



Grade 3
Reading MCA-III Item Sampler
Teacher Guide

Overview of Item Samplers

Item samplers are one type of student resource provided to help students and educators prepare for test administration. While standardized tests are familiar to almost all students, each assessment has its own layout and ways students interact with it. The item samplers should be used to familiarize students and educators with how the content is assessed by providing examples of the format and item types students could encounter on the MCA.

Other Resources

While this Teacher Guide provides detailed information about the item samplers, the student tutorial is the resource that should be used to familiarize students and educators with the general functionality of the online test, including navigation, tools, and examples of all item types.

For further information about the student tutorial and using student resources, refer to the *Purposes of Student Resources* on the [Item Samplers page](#) of PearsonAccess Next (PearsonAccess Next > Preparing for Testing > Item Samplers). Please contact mde.testing@state.mn.us for any questions about the MCA or resources for testing.

Contents of this Teacher Guide

The Teacher Guides provide supplementary information for the items in the online item samplers, including:

- A detailed answer key for all items in the online item sampler, including: correct answer, item type (multiple choice or technology enhanced), skill domain (benchmark classification based on the academic standards), benchmark, and cognitive complexity (indicated as Depth of Knowledge or DOK) from the test specifications.*
- Passage characteristics, including: substrand, Lexile, and word count.
- Item images that show correct answers followed by: benchmarks to which the sample items align (based on test specifications), DOK, and detailed rationales for correct and incorrect answer options.

For detailed information on benchmarks and cognitive complexity levels, see the [test specifications](#) on the MDE website (Districts, Schools and Educators > Statewide Testing > Test Specifications).

*The answer key for paper item samplers (12-point, 18-point, 24-point and braille test books) is included on the last page of this Teacher Guide. Some items on the paper item samplers appear in the online item sampler and the answer key includes information on where corresponding item information can be found in this guide.

Student Responses

Upon completion of the online item samplers, a report is displayed, which provides student responses for some item types. This report can be printed for use in conjunction with the information in this Teacher's Guide on how the student responded to those items. Note that the overall score on the report is **not** a predictor of performance on the MCA; it is simply a total of correct responses to some items.

MCA-III Item Sampler Online Answer Key
Grade 3 Reading

Section 1
7 Questions

Item #	Correct Answer	Item Type	Skill Domain	SSB	Depth of Knowledge
1	B	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
2	N/A	TE	Craft and Structure	3.1.4.4	II
3	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
4	A	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
5	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
6	B	MC	Craft and Structure	3.1.4.4	II
7	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	I

Section 2
10 Questions

Item #	Correct Answer	Item Type	Skill Domain	SSB	Depth of Knowledge
1	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	II
2	B	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	II
3	A	MC	Craft and Structure	3.2.6.6	III
4	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	III
5	B	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	I
6	C	MC	Craft and Structure	3.2.5.5	III
7	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.3.3	II
8	C	MC	Craft and Structure	3.2.4.4	III
9	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	II
10	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.2.2	II

Section 3
12 Questions

Item #	Correct Answer	Item Type	Skill Domain	SSB	Depth of Knowledge
1	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	I
2	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	I
3	A	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
4	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	III
5	N/A	TE	Craft and Structure	3.1.4.4	II
6	B	MC	Craft and Structure	3.1.4.4	II
7	C	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	III
8	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.2.2	II
9	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.2.2	III
10	A	MC	Craft and Structure	3.1.6.6	II
11	C	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.2.2	III

Section 4
19 Questions

Item #	Correct Answer	Item Type	Skill Domain	SSB	Depth of Knowledge
1	D	MC	Craft and Structure	3.1.6.6	II
2	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
3	A	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	III
4	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	III
5	B	MC	Craft and Structure	3.1.6.6	III
6	C	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	III
7	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
8	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	III
9	A	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	I
10	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.2.2	III
11	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	II
12	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	II
13	C	MC	Craft and Structure	3.2.4.4	II
14	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.3.3	II
15	D	MC	Craft and Structure	3.2.5.5	III
16	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	III
17	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	III
18	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
19	N/A	TE	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	I

Passage Characteristics

Section	Title	Type	Lexile	Word Count
1	A Dress for the Moon	L	640	116
2	Helen Keller: The World in Her Heart	I	600	632
3	My Special Day at Third Street School	L	N/A	261
4	Out of the Dark/Caves	L/I	670/660	1030

Section 1: A Dress for the Moon

Question 1

Which sentence best describes Madan at the beginning of the story?

- ☐ A. He is shy and works quietly.
- ☒ B. He is proud and seeks greatness.
- ☐ C. He is sad and tries to learn more.
- ☐ D. He is kind and generous to others.

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: II

Answer: B

Rationale A	Although Madan's work as a tailor may be solitary and require quiet concentration, the story does not suggest he is shy.
Rationale B	Correct: In paragraph 2, the story notes, "The more his fame spread, the more proud and boastful Madan became."
Rationale C	Readers may be attracted to this option if they view Madan's separation from his village and his family as a source of sorrow for him. However, the story does not support he is sad about moving into town.
Rationale D	Option D may be attractive to readers if they focus on paragraph 18, which reveals Madan has been humbled by his experience with the moon, and, as a result, sends money back home to his father and becomes more likeable. In addition, these events occur at the end of the story, not the beginning.

Question 2

Which meaning best fits the way spread is used in paragraph 2?

Select the meaning that best fits the way spread is used.

Then, select the phrase that supports that meaning.

Meaning

To open over a larger area

(to spread out a map)

To stretch out; extend

(to spread my arms wide)

To cover something

(to spread a cloth on the table)

To pass from person to person

(to spread the news rapidly)

Support Phrase from Paragraph 2

In town, Madan learned to be a tailor. He worked hard and soon became known for the fine clothes he made. The entire town wanted clothes sewed by Madan. The more his fame spread, the more proud and boastful Madan became.

Benchmark: 3.1.4.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language, including figurative language such as similes.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the appropriate meaning and support phrase.

Correct Responses

Meaning

To pass from person to person: Since “The entire town wanted clothes sewed by Madan,” the word of his skill must have traveled by mouth or *passed*/spread from person to person.

Support Phrase

“became known”: This phrase supports the meaning of spread. Madan’s skill “became known” as people talked, or spread, the word about him. “The entire town” became aware of Madan’s clothes.

Incorrect Responses

Meaning

To open over a large area: Readers may combine the idea of Madan’s growing reputation with a commodity that unfolds and spreads out. However, Madan’s fame does not open; it grows by word of mouth from person to person in the village.

