing the importance of family bonds. Relatives and friends congratulated each other on finishing another year while welcoming in the new one.
- 5 Brady was supposed to go camping that weekend with his family, but now his dad had to work. Brady was so disappointed that he was not sure whether he would want to spend the weekend doing anything at all. However, after listening to Wen and seeing the excitement in his face, Brady grew intrigued about experiencing the Chinese New Year. He was nervous about participating in new customs at Wen's house, but after a moment of thought, Brady agreed to ask his parents if he could spend the weekend at Wen's house.
- 6 With his parents' permission, Brady went home with Wen on Friday afternoon. Wen told him that the family spent days cleaning the house and preparing for the fifteen-day celebration. Rooms were cleaned from top to bottom, sweeping away traces of bad luck, hoping that good luck would enter. Floral decorations were arranged neatly around the house to represent a fresh beginning for the new year. Wen's father had even painted the door with another coat of bright red paint. The color red symbolizes fire and is believed to drive away unfavorable events.
- 7 Wen's mother hugged Brady. "We're honored to have you here with us. I've made special clothes for you to wear for the celebration." She gave Brady a package wrapped with a small, red ribbon.
- 8 Brady followed Wen into his room, asking why everyone was wearing red-colored pajamas for the sleepover. A smile played on Wen's face. "Open your present."
- 9 As he slowly pulled the thin paper away, Brady found his own pair of red pants and a knee-length shirt with long, wide sleeves. "They're *pien-fu*; I'll be

wearing the same thing,” Wen explained. “Wearing new clothes, especially in red, is part of the Chinese New Year tradition and symbolizes good fortune.”

- 10 Brady went into the bathroom to change into his new clothes. They were loose and comfortable. He liked the smoothness of the silk against his skin and the way the fabric breathed.
- 11 Next, the family sat down at an extravagant table and started eating a huge feast. There was an abundance of dumplings, oysters, and other sublime foods Brady could not identify. He hesitated to fill his plate, but the smell was very inviting.
- 12 “These dumplings are called *jiaozi*,” Wen said, piling his plate high with the small, crescent-shaped morsels. “The shells are made of dough and filled with meat, cabbage, and green onions. Then they’re boiled in water. *Jiaozi* are important to the Chinese New Year because they represent unity and happiness for the family.”
- 13 Throughout dinner, the family continued to explain the special meaning of each dish. Brady never knew that food could have special meanings such as luck, success, and good wishes. When he went to bed that night, his stomach and his heart felt full.
- 14 The next day, Wen’s grandmother woke them. “It’s time.”
- 15 “*Lai-see!*” Wen shouted and pulled Brady into a line of other children and young adults.
- 16 Wen’s grandmother brought out a tray covered with oranges, tangerines, and red envelopes. Each person in the line was given an envelope decorated with elaborate Chinese symbols and characters. Brady watched with curiosity as Wen and the others opened their envelopes. Money was inside!
- 17 Wen watched his friend. “*Lai-see* is a tradition to ensure wealth and fortune in the new year. Children and young adults receive this New Year’s present from family members.”
- 18 Wen’s father turned to Brady. “Are you enjoying our Chinese traditions?”
- 19 Brady answered with a shy smile on his face. “To be honest, I was afraid of doing all of these things. I wasn’t sure if I’d enjoy the Chinese New Year, but it’s been so much fun! Thank you for accepting me into your home and sharing your traditions with me. You’ve given me gifts and delicious foods. If I hadn’t let Wen talk me into coming here, I would have missed a great experience. You’ve taught me that trying different things can open new doors—red doors!”

20 Everyone laughed, and Wen's grandmother embraced the boys. "Chinese New Year is about good luck and success for the approaching year. We're off to a good start today with Wen's friend. I'm certain this means the coming year will be wonderful!"

