

*Minnesota*

**Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)  
Reading Item Sampler  
Grade 6**



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NOT SECURE TEST MATERIALS.  
THIS ITEM SAMPLER MAY BE  
COPIED OR DUPLICATED.

**Minnesota Test of Academic Skills  
Grade 6 Reading  
Sample Tasks 1–3**

**Hot Air Balloons**

- 1 Have you ever wanted to give someone a really unusual gift? One idea for a unique gift is a hot air balloon ride. You can ride in a hot air balloon in Stillwater, Minnesota.
- 2 The hot air balloons travel along the St. Croix River Valley. They float in the air as high as the treetops. On this adventure, people can reach out and touch the leaves on the trees. They can also look down to see the beautiful blue river, as well as deer and other wildlife.
- 3 The huge balloons are made of a special kind of cloth. The cloth usually has bright, beautiful colors.
- 4 The bottom of a hot air balloon is open. A burner below the opening heats the air inside the balloon. Hot air fills the balloon and the balloon rises.
- 5 People ride in a basket attached to the bottom of the balloon. A pilot controls how high or low the balloon goes. To make the balloon rise, the pilot turns the burner up. The flames heat the air. To make the balloon go lower, the pilot turns the burner down so the air cools.
- 6 A ride in a hot air balloon is really fun. It is a perfect gift!

# Minnesota Test of Academic Skills

## Grade 6 Reading

### Sample Task 1

Test Administrator Instructions	Score	Student Responses
<p><i>Administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The reading passage may be presented as many times as needed for the student at any score point.</li> <li>▪ Repeat the question exactly as it appears at score 3 as many times as needed until the student responds or until it is clear that the student will not respond.</li> </ul>		
<p><u>Present</u> "Hot Air Balloons" or have the student read the passage.</p> <p><b>Say: Here is the first question about "Hot Air Balloons."</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> R6_Sample 1.</p> <p><b>Say: Based on this story, what makes a balloon ride an adventure?</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. People can touch the treetops.</b>  <b>B. People can swim in the river.</b>  <b>C. People can feed the deer.</b></p>	<b>3</b>	<p>People can touch the treetops.</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 3. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, continue below.</i></p>
<p><i>Additional administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the student responds incorrectly or not at all, present the task with support as scripted.</li> <li>▪ Once additional support is provided, the task may not be re-administered for a score of 3.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Say: A ride in a hot air balloon can be exciting. Based on this story, what makes a balloon ride an adventure?</b></p> <p><u>Re-present</u> R6_Sample 1 and the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. People can touch the treetops.</b>  <b>B. People can swim in the river.</b>  <b>C. People can feed the deer.</b></p>	<b>2</b>	<p>People can touch the treetops.</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 2. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, the task should be scored a 1.</i></p>
	<b>1</b>	<p>People can swim in the river.  or  People can feed the deer.</p>
	<b>0</b>	<p>Unrelated or none</p>

**Grade 6 Reading 6.5.1.1:** Use textual evidence to determine what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

# Minnesota Test of Academic Skills

## Grade 6 Reading

### Sample Task 2

Test Administrator Instructions	Score	Student Responses
<p><i>Administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The reading passage may be presented as many times as needed for the student at any score point.</li> <li>▪ Repeat the question exactly as it appears at score 3 as many times as needed until the student responds or until it is clear that the student will not respond.</li> </ul>		
<p>Re-present "Hot Air Balloons" as needed.</p> <p><b>Say: Here is the second question about "Hot Air Balloons."</b></p> <p>Present R6_Sample 2.</p> <p><b>Say: Which is the best new title for the story?</b></p> <p>Present the answer options in order. Point to each option as you say it.</p> <p><b>A. A Unique Gift</b>  <b>B. Living in Minnesota</b>  <b>C. How to Be a Pilot</b></p>	<b>3</b>	<p>A Unique Gift</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 3. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, continue below.</i></p>
<p><i>Additional administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the student responds incorrectly or not at all, present the task with support as scripted.</li> <li>▪ Once additional support is provided, the task may not be re-administered for a score of 3.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Say: A hot air balloon ride is an unusual present to give to someone. Which is the best new title for the story?</b></p> <p>Re-present R6_Sample 2 and the answer options in order. Point to each option as you say it.</p> <p><b>A. A Unique Gift</b>  <b>B. Living in Minnesota</b>  <b>C. How to Be a Pilot</b></p>	<b>2</b>	<p>A Unique Gift</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 2. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, the task should be scored a 1.</i></p>
	<b>1</b>	<p>Living in Minnesota or How to Be a Pilot</p>
	<b>0</b>	<p>Unrelated or none</p>