To stretch out: Readers who focus on the word “out” in this phrase may be focusing on the attribute of a commodity that spreads out, such as a liquid, or the growth of an object. However, Madan’s fame in this story is not a tangible object that stretches to occupy more space. It is a figure of speech that means he became more famous over time.

To cover something: Although ideas and things that are spread can literally cover an area or space, in the context of paragraph 2, Madan’s fame is *passed* along by people to people who learn of, and then desire, his fine handiwork.

Support Phrase

“worked hard”: Although Madan worked hard, this fact is only tangential to the fact that his fame spread. A person can work hard without becoming skillful and/or famous.

“town wanted clothes”: The townspeople wanted Madan’s clothes because his fame has spread. The fact in itself does not give a clue to the meaning of spread.

“proud and boastful”: Someone whose fame has spread may be proud and boastful, but these character attributes occur after Madan’s fame has spread. They do not directly or indirectly support the meaning of the word.

Question 3

Why does Madan want to make a dress for the moon?

- ☐ A. He thinks the moon will be his friend.
- ☐ B. He thinks the moon will look prettier in a dress.
- ☐ C. He wants to impress his father and get more money.
- ☒ D. He wants the moon to praise him so he will be more famous.

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: II

Answer: D

Rationale A	This option may appeal to readers who view Madan’s gesture as one of kindness, the way one might treat a potential friend. However, it is not Moon’s friendship Madan seeks, but her praise.
Rationale B	Readers who read of the “smooth white satin” dress may be drawn to this option, thinking of the dress’s beauty. However, no evidence in the story indicates Madan thinks the moon will look better in a dress, only that the Moon will think Madan’s work itself is beautiful.
Rationale C	Readers who focus on Madan’s promise in paragraph 1 to send part of his earnings home to his father may be attracted to this option. However, it is the moon Madan wants to impress, not his father.
Rationale D	Correct: In paragraph 3, Madan develops the idea to make a dress for the moon as he gazes at her in the night sky. “The moon will praise my handiwork, and then my fame will spread to the sun and stars.”

Question 4

The tree thinks Madan's idea to make a dress for the moon is

- ☒ A. silly.
- ☐ B. mean.
- ☐ C. smart.
- ☐ D. clever.

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: II

Answer: A

Rationale A	Correct: The coconut tree hears Madan's plan in paragraph 4, and "Laughing softly, the tree bent down and whispered, 'That's one thing you can't do.'" Later in the story, the coconut tree says, "I tried to tell you before. . . After the moon is full, she grows smaller each day until you can't see her at all. . . So how can you make one dress that would fit the moon properly? But you wouldn't listen to me." The tree understands the ridiculousness of Madan's plan from the beginning.
Rationale B	This option may appeal to readers who think the tree views Madan's insistence on covering the moon as insensitive or uncaring. However, the story does not support the idea that the coconut tree views Madan's idea as an unkind one.
Rationale C	The coconut tree agrees to speak to the moon on Madan's behalf, and also helps Madan give the dress to the moon, which readers may see as an indication the tree thinks this is a smart idea. However, the tree knows from the start Madan will not be able to make a dress to fit the moon properly, saying in paragraph 4, "That's one thing you can't do."
Rationale D	Readers may be drawn to this option because Madan thinks his own idea is very clever and will bring him fame. However, this view is not shared by the coconut tree, who knows Madan's plan will not work

	because the moon is constantly changing size.
--	---

Question 5

The story is about a tailor who learns a lesson by failing.

Drag the events from the story into the order in which they happened, with the first event at the top.

Madan becomes a famous tailor.

A coconut tree laughs at Madan's claim.

The moon returns the dress to Madan because it does not fit.

Madan cries bitterly at his failure.

People know Madan for his skills and for being nice.

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers stack the events of the story in the order in which they happened.

Correct Responses

1st Madan becomes a famous tailor: This event exists in paragraph 2, where Madan first “learned to be a tailor” and where, later, “his fame spread.”

2nd A coconut tree laughs at Madan's claim: In paragraph 4, the coconut tree was “laughing softly” as it bent down and whispered to Madan.

3rd The moon returns the dress to Madan because it does not fit: In paragraphs 10 and 12, the moon uses the coconut tree to communicate the dress size issues. Readers must assume the dress was also returned at these times.

4th Madan cries bitterly at his failure: In paragraph 13, Madan nearly weeps with disappointment after his failure to make the moon a perfect dress, and by paragraph 15, he sits, “brokenhearted,” all night.

5th People know Madan for his skills and for being nice: Following the rise and fall of Madan from paragraphs 1-15, paragraph 17 shows him to be contrite and humble. The final paragraph explains that he is now liked “better because he was an excellent tailor and a humble one, too.”

Incorrect Responses

Any other order presented is incorrect because it will not reflect the order in which events happened.

Question 6

In paragraph 14 the word properly means

- ☐ A. loosely.
- ☒ B. correctly.
- ☐ C. happily.
- ☐ D. handsomely.

Benchmark: 3.1.4.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language, including figurative language such as similes.

DOK: II

Answer: B

Rationale A	Despite Madan's repeated attempts to fix the dress, it continues to fit loosely on the moon. Madan insists his clothes "always fit perfectly." Readers may be drawn to this response if they equate "perfectly" with "loosely." However, the fact that the dress fits loosely (i.e., it is too big) is the problem.
Rationale B	Correct: Madan's fame is built on his reputation for being a fine tailor, which includes the fact his clothes always fit correctly. Madan is stunned after he first learns the dress is too big for the moon, and cries, "It can't be! . . . The clothes I make always fit perfectly." (paragraph 11). Since the moon is always changing sizes, he will never be able to make a dress that fits her <u>properly</u> , or correctly.
Rationale C	Once the moon agrees to have a dress made, the story notes "Madan jumped for joy. Quickly he began to sew a dress" (paragraph 9). In paragraph 10, "Madan waited eagerly for the moon to appear." Madan's initial excitement, followed by his distress when he finds out the dress does not fit, may draw readers who connect these two ideas to the word <u>properly</u> . However, the coconut tree's explanation of the moon's ever-changing size in paragraph 14 provides the correct reading of the word <u>properly</u> .

Rationale D	The dress Madan makes for the moon is of “smooth white satin” (paragraph 8). This option may be appealing if the word <u>properly</u> is equated with the garment’s beauty or handsomeness. However, an item of clothing can be beautiful but still not fit correctly.
-------------	--

Question 7

What does Madan send home to his father?