4 Paragraph 19 contributes to the theme of the story by showing that —

- F** overcoming fears can bring power
- G** honoring the beauty of simple objects is important
- H** experiencing different cultures can lead to personal growth
- J** celebrating traditions brings families together

5 Which sentence from the story best communicates a sense of celebration?

- A** Wen elaborated on the traditional Chinese festival while Brady listened intently.
- B** Relatives and friends congratulated each other on finishing another year while welcoming in the new one.
- C** Brady followed Wen into his room, asking why everyone was wearing red-colored pajamas for the sleepover.
- D** When he went to bed that night, his stomach and his heart felt full.

Directions: Read the article and answer the questions that follow.

Pioneer Architect

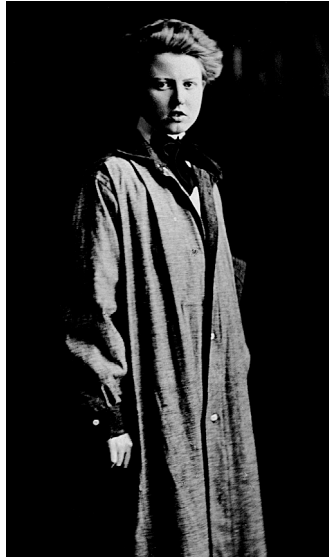
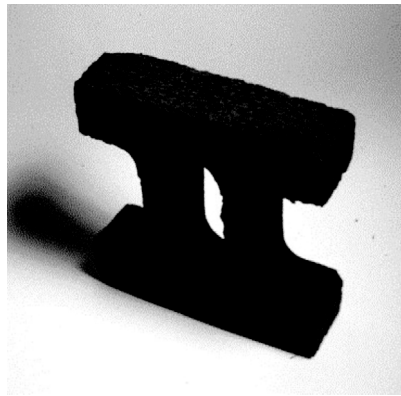


Image courtesy of Nancy Perkins FIDSA

- 1 Anna Wagner Keichline (Keek-leen), the pride of Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, was the first licensed female architect in the state. Her career included designing many buildings, some of which are still standing in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Washington, D.C., and her inventions and designs helped revolutionize architecture.
- 2 Keichline, born in 1889, showed interest in design and creative thinking at a young age. Keichline's parents saw her talent and helped develop her ability. According to several sources, they even built a home workshop for Keichline and stocked it with quality carpentry tools. This opportunity was rare for a female during this time period, and Keichline took full advantage of it.
- 3 Even before graduating from high school, Keichline showed her architectural ability. At the age of 14, she designed and constructed an impressive oak table that won her first prize at a local county fair. The table showed true craftsmanship, and even grabbed the attention of a reporter from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* newspaper. The reporter praised Keichline and compared her construction to that of a highly skilled professional.
- 4 Keichline believed education was important. After graduating from high school in 1906, she began studying mechanical engineering at Pennsylvania State College, even though she was one of only a few women in the classes. However, her focus quickly shifted from engineering to architecture, and after her first year, Keichline transferred to Cornell University. It took courage to

enter a mostly male profession like architecture, but Keichline was ready for the challenge.

- 5 Only a year after graduating from Cornell, Keichline received her first patent for an innovative sink and washtub design. Her new creation saved space and was much more comfortable to operate. Another of her patents was for a convenient and efficient kitchen design. Her plan stressed comfort and space-saving ideas that were ahead of their time. One of the special features was sloped countertops to make cleaning easier. Keichline was also one of the first designers to use glass for cabinet doors so that the contents were visible while the doors were closed. People living in apartments benefited from her design for a bed that folded into the wall when not in use. Keichline also received patents for her innovative designs of air systems and portable partitions which functioned as mobile walls.



IAWA: Keichline, Anna Wagner, MS89-016,
Digital Library and Archives, University Libraries,
Virginia Tech, [http://imagebase.lib.vt.edu/
view_records.php?URN=sci16&mode=popup](http://imagebase.lib.vt.edu/view_records.php?URN=sci16&mode=popup)

K Brick

- 6 The most valuable and important of Keichline's inventions was the "K Brick," patented in 1927. The design of the K Brick was unique in that it was a hollow brick that was lighter and less expensive than other building materials that were commonly used for interior walls. This design allowed for the brick to be filled with insulation or soundproof material. The K Brick was also believed to be more efficient to manufacture, requiring less clay and taking less time to fire and harden. Even shipping and labor were thought to be easier because of the K Brick's lightweight design. In 1931 the American Ceramic Society recognized the contribution that the K Brick represented by honoring Keichline for her design.