**Grade 6 Reading 6.5.2.2:** Determine the main idea in a passage; summarize the passage.

# Minnesota Test of Academic Skills

## Grade 6 Reading

### Sample Task 3

Test Administrator Instructions	Score	Student Responses
<p><i>Administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The reading passage may be presented as many times as needed for the student at any score point.</li> <li>▪ Repeat the question exactly as it appears at score 3 as many times as needed until the student responds or until it is clear that the student will not respond.</li> </ul>		
<p><u>Re-present</u> "Hot Air Balloons" as needed.</p> <p><b>Say: Here is the last question about "Hot Air Balloons."</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> R6_Sample 3.</p> <p><b>Say: Why is a burner used on a hot air balloon?</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. To make the balloon rise</b>  <b>B. To warm up balloon passengers</b>  <b>C. To provide light for the balloon ride</b></p>	<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">To make the balloon rise</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 3. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, continue below.</i></p>
<p><i>Additional administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the student responds incorrectly or not at all, present the task with support as scripted.</li> <li>▪ Once additional support is provided, the task may not be re-administered for a score of 3.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Say: The burner fills the balloon with hot air. Why is a burner used on a hot air balloon?</b></p> <p><u>Re-present</u> R6_Sample 3 and the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. To make the balloon rise</b>  <b>B. To warm up balloon passengers</b>  <b>C. To provide light for the balloon ride</b></p>	<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">To make the balloon rise</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 2. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, the task should be scored a 1.</i></p>
	<b>1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">To warm up balloon passengers or To provide light for the balloon ride</p>
	<b>0</b>	Unrelated or none

**Grade 6 Reading 6.5.1.1:** Use textual evidence to determine what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

# Hot Air Balloons

Images used from Jupiter Images at <http://www.clipart.com>.



- 1 Have you ever wanted to give someone a really unusual gift? One idea for a unique gift is a hot air balloon ride. You can ride in a hot air balloon in Stillwater, Minnesota.



- 2 The hot air balloons travel along the St. Croix River Valley. They float in the air as high as the treetops. On this adventure, people can reach out and touch the leaves on the trees.





They can also look down to see the beautiful blue river, as well as deer and other wildlife.



- 3 The huge balloons are made of a special kind of cloth. The cloth usually has bright, beautiful colors.



- 4 The bottom of a hot air balloon is open. A burner below the opening heats the air inside the balloon. Hot air fills the balloon and the balloon rises.



- 5 People ride in a basket attached to the bottom of the balloon. A pilot controls how high or low the balloon goes.





To make the balloon rise, the pilot turns the burner up. The flames heat the air. To make the balloon go lower, the pilot turns the burner down so the air cools.



6 A ride in a hot air balloon is really fun. It is a perfect gift!

Based on this story, what makes a balloon ride an adventure?

R6\_Sample 1  
A



People can touch the treetops.

---

R6\_Sample 1  
B



People can swim in the river.

---

R6\_Sample 1  
C



People can feed the deer.



Which is the best new title for the story?

R6\_Sample 2  
A



## A Unique Gift

---

R6\_Sample 2  
B



## Living in Minnesota

---

R6\_Sample 2  
C



## How to Be a Pilot

Why is a burner used on a hot air balloon?

R6\_Sample 3  
A



To make the balloon rise

---

R6\_Sample 3  
B



To warm up balloon passengers

---

R6\_Sample 3  
C



To provide light for the balloon ride

**Minnesota Test of Academic Skills**  
**Grade 6 Reading**  
**Sample Tasks 1–3**

**Paul Bunyan**

- <sup>1</sup> People like to tell funny stories about Paul Bunyan, but of course these stories are not true. Paul Bunyan is a fictional character. He is not a real person.
- <sup>2</sup> In the stories, Paul Bunyan was a giant lumberjack. He chopped down trees faster than any other lumberjack. Paul Bunyan was the biggest and strongest lumberjack in Minnesota. He was tall. He was strong enough to pull trees out of the ground like people pick flowers! Paul Bunyan had a pet. His pet was a giant blue ox named Babe.
- <sup>3</sup> There are many stories about Paul and Babe. One story says that Paul and Babe’s footprints became all 10,000 lakes of Minnesota! Another story says that Paul and Babe made the hills and valleys of the United States when they wrestled and tore up the earth.
- <sup>4</sup> Many people believe that Paul Bunyan was born in Bemidji, Minnesota. According to one story, Lake Bemidji was one of the lakes formed from Paul Bunyan’s giant footprint. There is a large statue of Paul Bunyan and Babe in Bemidji. People love to talk about Paul Bunyan and Babe in Bemidji and all over the United States.