- ☐ A. Clothes
- ☐ B. Food
- ☐ C. Jewelry
- ☒ D. Money

Benchmark: 3.1.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: 1

Answer: D

Rationale A	Readers may be drawn to this idea because Madan is a tailor. However, paragraph 1 discusses Madan sending “earnings” home to his father, and paragraph 18 talks specifically about sending money, not clothes, back to his father.
Rationale B	This option may be attractive to readers if they interpret Madan’s “earnings” in paragraph 1 as something other than money. However, it is clear in paragraph 18 that it is money Madan is sending home to his father.
Rationale C	Option C may be attractive to readers if they interpret Madan’s “earnings” in paragraph 1 as something valuable other than money. However, it is clear in paragraph 18 that it is money Madan is sending home to his father.
Rationale D	Correct: Before Madan leaves his village, “He promised his father that he would send a part of his earnings home regularly” (paragraph 1). After Madan’s humbling experience with the moon, paragraph 18 reveals Madan’s “hard work brought him more money. He remembered to send a good part of it to his father.”

Section 2: Helen Keller: The World in Her Heart

Question 1

What does paragraph 1 tell readers about Helen?

- ☐ A. She does not recognize her family.
- ☐ B. She understands the thoughts of her family.
- ☐ C. She does not enjoy time with her family.
- ☒ D. She wants to communicate with her family.

Benchmark: 3.2.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: II

Answer: D

Rationale A	Some readers may choose this option since Helen does not use names for her family members: “For Father, she made the shape of glasses with her fingers. For baby sister Mildred, she sucked her thumb, and for Mother, she laid her hand against her face” (paragraph 1). She uses these symbolic gestures to represent her family members, so she recognizes them without using sight or speech.
Rationale B	Although the author describes Helen’s frustration with her inability to communicate with her family (“hitting Mildred, kicking at her family, and crying” (paragraph 1)), she does not discuss the family’s reaction to Helen’s behavior. Paragraph 1 focuses on Helen’s difficulties rather than Helen’s ability to sense what her family thinks about her.
Rationale C	Some readers may choose this option because in paragraph 1 the author states, “But each day she grew more frustrated and angry.” However, Helen’s frustration and anger stem from her inability to communicate with her family members, not from her dislike of them.
Rationale D	Correct: In paragraph 1, Helen tries to communicate with her family by using symbolic gestures for her father, her sister, and her mother. She

	grows “more frustrated and angry” because her ability to communicate with them, beyond identifying who they are, is extremely limited.
--	--

Question 2

Why does Helen make “the shape of glasses with her fingers” when she means “Father”?

- ☐ A. Helen’s mother has different glasses.
- ☒ B. Helen has felt the glasses on her father’s face.
- ☐ C. Helen’s father has glasses like the teacher.
- ☐ D. Helen learned about glasses in her teacher’s lessons.

Benchmark: 3.2.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: II

Answer: B

Rationale A	Some readers may find this option appealing because paragraph 11 (<i>“Hidden behind glasses”</i>) refers to glasses other than her father’s. However, these glasses belong to Helen’s teacher, not her mother. In paragraph 1, Helen makes “the shape of glasses” for her father rather than her mother.
Rationale B	Correct: According to paragraph 1, Helen makes “the shape of glasses with her fingers” to communicate with her father. Paragraph 3 indicates Helen uses “touch” to learn about individuals, and readers can infer she feels the glasses on her father’s face.
Rationale C	According to paragraph 11, Teacher’s eyes are <i>“Hidden behind glasses.”</i> However, Helen understands the concept of glasses prior to Teacher’s arrival through her experiences with her father, as noted in paragraph 1.
Rationale D	This option is attractive because Helen’s teacher opens up Helen’s world with new words for all the familiar objects Helen has known; however, this is a gesture Helen uses to identify her father prior to her teacher’s arrival (paragraph 1).

Question 3

Read these sentences from paragraph 12.

The stranger's hand in hers. Fingers tracing, fist pounding, so many unfamiliar shapes.

The author includes these sentences most likely to

- ☒ A. explain how the teacher makes words.
- ☐ B. show how the teacher wants to comfort Helen.
- ☐ C. explain how the teacher's behavior upsets Helen.
- ☐ D. show how Helen expresses her feelings.

Benchmark: 3.2.6.6

Distinguish their own point-of-view from that of the author of a text.

DOK: III

Answer: A

Rationale A	Correct: Paragraph 18 reads: "With the stranger's help she discovered that each of the movements in her hand was the shape of a letter. And that all of the letters put together made words." The author's repetition of tactile sensory detail allows the reader to understand how Helen's teachers taught her to connect the hand gestures with specific words.
Rationale B	This option may appeal to some readers since the teacher is attempting to communicate with Helen, and touching her hand may suggest comfort. However, the actions the teacher makes are designed to teach Helen words, not to comfort her.
Rationale C	Although paragraphs 12-17 reveal Helen's frustration with her teacher's techniques, the two passages listed above center on Helen's inability to understand her teacher's persistent hand-to-hand efforts ("Fingers tracing, fist pounding" in paragraph 12 and "fingers tracing, fists pounding" in paragraph 14) to connect words to objects. The text is

	descriptive rather than explanatory.
Rationale D	Readers may be drawn to this option if they interpret the sentence to mean <i>Helen's</i> fist is pounding, as fists pounding can connote anger or frustration, feelings Helen has in her teacher's presence. However, these sentences demonstrate how the teacher tries to teach Helen words by touching Helen's hand and pounding, and do not show how Helen expresses her feelings.

Question 4

Read paragraph 15 from the article.

I don't like her.

Select the three sentences that support paragraph 15.

- ☒ Helen tries to hide.
- ☒ The stranger always finds Helen.
- ☐ The stranger teaches Helen words.
- ☒ Helen tries to lock the stranger in her room.

Benchmark: 3.2.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: III

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the three supportive sentences.

Correct Responses

Helen tries to hide: Helen's frustration is evident as she tries to evade the stranger who "will not leave" (paragraph 12) and who "stayed by her side every minute of the day" (paragraph 14). Although Helen attempts to hide from the stranger, "she was always found."

The stranger always finds Helen: Despite Helen's attempts to hide, she is consistently thwarted by the stranger. When Helen reaches for her favorite things to comfort her, the stranger "always took Helen's hand in hers, fingers tracing, fists pounding, too many strange shapes" (paragraph 14).

Helen tries to lock the stranger in her room: In her desperation to get away from the stranger, Helen attempted to lock the stranger in her room. Although Helen is persistent in her attempts to be left alone, paragraph 14 states “Nothing worked.” Helen’s inability to escape the stranger’s presence, with her “fingers tracing, fists pounding,” in Helen’s hand (paragraph 14) causes her to dislike the stranger.