- 7 The curiosity and enthusiasm Keichline showed in her public life extended to her personal life as well. She is believed to have been one of the first women in America to own a car and, according to some, performed her own maintenance. Keichline enjoyed success because she believed there was always a better way to design, organize, and create. She was both an inspiration for women and a pioneer who left an unforgettable mark in the fields of architecture and construction.

6 In paragraph 3, the newspaper reporter writes about Keichline most likely because she —

- F** had uncommon abilities
- G** used unusual materials
- H** had won an impressive contest
- J** was well known in the community

7 In paragraph 5, the word innovative means —

- A** occurring rarely or infrequently
- B** showing great value
- C** using new methods
- D** quickly or easily built

8 In paragraph 5, the information is organized by —

- F** cause and effect
- G** process
- H** listing
- J** comparison/contrast

9 "A Leader in Her Profession" would be the best heading for which paragraph?

A 2

B 3

C 4

D 5

Directions: Read the poem and answer the questions that follow.

Gifts of the Seasons

- Amid the thaw, the warming earth awakes,
Rumbling from a bed of dark and damp gloom
And shrugging off its cloak of cold and sleep.
It stretches, yawns, and reaches for the lamp.
- 5 And soon a full bouquet of fragrant blossoms
Like honey-sweet perfume
With hints of mint so tender, fresh, and new
Calls winged wonders to its every bloom.
- With a youthful face, the earth invites
- 10 A sizzling sun and cheerful sky
To stay awhile and welcome the sounds
A lazy day like this cannot deny.
A jump! A dive! A splash of laughing blue,
The distant crack of the bat, a home run,
- 15 The happy hum of bees free from their hive,
And whispered tales around a campfire spun.
- When the earth continues its routine,
It makes a bold and glorious show
With leaves in flames of red and orange-gold
- 20 That burn above, then spark against the earth below.
No canvas can compete with such a scene;
No tube of paint can duplicate so true
A tree hung heavy with forgotten fruit,
Like ruby jewels that catch the morning dew.
- 25 Too cold, the earth now readies for rest;
It gathers pleasant thoughts about the past
And snuggling down beneath a snowy quilt
To conjure dreams of warmth it hopes will last.
The lapping shore is silent, frozen still;
- 30 Its mirrored surface reads a solemn sky
Yet somehow there is comfort in the wind,
A softly soothing good-night lullaby.

10 Read lines 21 and 22 from the poem.

**No canvas can compete with such a scene;
No tube of paint can duplicate so true**

These lines show that the speaker believes —

- F** the beauty of nature is impossible to capture in art
- G** leaves exhibit vivid colors for only a short time
- H** artists are limited by the materials available to them
- J** the sights of nature change with each season

11 In line 31, the word comfort has a connotation of —

- A** an easing of grief
- B** a freedom from hardship
- C** a relaxed feeling of peace
- D** an improved mood

12 The speaker's word choice in the poem conveys a tone of —

- F** appreciation
- G** humor
- H** enthusiasm
- J** admiration

Directions: Read the article and answer the questions that follow.