# Minnesota Test of Academic Skills

## Grade 6 Reading

### Sample Task 1

Test Administrator Instructions	Score	Student Responses
<p><i>Administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The reading passage may be presented as many times as needed for the student at any score point.</li> <li>▪ Repeat the question exactly as it appears at score 3 as many times as needed until the student responds or until it is clear that the student will not respond.</li> </ul>		
<p><u>Present</u> "Paul Bunyan" or have the student read the passage.</p> <p><b>Say: Here is the first question about "Paul Bunyan."</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> R6_Sample 1.</p> <p><b>Say: What shows that Paul Bunyan was strong?</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. He picked up trees.</b>  <b>B. He had a giant blue ox.</b>  <b>C. He planted flowers.</b></p>	<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">He picked up trees.</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 3. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, continue below.</i></p>
<p><i>Additional administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the student responds incorrectly or not at all, present the task with support as scripted.</li> <li>▪ Once additional support is provided, the task may not be re-administered for a score of 3.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Say: Paul Bunyan was stronger than real people. What shows that Paul Bunyan was strong?</b></p> <p><u>Re-present</u> R6_Sample 1 and the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. He picked up trees.</b>  <b>B. He had a giant blue ox.</b>  <b>C. He planted flowers.</b></p>	<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">He picked up trees.</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 2. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, the task should be scored a 1.</i></p>
	<b>1</b>	<p>He had a giant blue ox. or He planted flowers.</p>
	<b>0</b>	Unrelated or none

**Grade 6 Reading 6.5.1.1:** Use textual evidence to determine what the text says explicitly and make inferences.

# Minnesota Test of Academic Skills

## Grade 6 Reading

### Sample Task 2

Test Administrator Instructions	Score	Student Responses
<p><i>Administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The reading passage may be presented as many times as needed for the student at any score point.</li> <li>▪ Repeat the question exactly as it appears at score 3 as many times as needed until the student responds or until it is clear that the student will not respond.</li> </ul>		
<p><u>Re-present</u> "Paul Bunyan" as needed.</p> <p><b>Say: Here is the second question about "Paul Bunyan."</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> R6_Sample 2.</p> <p><b>Say: Which phrase is a summary of what Paul Bunyan and Babe did?</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. Helped lumberjacks in Minnesota</b>  <b>B. Created lakes, hills, and valleys</b>  <b>C. Told stories about the United States</b></p>	<b>3</b>	<p>Created lakes, hills, and valleys</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 3. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, continue below.</i></p>
<p><i>Additional administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the student responds incorrectly or not at all, present the task with support as scripted.</li> <li>▪ Once additional support is provided, the task may not be re-administered for a score of 3.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Say: A summary tells the important parts of a story. Which phrase is a summary of what Paul Bunyan and Babe did?</b></p> <p><u>Re-present</u> R6_Sample 2 and the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. Helped lumberjacks in Minnesota</b>  <b>B. Created lakes, hills, and valleys</b>  <b>C. Told stories about the United States</b></p>	<b>2</b>	<p>Created lakes, hills, and valleys</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 2. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, the task should be scored a 1.</i></p>
	<b>1</b>	<p>Helped lumberjacks in Minnesota or Told stories about the United States</p>
	<b>0</b>	<p>Unrelated or none</p>