Incorrect Responses

The stranger teaches Helen words: Readers may be drawn to this answer if they focus only on the beginning of the story, where the message, “Fingers tracing, fists pounding, too many strange shapes,” is reiterated in paragraphs 12 and 14, along with Helen’s frustration that “The stranger will not leave.” However, after Helen understands the stranger’s constant hand motions are actually letters the stranger is trying to teach her, Helen becomes a voracious learner, eager to know the names of everything in her world. Upon learning the name of the stranger is “Teacher,” Helen declares “*I like her.*” (paragraph 27).

Question 5

Which word does Helen first learn to spell?

- ☐ A. Tree
- ☒ B. Water
- ☐ C. Mother
- ☐ D. Teacher

Benchmark: 3.2.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: 1

Answer: B

Rationale A	This option may attract some readers because paragraph 19 indicates Helen learns to spell “tree”; however, paragraph 18 shows “tree” is not the first word she learns to spell.
Rationale B	Correct: According to paragraph 18, Helen learns to spell the word “water” at the pump. “Helen learned her first word at the pump...all of the letters put together made words.”
Rationale C	In paragraph 21, Helen learns to spell names of her family including “ <i>M-o-t-h-e-r</i> .” However, this event occurs after she learns to spell water at the pump (paragraph 18).
Rationale D	In paragraph 25, Helen spells “ <i>T-e-a-c-h-e-r</i> .” This event occurs after she learns to spell water in paragraph 18, however.

Question 6

Read paragraph 17 from the article.

I want my mother.

Why does the author most likely use italics in this sentence?

- ☐ A. To describe Helen's actions
- ☐ B. To inform readers of important ideas
- ☒ C. To show Helen's thoughts
- ☐ D. To explain the meaning of new words

Benchmark: 3.2.5.5

Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.

DOK: III

Answer: C

Rationale A	Although the author describes actions Helen takes against her teacher in paragraph 14 ("She even tried locking the stranger in her room"), this sentence reveals a thought rather than an action.
Rationale B	The statement " <i>I want my mother</i> " reveals Helen's reaction to her teacher rather than representing a significant idea. It is a reaction to the teacher's efforts to teach Helen words: "Every day there is something new. The stranger's hand in hers. Fingers racing, fist pounding, so many unfamiliar shapes" (paragraph 12). The sentence reveals Helen's emotional desire, not an important idea.
Rationale C	Correct: The author uses italics to distinguish Helen's thoughts from the narrative portions of the passage. The author uses italics to describe Helen's thoughts throughout the story (paragraphs 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 20, 22, 24, 27, and 29).
Rationale D	Some readers may be drawn to this option if they assume the italicized

	<p>"<i>I want my mother</i>" in paragraph 17 is the translation of the hand actions at the end of paragraph 14. However, Helen does not know what the hand gestures mean or how to use them at this point in the story. The italics here are used to express Helen's thoughts.</p>
--	--

Question 7

Select the two quotations from the article that show how Helen learned new information.

- ☐ "But each day she grew more frustrated"
(paragraph 1)
- ☐ "Her parents tried to make her happy"
(paragraph 1)
- ☒ "She felt the sharp crunch of pine needles underfoot"
(paragraph 28)
- ☒ "When she caught the scent of water she stopped"
(paragraph 30)

Benchmark: 3.2.3.3

Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the two correct quotations.

Correct Responses

"She felt the sharp crunch of pine needles underfoot": Since Helen is both blind and deaf, she interprets and learns about her world through physical sensation. In paragraph 28, "Helen paid close attention" as she led her teacher down a path. When she feels the pine needles under her feet as she is walking, followed by "spongy moss" and "rickety planks of a bridge," she knows they are getting close to the river.

"When she caught the scent of water she stopped": Helen's reliance on her remaining senses for learning about the world around her includes the sense of smell.

By carefully noting the scent of water in the air in paragraph 30, Helen knows they are close to the river (*W-a-t-e-r*, she spelled in Teacher's hand").

Incorrect Responses

"But each day she grew more frustrated": Readers may be drawn to this answer if they associate it with Helen's initial resentment of her teacher and her bafflement over the continual hand gestures her teacher uses; however, this quotation is from paragraph 1, prior to the teacher's arrival and any sort of formal education is attempted. Although Helen has "found ways to speak to her family" (paragraph 1), her lack of communication skills is her primary source of frustration, and this frustration hinders, not helps, her ability to learn new information.

"Her parents tried to make her happy": Readers may be attracted to this answer if they correlate Helen's rudimentary communication skills ("Helen found ways to speak to her family") with her parents' attempts to make her happy in paragraph 1. These two ideas are unrelated, however, and as the paragraph ends, "Helen's behavior only got worse;" no mention is made of Helen learning anything new.

Question 8

Based on information in the article, what does gestured mean in paragraph 20?

- ☐ A. Asked
- ☐ B. Pulled
- ☒ C. Motioned
- ☐ D. Demanded

Benchmark: 3.2.4.4

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.

DOK: III

Answer: C

Rationale A	This option may be attractive if the story's italicized portions, which represent Helen's thoughts, are mistaken for spoken words. Since Helen does not have the ability to ask questions orally, she uses physical motions to convey her needs: " <i>Tell me the name</i> " is a translation of Helen's motion.
Rationale B	The author states in paragraph 20, "Helen touched everything in her path. <i>Tell me the name</i> , she <u>gestured</u> ." Some readers may think <u>gestured</u> means pulled if they think Helen is pulling her teacher along because she is so eager to know the name of objects. However, Helen is touching "everything in her path" rather than pulling her teacher.
Rationale C	Correct: In paragraph 20, the author states, "Helen touched everything in her path. <i>Tell me the name</i> , she <u>gestured</u> ." In this context, <u>gestured</u> means a physical movement (motion) designed to convey a question.
Rationale D	Although Helen's gesture is conveyed as an imperative sentence, " <i>Tell me the name</i> ," the gesture reflects Helen's eagerness to know the names of objects rather than her making a demanding request.

Question 9

Which sentence from the article shows that Helen is eager to learn?