Frederick Douglass Middle School

Student Newspaper

Student Voices Column

SCHOOL LUNCH: QUESTIONS ANSWERED

by Amelia Cores

- 1 Since the beginning of the school year, much of the talk at the cafeteria tables has been about the food students eat. As past editorials in this student publication show, the cafeteria staff has made several attempts over the years to modify the menu and student eating habits. Why has the cafeteria been making these changes, and how do students feel about the new menu?
- 2 In 2012 the U.S. Department of Agriculture issued rules requiring all schools in the country to increase the availability of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. The department also called for meals to be lower in saturated fat. These new rules were passed in order to enhance the diet and health of school-aged children.
- 3 As a result of these rules, Frederick Douglass Middle School began providing more healthful school meals. Gone were the days of deep-fried foods and sugary desserts. Breakfast and lunch options instead included low-fat milk, fresh fruit, and more nutritious versions of popular dishes. The cafeteria staff took the not-so-healthful meals and made them better for us. For instance, one of my personal favorites was called "faux fried chicken." It looked like real fried chicken, golden brown and crispy. It tasted like real fried chicken, too, but instead of being fried in oil, it was baked, which made it healthier than traditional fried chicken. Other examples included pizza with a cauliflower crust instead of pizza dough, and "old-fashioned" macaroni and cheese using nonfat dairy products. Although these dishes were satisfying and tasty, some students felt like they were being tricked into eating healthful food.
- 4 This year the school unveiled more changes in the cafeteria menu. Faux fried chicken has been replaced with grilled chicken, and old-fashioned macaroni and cheese has been replaced with pasta primavera, an entrée loaded with

vegetables. These new dishes, along with several others, do not hide their healthfulness. The most apparent change to the food can be summed up in one word: fresh. The tacos on Taco Tuesday are a good example. The old tacos were made of seasoned and browned ground turkey topped with low-fat cheese and canned salsa. The new tacos are stuffed with grilled meat and vegetables and are topped with fresh salsa. The vegetarian tacos are made with grilled bell peppers, mushrooms, and onions. Eighth-grader Jasmine Firestone says, "The new tacos on Tuesdays are the best food in the world!"

- 5 The chefs who designed the new menu definitely have the health of today's young people in mind. In turn, students are learning to enjoy the taste of fresh vegetables and modern dishes. The students I surveyed overwhelmingly enjoy the new menu. About 85% of students interviewed welcome this approach to healthful eating, with its new and interesting dishes. Seventh-grader Lucas Tam says, "I can appreciate that the cafeteria staff is trying to keep us healthy. Honestly, I feel more alert and my body feels stronger."
- 6 There is one big problem with the current lunch menu: the lack of choices. The old menu provided students with several choices every day, and it would be at least three weeks before those foods were repeated. The exception, of course, was for our beloved tacos, served every Tuesday. The new menu, however, lacks variety. The meals are repeated more often now, and sometimes we see the same menu two weeks in a row. The cafeteria manager, Marge LaRough, offered some reassurance: "We have new and exciting healthy menu items coming to the campus very soon. Our chefs have been working to find the best ingredients to be included in dishes students will love, but we also must be careful to follow the rules of the U.S. Department of Agriculture."
- 7 I sometimes joke that my favorite subject in school is lunch. With these menu changes, I feel like I am making an A+. The new menu may currently lack variety, but we are fortunate to now have dishes that focus on freshness and health. Also, we know why it is taking a bit more time to come up with a variety of healthful and delicious menu items, and we have the promise that we will see more dishes in the near future.

13 At the top of the article, the words “Student Voices Column” are in boldface type and placed between horizontal lines in order to —

- A** highlight a featured section of the newspaper
- B** indicate that the newspaper article conveys the ideas of all students
- C** suggest the urgent nature of the newspaper article
- D** emphasize that the newspaper is published by middle school students

14 In paragraph 1, the reader knows that the students —

- F** have expressed interest in newspaper articles about the menu
- G** are divided in their attitudes about the quality of the cafeteria food
- H** have discussed their food preferences with the cafeteria staff
- J** are lacking information about the reasons for the menu changes

15 In paragraph 3, the author puts “old-fashioned” in quotation marks to —

- A** highlight an important phrase
- B** indicate a disagreement between chefs
- C** emphasize the style of a particular dish
- D** introduce an unfamiliar term

16 Which detail from paragraphs 3 and 4 emphasizes the author’s positive viewpoint about menu items?

- F** looked like real fried chicken, golden brown and crispy
- G** cauliflower crust instead of pizza dough
- H** macaroni and cheese using nonfat dairy products
- J** made with grilled bell peppers, mushrooms, and onions

17 Read this sentence from paragraph 4.

Eighth-grader Jasmine Firestone says, “The new tacos on Tuesdays are the best food in the world!”