**Grade 6 Reading 6.5.2.2:** Determine the main idea in a passage; summarize the passage.

# Minnesota Test of Academic Skills

## Grade 6 Reading

### Sample Task 3

Test Administrator Instructions	Score	Student Responses
<p><i>Administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The reading passage may be presented as many times as needed for the student at any score point.</li> <li>▪ Repeat the question exactly as it appears at score 3 as many times as needed until the student responds or until it is clear that the student will not respond.</li> </ul>		
<p><u>Re-present</u> "Paul Bunyan" as needed.</p> <p><b>Say: Here is the last question about "Paul Bunyan."</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> R6_Sample 3.</p> <p><b>Say: Why is there a statue of Paul Bunyan in Bemidji, Minnesota?</b></p> <p><u>Present</u> the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. People think Paul Bunyan was born there.</b></p> <p><b>B. Paul Bunyan found Babe there.</b></p> <p><b>C. Paul Bunyan learned to chop down trees there.</b></p>	<b>3</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">People think Paul Bunyan was born there.</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 3. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, continue below.</i></p>
<p><i>Additional administration notes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If the student responds incorrectly or not at all, present the task with support as scripted.</li> <li>▪ Once additional support is provided, the task may not be re-administered for a score of 3.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Say: There is a statue of Paul Bunyan in Bemidji, Minnesota. Statues are made to remind us of interesting things. Why is there a statue of Paul Bunyan in Bemidji, Minnesota?</b></p> <p><u>Re-present</u> R6_Sample 3 and the answer options in order. <i>Point to each option as you say it.</i></p> <p><b>A. People think Paul Bunyan was born there.</b></p> <p><b>B. Paul Bunyan found Babe there.</b></p> <p><b>A. Paul Bunyan learned to chop down trees there.</b></p>	<b>2</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">People think Paul Bunyan was born there.</p> <p><i>If you believe the student's correct response was unintentional, reorder the answer options to B, C, A (instead of A, B, C). Repeat the question. If the student chooses the correct answer again, the task should be scored a 2. If the student chooses an incorrect answer, the task should be scored a 1.</i></p>
	<b>1</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">Paul Bunyan found Babe there. or Paul Bunyan learned to chop down trees there.</p>
	<b>0</b>	Unrelated or none

**Grade 6 Reading 6.5.1.1:** Use textual evidence to determine what the text says explicitly and make inferences.



# **Paul Bunyan**

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- 1 People like to tell funny stories about Paul Bunyan, but of course these stories are not true. Paul Bunyan is a fictional character. He is not a real person.





2 In the stories, Paul Bunyan was a giant lumberjack. He chopped down trees faster than any other lumberjack. Paul Bunyan was the biggest and strongest lumberjack in Minnesota.



He was tall. He was strong enough to pull trees out of the ground like people pick flowers!



Paul Bunyan had a pet. His pet was a giant blue ox named Babe.



- 3 There are many stories about Paul and Babe. One story says that Paul and Babe's footprints became all 10,000 lakes of Minnesota!



Another story says that Paul and Babe made the hills and valleys of the United States when they wrestled and tore up the earth.



- 4 Many people believe that Paul Bunyan was born in Bemidji, Minnesota. According to one story, Lake Bemidji was one of the lakes formed from Paul Bunyan's giant footprint.





There is a large statue of Paul Bunyan and Babe in Bemidji. People love to talk about Paul Bunyan and Babe in Bemidji and all over the United States.

What shows that Paul Bunyan was strong?

R6\_Sample 1

A



He picked up trees.

---

R6\_Sample 1

B



He had a giant blue ox.

---

R6\_Sample 1

C

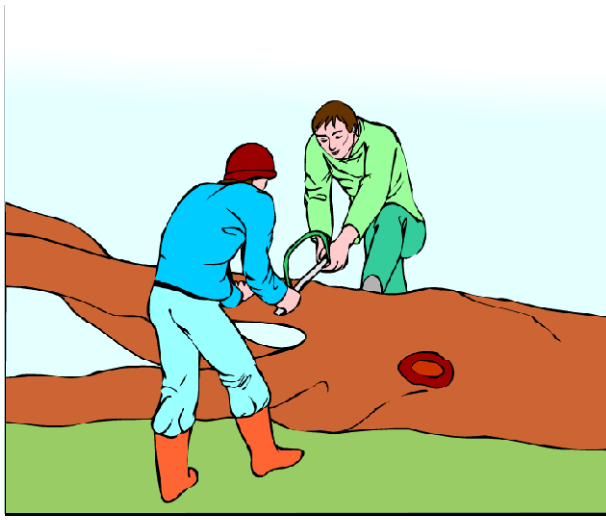


He planted flowers.

Which phrase is a summary of what Paul Bunyan and Babe did?

R6\_Sample 2

A



Helped lumberjacks in Minnesota

---

R6\_Sample 2

B



Created lakes, hills, and valleys

---

R6\_Sample 2

C



Told stories about the United States

Why is there a statue of Paul Bunyan in Bemidji,  
Minnesota?



People think Paul Bunyan was born there.

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Paul Bunyan found Babe there.

---



Paul Bunyan learned to chop down trees there.