- ☐ A. "The stranger stayed by her side every minute of the day."
(paragraph 14)
- ☐ B. "Helen learned her first word at the pump."
(paragraph 18)
- ☐ C. "The letters were spelled slowly into her hand."
(paragraph 25)
- ☒ D. "Soon Helen could spell nearly six hundred words."
(paragraph 28)

Benchmark: 3.2.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: II

Answer: D

Rationale A	This option may be attractive if the teacher's persistence is confused with Helen's eagerness. The author states in paragraph 12, "The stranger will not leave. Each day there is something new." However, this option shows the teacher's willingness to teach Helen, not Helen's eagerness to learn.
Rationale B	This option may appeal to some readers because paragraph 18 shows that Helen finally makes the association between her teacher's hand actions and the words they represent. However, paragraphs 12-17 depict Helen's resistance to her teacher's relentless efforts at instruction; Helen's eagerness to learn manifests itself only after she learns the first word.
Rationale C	This statement from paragraph 25 reveals how the teacher uses hand motions to teach Helen words; however, it does not reflect Helen's eagerness to learn.
Rationale D	Correct: In very little time (paragraphs 19-37), Helen amasses a large

	vocabulary, revealing her desire to learn.
--	--

Question 10

Read this summary of the article.

Then, select two details that should be removed from the summary.

Helen Keller could communicate very little with her family. She often misbehaved. One day, a teacher came to stay and help Helen. This teacher was from Boston and she had curly hair. At first, Helen was mean to the teacher, but the teacher taught Helen how to spell and communicate. This teaching allowed Helen to explore the world around her.

Benchmark: 3.2.2.2

Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the two details that should be removed from the summary of the article.

Correct Responses

“She often misbehaved”: This detail should be removed from the summary because it is not a key idea. Readers should select this sentence since it only accompanies the

fact that the Kellers acquired a teacher. Although this detail is important, it is not in itself critical to the summary.

“This teacher was from Boston and she had curly hair”: This detail should be removed from the summary because it is a supporting detail rather than a key idea. Readers should select the sentence since it only accompanies the fact the Kellers acquired a teacher (a key idea). The teacher’s hair and hometown do not pertain to how the teacher was instrumental in Helen’s learning.

Incorrect Responses

“Helen Keller could communicate very little with her family.”

“One day, a teacher came to stay and help Helen.”

“At first, Helen was mean to the teacher, but the teacher taught Helen how to spell and communicate.”

“This teaching allowed Helen to explore the world around her.”

This summary is set up as a problem/solution format. Each sentence is relevant to the summary because it outlines the main ideas. Problem or main idea: Helen has communication issues. Solution: a teacher is hired and eventually gets through to Helen. Resolution: Helen can now communicate and respond effectively.

Section 3: My Special Day at Third Street School

Question 1

Miss Amanda Drake visits Third Street School because

- ☐ A. the children have made her presents.
- ☐ B. she lives near the school.
- ☐ C. the school is so beautiful.
- ☒ D. she has been invited.

Benchmark: 3.1.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: 1

Answer: D

Rationale A	Although the students “fold some origami flowers” in line 17 for Miss Amanda Drake and also provide lemonade and chocolate cake in lines 25-26, the author agrees to visit before the students make her presents. Thus, the promise of gifts is not the reason for Miss Amanda Drake’s visit.
Rationale B	In lines 6-7, the speaker states the author is coming on a bus from Biloxi Street, and it might make sense that the author would visit the school if she lives close enough to take a bus there. However, the speaker notes that Miss Amanda Drake “was glad to be invited” (line 4), and it is the invitation, not the author’s proximity to the school, that prompts her visit.
Rationale C	The students’ efforts to beautify their classroom before Miss Amanda Drake’s visit may attract some readers to this option. For example, the students “draw a million drawings / just to decorate the wall” in lines 15-16. The narrator also states in line 27 that their “classroom’s looking beautiful.” However, the author agrees to visit before the students decorate, so the beauty of the classroom is not the reason for Miss

	Amanda Drake's visit.
Rationale D	Correct: The opening stanza of the poem contains the information that "AN AUTHOR'S COMING TO OUR SCHOOL," and the "teacher's so excited" because "The author wrote and said that she / was glad to be invited."

Question 2

Which statement about Miss Amanda Drake is true?

- ☐ A. She writes to ask for directions to Third Street School.
- ☐ B. She arrives in the morning at Third Street School.
- ☐ C. She walks part way to Third Street School.
- ☒ D. She rides the bus to Third Street School.

Benchmark: 3.1.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: 1

Answer: D

Rationale A	Miss Amanda Drake writes and says she will visit the school (line 3), so some readers may infer she requested directions. However, the poem does not support the suggestion that she needs directions to the school.
Rationale B	A significant amount of time passes between the author's response to the invitation and her actual arrival at the school. This time allows the students to make preparations for her visit, which are detailed in lines 9-28. However, no specific reference exists for Miss Amanda Drake's arrival time—morning or afternoon.
Rationale C	The speaker mentions Miss Amanda Drake is taking a bus "from over on Biloxi Street" (line 7). Readers might infer that Miss Amanda Drake would walk part of the way to the bus and to the school, but no mention of her walking is made anywhere in the context of the poem.
Rationale D	Correct: In line 6, the speaker says Miss Amanda Drake is "coming on the bus / from over on Biloxi Street / just to visit us."

Question 3

Why do the students want to meet Miss Amanda Drake?

- ☒ A. They like her books.
- ☐ B. They like her pink hair.
- ☐ C. They like the way she reads to them.
- ☐ D. They like the letter she wrote to them.

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: II

Answer: A

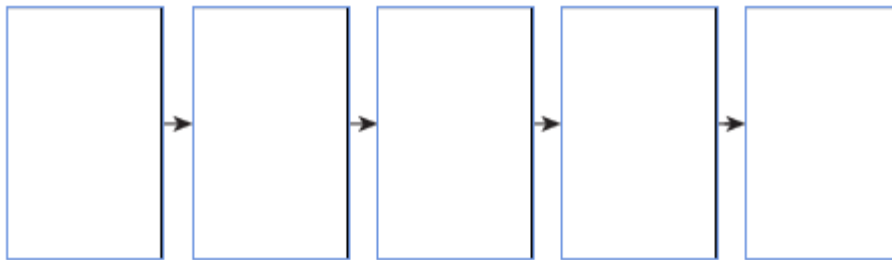
Rationale A	Correct: Miss Amanda Drake is an author, which is established in line 1. The students' first order of business in preparing for her visit is to "read her books...every one we've got. / Then we borrow fourteen more" (lines 9-11) to read before she arrives. The speaker says, "She's written quite a lot" (line 12), which is the basis of their admiration for her.
Rationale B	Although the speaker comments on the surprisingly attractive nature of Miss Amanda Drake's pink-streaked hair in line 34, the students do not know this about her until she is in their classroom. Therefore, her hairstyle is not the reason why the students want to meet Miss Amanda Drake.
Rationale C	Some readers may select this option because line 37 states: "She talks to us and reads to us" and may extrapolate that the students want to hear her read what she has written. However, context in the poem does not indicate this is why the students want to meet the author.
Rationale D	Miss Amanda Drake does write to the teacher to accept her invitation, but aside from this one detail, the speaker does not mention the contents of the letter.