Why does the author include this example of hyperbole?

- A** to indicate which days the tacos will be served
- B** to convey how large the tacos will be
- C** to emphasize how delicious the new tacos taste
- D** to highlight which students will eat the tacos

18 Read these glossary entries for words that appear in paragraph 5.

alert: Able to think and respond quickly.

approach: Move closer to a person or object.

designed: Created a drawing or sketch.

surveyed: Carefully examined something to determine its value.

Which entry gives the meaning of the word as it is used in paragraph 5?

F alert

G approach

H designed

J surveyed

19 What is the main idea of paragraph 5?

A The chefs are knowledgeable about the health of students.

B The nutritious food that the students are eating makes them feel better.

C The new menu includes fresh ingredients that students have requested.

D The students have responded positively to dishes on the new menu.

20 Based on paragraph 6, the main outcome of interviewing Marge LaRough was that the author —

- F** was able to tell cafeteria staff what the students think about the meal variety
- G** gained a better understanding of the requirements placed on the school cafeteria
- H** could understand the challenges of locating the ingredients for certain dishes
- J** learned that additional meal options would soon become available to students

21 Based on the word choice in paragraph 7, what does the author most likely believe?

- A** Students should accept that healthful dishes are often similar in flavor.
- B** Currently served dishes will be replaced with new versions.
- C** Staff should consult students when making menu decisions.
- D** Consistent improvements in the cafeteria will continue.

22 Which action by cafeteria staff suggests that student opinions are taken into consideration when making menu decisions?

- F** Continuing the tradition of serving tacos on Tuesday
- G** Developing dishes that are more modern
- H** Studying the rules of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
- J** Replacing macaroni and cheese with a new dish

23 According to the article, cafeteria offerings were different before the 2012 rules in that they —

- A** featured familiar ingredients
- B** contained fresh fruits and vegetables
- C** included sugary and fried foods
- D** provided few vegetarian dishes

24 Which sentence is NOT supported by relevant evidence?

- F** The cafeteria staff took the not-so-healthy meals and made them better for us.
- G** The old tacos were made of seasoned and browned ground turkey topped with low-fat cheese and canned salsa.
- H** The chefs who designed the new menu definitely have the health of today's young people in mind.
- J** The new menu may currently lack variety, but we are fortunate to now have dishes that focus on freshness and health.

25 Which paragraph contains useful information for a presentation about how to make dishes healthier?

- A** 2
- B** 3
- C** 5
- D** 7

26 Which statement best expresses the author's viewpoint?

- F** The cafeteria's healthful food options are delicious.
- G** Some items on the current menu are more flavorful than others.
- H** Traditional dishes should be added to the current menu.
- J** The cafeteria's chefs are more concerned about nutrition than taste.

Directions: Read the passages and answer the questions that follow.