Question 4






Complete the diagram to show the correct order of events as students prepare for Miss Amanda Drake's visit.

Drag each picture into the correct box.

What Students Do to Prepare for Miss Amanda Drake's Visit



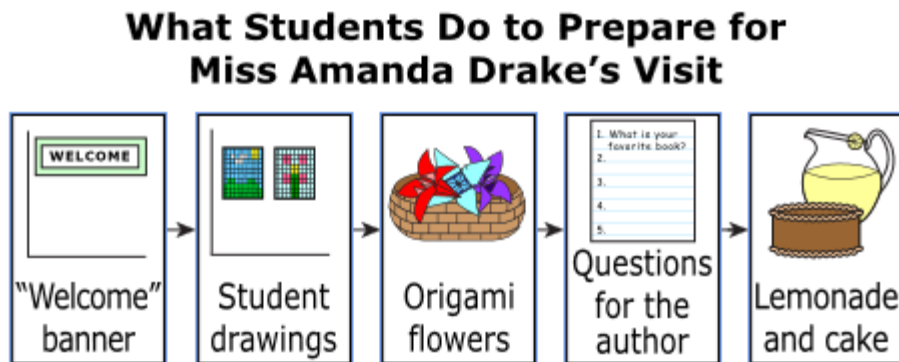
Students' Actions

 Lemonade and cake	 "Welcome" banner	 Questions for the author	 Student drawings	 Origami flowers
--	---	---	---	--

Question 4 Correct Answers

Complete the diagram to show the correct order of events as students prepare for Miss Amanda Drake's visit.

Drag each picture into the correct box.



Students' Actions

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: III

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers drag the events of the poem into the boxes in the correct order as shown.

Correct Responses

1st "Welcome" banner: In lines 13-15, the students "make a welcome banner / that we hang up in the hall."

2nd Student drawings: In lines 15-16, the narrator states, "We draw a million drawings / just to decorate the wall."

3rd Origami flowers: Lines 17-20 describe the process of making the origami flowers, stating “We fold some origami flowers. / They’re very hard to do. / We pile them in a basket / with a note that says ‘For You.’”

4th Questions for the author: Lines 21-22 state, “We make a list of questions / that we’ll ask Amanda Drake.” The students are further instructed in lines 23-24 to refrain from asking how much money she makes.

5th Lemonade and cake: Finally, in lines 25-26, the student narrator notes, “We squeeze some ice-cold lemonade. / We bake a chocolate cake.”

Incorrect Responses

Any other order presented is incorrect because it will not reflect the order in which events happened.

Question 5

Select the line from the poem that contains figurative language.

Then, select the description to support your choice.

Lines from the Poem

"We make a welcome banner"
(line 13)

"We draw a million drawings"
(line 15)

"We pile them in a basket"
(line 19)

"We make a list of questions"
(line 21)

Descriptions

An object is given
a human
characteristic.

An object is being
compared to
another object.

An event is described
as being more than
it really is.

An event is the
opposite of what is
being described.

Benchmark: 3.1.4.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language, including figurative language such as similes.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the correct line and description.

Correct Responses

Line from the Poem

“We draw a million drawings”

Description

An event is described as being more than it really is.

Because the students in the poem do not literally draw a million drawings, the statement is an example of hyperbole, where “An event is described as being more than it really is.” The hyperbole is intended to show the students created many drawings for the occasion.

Incorrect Responses

Line from the Poem

“We make a welcome banner”: Some readers may choose this option based on connecting it with the description, “An object is being compared to another object.” The logic readers might apply is that “welcome” describes banner and *describe* means *compare*.

“We pile them in a basket”: Some readers may consider the word *pile* as a noun and connect piles with large quantities—more than something really is. However, *pile* is used as a verb in this line to show the origami were not formally arranged, but more casually collected.

“We make a list of questions”: Although this statement is not an example of figurative language, some readers may consider “list” and “questions” as opposites, or they may consider them comparisons.

Description

An object is given a human characteristic: This description correctly defines a type of figurative language—personification—but no such comparison is present in the cited lines.

An object is being compared to another object: This description correctly defines a type of figurative language—simile—but no such comparison is present in the cited lines.

An event is the opposite of what is being described: This description closely resembles a type of figurative language—antithesis—but no opposition of ideas is present in the cited lines.

Question 6

In line 32, what does the word appreciation mean?

- ☐ A. Hope
- ☒ B. Thanks
- ☐ C. Wonder
- ☐ D. Surprise

Benchmark: 3.1.4.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language, including figurative language such as similes.

DOK: II

Answer: B

Rationale A	Although the students may have hopes about what Miss Amanda Drake will be like or what she will have to offer them, hope does not describe the students' feelings in this stanza as they "stamp [their] feet and clap [their] hands" (line 31).
Rationale B	Correct: In line 31, the students "stamp [their] feet and clap [their] hands" to show thanks for Miss Amanda Drake taking the time to visit them.
Rationale C	Some readers may select this option because the students are very excited that the writer has arrived (line 29). However, the children's response is less one of wonder than it is of gratitude.
Rationale D	While the students show great enthusiasm in lines 29-32, they have spent a great deal of time preparing for the author's visit and are not surprised by her arrival.

Question 7

Read lines 29–32 from the poem.

She's here! She's here! We're in a state
of great anticipation!
We stamp our feet and clap our hands
to show appreciation.

Which phrase describes the students in lines 29–32?

- ☐ A. Eager to prepare
- ☐ B. Suddenly shy
- ☒ C. Full of excitement
- ☐ D. Suddenly surprised

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: III

Answer: C

Rationale A	The students are excited the writer has arrived in line 29. However, at this point in the poem, the children have already prepared for the guest, as shown in lines 9-28.
Rationale B	Some readers may think because the writer has finally arrived ("She's here! She's here!"), the students may suddenly feel shy about meeting her. However, the rest of the quotation that describes the students stamping their feet and clapping their hands does not suggest the students suddenly feel shy.
Rationale C	Correct: The students' behavior in lines 29-32 shows their excitement—from the exclamations, "She's here! She's here!" in line 29 to the admission that they are "in a state / of great anticipation!" in lines 29-30.

	The students use the sounds of their hands and feet to show Miss Amanda Drake just how excited and grateful they are to meet her.
Rationale D	This option may appeal to some readers because the author is famous since “[s]he’s written quite a lot” (line 12). However, the physical manifestations of the students’ delight in Miss Amanda Drake’s visit (“We stamp our feet and clap our hands / to show appreciation” in lines 31-32), reveal the students are not surprised. They expect the writer and greet her with great enthusiasm.

Question 8

Read the chart that shows the actions in the poem.

Drag the quotation into the correct box that best supports each action.

Actions in the Poem

The Author Talks to the Students	The Students Prepare for the Author's Visit	The Speaker Describes the Author's Looks	The Students React When the Author Arrives

Quotations from the Poem

"We fold some origami flowers" (line 17)	"We stamp our feet and clap our hands" (line 31)	"Her hair is streaked with pink" (line 34)	"My dictionary's close at hand" (line 43)
---	---	---	--

Question 8 Correct Answers

Read the chart that shows the actions in the poem.

Drag the quotation into the correct box that best supports each action.

Actions in the Poem

The Author Talks to the Students	The Students Prepare for the Author's Visit	The Speaker Describes the Author's Looks	The Students React When the Author Arrives
"My dictionary's close at hand" (line 43)	"We fold some origami flowers" (line 17)	"Her hair is streaked with pink" (line 34)	"We stamp our feet and clap our hands" (line 31)

Quotations from the Poem

Benchmark: 3.1.2.2

Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers drag the appropriate quote into the correct box.

Correct Responses

The Author Talks to the Students

“My dictionary’s close at hand”: Line 37 of the poem states the author “talks to us and reads to us,” telling the students that she keeps her dictionary close to her while she writes.

The Students Prepare for the Author’s Visit

“We fold some origami flowers”: As a way of welcoming their special guest, the students spend time decorating their classroom with banners and pictures. As part of this preparation, they fold origami flowers and “pile them in a basket / with a note that says ‘For You.’”(lines 19-20).

The Speaker Describes the Author’s Looks

“Her hair is streaked with pink”: In lines 33-36, the poem describes the author’s physical appearance, including her hair, noting that it “doesn’t sound attractive / but it’s nicer than you think.”

The Students React When the Author Arrives

“We stamp our feet and clap our hands”: The students’ excitement over Amanda Drake’s arrival is revealed in lines 29-30: “She’s here! She’s here! We’re in a state / of great anticipation!” They “show appreciation” (line 32) for the author’s visit by stamping their feet and clapping their hands.

Incorrect Responses

There are no extra responses. Readers who switch quotes may not have made the correct associations based on textual evidence.

Question 9

Read this poem about a special day at school when an author visits. Then answer the questions. Some questions may ask you about certain lines. The lines are numbered on the left side.

My Special Day at Third Street School

by Eve Bunting

- 1 AN AUTHOR'S COMING TO OUR SCHOOL.
2 Our teacher's so excited.
3 The author wrote and said that she
4 was glad to be invited.
5 Her name is Miss Amanda Drake.
6 She's coming on the bus
7 from over on Biloxi Street
8 just to visit us.
- 21 We make a list of questions
22 that we'll ask Amanda Drake.
- 35 It doesn't sound attractive,
36 but it's nicer than you think.
37 She talks to us and reads to us
38 and says she loves to write.
39 "I'm working, working every day

Select the central idea of the poem.

Then, scroll through the entire poem to select the quotation from the poem that best supports that idea.

Central Idea

Amanda Drake accepts the challenge of working long days and nights.

Amanda Drake enjoys talking to children more than doing her job.

(To see the entire passage text, refer to the Reading Sampler.)

Benchmark: 3.1.2.2

Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

DOK: III

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the central idea and the best supporting quotation.

Correct Responses

Central Idea

Amanda Drake accepts the challenge of working long days and nights: The context of the poem should convince readers that Amanda Drake is a “famous” writer because the students go to such lengths to welcome her. She is a prolific writer (lines 9-12), which supports the idea that she accepts the challenge of working hard. Amanda herself confesses, “I’m working, working every day / and sometimes every night” (lines 39-40).

Supporting Quotation

“and says she loves to write”: Readers who select this line for support understand a writer would accept the challenge of the long hours required because of a love for writing and reading.

Incorrect Responses

Central Idea

Amanda Drake enjoys talking to children more than doing her job: Readers who choose this quotation may have used as evidence lines 3 and 4 since Amanda Drake expressed her gladness for the invitation in these lines. Readers may also look at the efforts made to prepare for the visit (reading, origami flowers, lemonade, and cake) and, seeing those features as enjoyable things, may apply them as **more** enjoyable than writing, and these enjoyable things accompany talking to children. In addition, lines 37-40 describe a woman who enjoys children, but readers should not assume she enjoys talking to children more than doing her job. She enjoys talking to them as a part of her job.

Supporting Quotation

“She’s coming on the bus”: Readers who select line 6 as the supporting quotation have assumed the central idea is “Amanda Drake enjoys talking to children more than doing her job.” The line about the bus possibly conveys the students’ astonishment that such a famous person would get on an ordinary bus, or go to the trouble of getting on a bus, just to visit them. This interpretation reveals the assumption that she must really like talking to children.

“We make a list of questions”: Readers who select line 21 as the supporting quotation have likely assumed the central idea is “Amanda Drake enjoys talking to children more than doing her job.” If the students are compiling questions, readers might assume this action must be to honor Amanda’s preference for talking with children over

doing her job as a writer. Instead, the students are preparing for an organized, smooth visit.

“but it’s nicer than you think”: Readers may think the niceness in line 36 describes Amanda Drake herself, who is so nice she prefers to talk with children over being a writer. However, the “it’s nicer” refers to her pink-streaked hair, not her attitude toward children.

Question 10

Who is the speaker of the poem?

- ☒ A. A student at Third Street School
- ☐ B. The principal from Third Street School
- ☐ C. A teacher at Third Street School
- ☐ D. A writer who visits Third Street School

Benchmark: 3.1.6.6

Distinguish their own point-of-view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

DOK: II

Answer: A

Rationale A	Correct: The speaker is established as a student in line 2 with references to “Our teacher,” and by stating in line 1 that the author is “coming to our school.” Throughout the rest of the poem, the speaker is further established as part of a class that is making special efforts to welcome Miss Amanda Drake to Third Street School.
Rationale B	This may seem a feasible option, since the reader may associate a principal as someone who would help set up an author’s visit to the school. Line 1 states, “AN AUTHOR IS COMING TO OUR SCHOOL”; however, line 2 notes, “Our teacher’s so excited,” indicating the narrator is a student, not the principal.
Rationale C	Since a teacher is mentioned in line 2, some readers may be tempted to select this option. However, although the teacher is responsible for inviting Miss Amanda Drake to the school, the teacher is not the speaker of the poem.
Rationale D	Some readers may select this option if they confuse the speaker with a character from the poem. Miss Amanda Drake is a writer who visits Third Street School, but she is not the speaker of the poem.