A Matter of Taste

- 1 “Bravo, Phil!” Chef Thompson exclaimed as the rest of my classmates applauded congenially. My heart swelled as she took a second heaping spoonful of the curry dish I had prepared for the final exam of my first semester at the Virginia Culinary Institute. Chef Thompson motioned to the other students to invite them to taste the dish for themselves. As my classmates licked their spoons clean, their nods and smiles provided a stark contrast to the faces I remembered from my middle school years—about a decade ago.
- 2 “Blech!” I remember my younger brother saying after tasting my first attempt at cooking chicken pot pie when I was thirteen. I thought at the time that he was just being mean when he dropped his fork on his plate and a chunk of my creation landed on the floor. That is until our dog Prince ran up to seize the discarded morsel, sniffed it, then dropped his tail between his legs and walked off without so much as a lick.
- 3 “It’s . . . interesting,” Mom offered. But I knew differently. Dogs don’t lie. I didn’t want to make a pot pie that tasted like the ones sold in the grocery store in the frozen foods section. I wanted my recipe to be unique. It was certainly one of a kind, since I never came across any other chicken pot pie whose smell would cause a dog to hide behind the sofa.
- 4 “Maybe a little more salt next time will bring out the natural flavors,” Mom said. “And . . . maybe not so *many* flavors in the same dish. It was a good attempt, though. Keep trying, Phil.”
- 5 I did keep trying. I wanted to make something no one had ever tasted before, and I was determined to face any challenge that would keep me from that goal. Unfortunately for my family, determination didn’t always result in deliciousness. I remember my father setting a world record for the most glasses of milk consumed consecutively after I attempted to make stew loosely based on a Cajun gumbo recipe. *Black pepper is a common seasoning. Thai chili adds spicy flavor. Jalapeños are a staple of Mexican cuisine,* I remember thinking at the time. *Why not add all of them?*
- 6 In spite of my lack of early success, I spent hours watching cooking shows on television throughout those years, thinking I could create recipes that taste even better. I learned the basics, but all the meals that were presented seemed plain to me, even when they really weren’t. As my favorite TV chef always says, I just wanted to “kick it up a notch.” But try as I might, most of my dishes still didn’t fare so well with my family.

- 7 When I took a family and consumer science class in high school, my classmates began to suffer in the same way my family had. The other students would shy away from sampling my projects. My teacher had no choice but to taste my cooking. It was after my omelet received mixed reviews from classmates for my use of cinnamon that my teacher, Mr. Perry, took me aside after class one day.
- 8 “It’s clear to me that you have a passion for cooking,” he said. “I can tell you love to create, and transforming food is something that makes you happy.”
- 9 “I just don’t seem very good at creating new flavors,” I told him. “I like what I make, but I’ve never been able to cook anything that people really love.”
- 10 “It seems your motivation is not to make something people really love,” he said. “You are too busy trying to make something *different*. People love macaroni and cheese because it is simple and familiar. I have seen your technique, your attention to detail, your exactness in measurement—you could achieve perfection if you would follow a recipe.”
- 11 I just stood there, blinking my eyes in disbelief.
- 12 “Do you like music?” he added.
- 13 “Sure,” I hesitated, not understanding the sudden turn in the conversation.
- 14 “And what if the songs you enjoy were played all at once, each note overlapping another and each beat sounding at the same time?” Mr. Perry asked.
- 15 “It would just be noise,” I mumbled.
- 16 “Exactly!” he exclaimed. “Think about a recipe, or a dish, as playing one song at a time. Make sense?”
- 17 “So, maybe blueberries don’t belong in meatloaf?” I suggested.
- 18 Mr. Perry laughed. “Probably not.”
- 19 I thought about what my mother had said—a little salt to enhance the natural flavors. I blended flavors that would harmonize nicely, not straying far from the original recipes. I didn’t feel that I was making much headway. Then one day I quickly turned to drop some chopped carrots into a soup and almost tripped over Prince. For months he had been patrolling the floor of the kitchen, looking for small morsels of my meals.
- 20 Then the real test came, a simple meatloaf for my family. I didn’t need any verbal feedback. The sight of them eating quietly said everything I needed to know.

21 The family meal was just a few months ago. Now my small morsels met with more approval, as I was shaking hands with Chef Thompson. I received an “A” on my first exam at the Virginia Culinary Institute. Even Prince would wag his tail at the sight and smell of the curry dish.

No Regrets

That day I didn't want to remember
Was a day I would never forget—
That instant burned like an ember . . .
That moment of lasting regret.

5 My closest friend was a part of me;
Our thoughts and actions were one.
We were more alike than sisters could be
With a bond that could not be undone.

Until that day, that terrible day,
10 When "friends" whispered half-truths and tales.
So filled with betrayal and dismay,
I was unable to stop and exhale.

My anger was written all over my face
As I unleashed a cyclone of words.
15 Years of friendship were quickly erased;
Shame and sadness were all that endured.

For weeks and months I tried to envision
The apology I'd give to convey
My error and guilt, to make an admission
20 That I'd been so wrong that day.

One fine morning, with time running out,
I finally knew what to say.
With my heart bursting, I ran to her house
Just to see the moving van drive away.

25 The lost chance taught me a lesson
That words have the power to wound.
I had missed my chance at redemption,
And I lived with this bitter truth.

I finally realized after years of remorse
30 That I was tired of feeling this blame.
Action could be my only recourse
Though I knew it meant risking more pain.

As I sat at the computer and searched for her name,
Though uneasy, I was filled with delight.
35 Nothing between us can be just the same—
But even so, I started to write.

27 The phrase “My heart swelled” in paragraph 1 conveys that the narrator is —

- A** not feeling very well
- B** proud of the dish he has created
- C** nervous that his dish will not earn him a good grade
- D** hoping that the teacher will make a decision quickly

28 In paragraph 5, the word consecutively comes from a Latin root that means —

- F** finish early
- G** empty rapidly
- H** happen carefully
- J** follow closely

29 Which word is a synonym for enhance in paragraph 19?

- A** circulate
- B** discover
- C** intensify
- D** scatter

30 How is figurative language used in the first stanza of the poem?

- F** To show that the speaker's experience was agonizing
- G** To re-create sounds from the speaker's past experiences
- H** To emphasize the effects of the speaker's reaction
- J** To exaggerate the speaker's feelings of impatience

31 Lines 13–14 of the poem convey that the speaker's anger is —

- A** difficult to control
- B** part of the healing process
- C** the result of many arguments
- D** a normal reaction to the situation

32 Lines 29–32 reveal that the speaker of the poem —

- F** is usually a sensible person
- G** accepts responsibility for what she has done wrong
- H** fails to understand her actions
- J** is unable to forgive her friend for her betrayal

33 Which idea is developed in both the story and the poem?

- A** The past is often the reason people are unable to move forward.
- B** Having a disagreement will usually bring people closer in the end.
- C** Admitting the reason for our failures is the first step toward transformation.
- D** The harshest judgments we receive often come from ourselves.

34 The endings of the story and the poem both convey a tone of —

- F** calmness
- G** confusion
- H** hopefulness
- J** indecision

35 How do the narrator of the story and the speaker of the poem resolve their conflicts?

- A** By seeking guidance from someone who offers wise advice
- B** By sharing an idea with someone who may or may not respond
- C** By standing up for their beliefs even when others do not agree
- D** By using a different approach than they have used in the past

36 Which major theme do the story and the poem have in common?

- F** Expressing feelings in a kind and patient way can be difficult.
- G** Making changes in life requires taking the necessary steps.
- H** Respecting peers involves being honest with them.
- J** Remaining loyal to one another in difficult times is important.

**Grade 7 Reading
Practice Item Set Spring 2025
Answer Key**

Sequence Number	Correct Answer	Reporting Category	Reporting Category Description
1	D	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
2	G	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
3	B	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
4	H	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
5	B	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
6	F	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
7	C	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
8	H	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
9	D	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
10	F	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
11	C	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
12	F	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
13	A	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
14	J	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
15	C	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
16	F	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
17	C	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
18	F	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies

**Grade 7 Reading
Practice Item Set Spring 2025
Answer Key**

Sequence Number	Correct Answer	Reporting Category	Reporting Category Description
19	D	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
20	J	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
21	D	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
22	F	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
23	C	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
24	G	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
25	B	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
26	F	002	Demonstrate comprehension of informational texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
27	B	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
28	J	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
29	C	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
30	F	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
31	A	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
32	G	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
33	C	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
34	H	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
35	D	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies
36	G	001	Demonstrate comprehension of literary texts and use vocabulary development and word analysis strategies