Question 11

What is Miss Amanda Drake's message to the students?

- ☒ A. Ask good questions if you expect good answers.
- ☐ B. Use a tool such as a dictionary when you write.
- ☒ C. Enjoy your job even if you have to work hard.
- ☐ D. Behave kindly toward people when they visit.

Benchmark: 3.1.2.2

Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

DOK: III

Answer: C

Rationale A	Although the students “make a list of questions / that [they’ll] ask Amanda Drake” in lines 21-22, Miss Amanda Drake herself does not address the importance of asking good questions. Some readers may be drawn to this option if they confuse Miss Amanda Drake with the teacher, who advises the students not to ask questions that are too personal, like “How much money do you make” (line 24).
Rationale B	Miss Amanda Drake refers to her dictionary, which is “close at hand / for words that [she] can’t spell” (lines 43-44). Because she is a writer, a dictionary is important to her work, but her message to the students is not about the importance of using a dictionary.
Rationale C	Correct: Miss Amanda Drake emphasizes how hard she works in lines 39-40 (“I’m working, working every day / and sometimes every night”), and her final words to the students in lines 45-48 are “[it] doesn’t seem like work / if you are loving what you do.”
Rationale D	Some readers may select this option because the students at Third Street School are so kind toward Miss Amanda Drake when she visits. However, no text evidence suggests Miss Amanda Drake addresses the importance of good manners when she talks to the students.

Section 4: Out of the Dark / Caves

Question 1

Who is the narrator of this story?

- ☒ A. Dawn
- ☐ B. The tour guide in the story
- ☐ C. Jason
- ☐ D. A person outside the story

Benchmark: 3.1.6.6

Distinguish their own point-of-view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

DOK: II

Answer: D

Rationale A	Some readers may be attracted to this option because Dawn plays a major role in the story and is the best friend of Jason, the story's main character. However, the story is told by someone outside the story.
Rationale B	The cave tour guide explains "the rules of cave exploration" (paragraph 5) and tells the class about the bats that once lived in the cave (paragraph 7). However, the tour guide is not the narrator of this story.
Rationale C	Jason is the main character of the story and the first character mentioned by the author; some readers may take his prominence in the story as an indication that he is the narrator. However, Jason's character is referred to as "he" throughout the story, not "I", demonstrating that the story is told by someone outside the story.
Rationale D	Correct: The story is narrated in third person, indicating that its narrator is outside the action.

Question 2

Read paragraph 1 of the story.

Select the three groups of words that show how Jason really feels about the cave.

Jason **tried to force a smile** as his classmates **lined up to enter** the cave. “**This will be great**,” he whispered to Dawn, his best friend, who was standing in front of him. Jason **wiped his sweaty palms** on his pants and **swallowed hard**. The rest of his classmates were laughing and talking excitedly to one another. Jason hoped that no one would discover how he really felt about this field trip.

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the three groups of words that show Jason’s feelings.

Correct Responses

“tried to force a smile”: Jason’s efforts to pretend that he feels happy are captured in this option. If he were truly happy to be entering a dark cave, there would be no need for him to try to force a smile, as it would be a natural, automatic response.

“wiped his sweaty palms”: Sweat is one of the body’s involuntary responses to stress, which reflects Jason’s state of mind as he prepares to go into the cave.

“swallowed hard”: Difficulty swallowing can be seen as a sign of anxiety, which Jason feels when confronted with the prospect of being in an enclosed, dark space.

Incorrect Responses

“lined up to enter”: This is a description of how the students entered the cave, and does not reveal Jason’s emotional state.

“This will be great”: Readers may be drawn to this option if they take the statement at face value. However, a closer reading reveals that Jason says this to mask his fear and unhappiness about being in a dark cave. This is evident when the story reveals, “Jason hoped that no one would discover how he really felt about this field trip” (paragraph 1).

Question 3

In paragraph 4 of “Out of the Dark,” Dawn’s eyes “darted back and forth, searching the ceiling of the cave.” According to the article “Caves,” what was Dawn most likely seeing?

- ☒ A. Limestone bedrock
- ☐ B. Ocean waves
- ☐ C. Thick lava
- ☐ D. Melting ice

Benchmark: 3.1.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: III

Answer: A

Rationale A	Correct: Paragraphs 21-23 of “Caves” explain how limestone caves form when groundwater fills cracks in underground limestone bedrock; readers can infer from this information that when Dawn looks at the ceiling of the cave through which the guide leads her class, she sees this type of bedrock.
Rationale B	Paragraph 20 of “Caves” states, “In some places, bedrock cliffs are near the seashore. Ocean waves crash against the rock.” Although ocean waves help make sea caves, students would be unable to tour the cave if waves were flowing in high enough to reach the ceiling.
Rationale C	Paragraphs 16-17 of “Caves” relate how lava forms lava caves; however, Dawn would be unlikely to see actual lava when she looks at the ceiling of the cave, for a lava tube’s walls and ceiling are, according to paragraph 17, an “empty tube” from which “[l]ava beneath the hard crust [has] drain[ed] away.”
Rationale D	Although glacier caves are an important part of “Caves” (paragraphs 18-19), the setting of “Out of the Dark” is unlikely to be a glacier cave. The cave Dawn is in has “chilly air” (paragraph 6), but since “lights

	shone from the sides of the cave” (paragraph 5), it is probably not made of ice.
--	--

Question 4

Both characters in the story experience a certain feeling while on a class trip.

Drag one feeling that each character experiences into the box labeled "Feeling."

Then, drag the detail that provides support for each character's feeling into the box labeled "Detail from Text."

	Feeling	Detail from Text
Jason		
Dawn		

Feeling

Detail from Text

Frightened	"eyes darted back and forth" (paragraph 4)
Curious	"heartbeat was also drowning out the sound" (paragraph 5)
Excited	"kicked a loose rock" (paragraph 10)
Nervous	"grin was so big" (paragraph 12)

Question 4 Correct Answers

Both characters in the story experience a certain feeling while on a class trip.

Drag one feeling that each character experiences into the box labeled "Feeling."

Then, drag the detail that provides support for each character's feeling into the box labeled "Detail from Text."

	Feeling	Detail from Text
Jason	Frightened	"heartbeat was also drowning out the sound" (paragraph 5)
Dawn	Nervous	"eyes darted back and forth" (paragraph 4)

Feeling

Detail from Text

Frightened	"eyes darted back and forth" (paragraph 4)
Curious	"heartbeat was also drowning out the sound" (paragraph 5)
Excited	"kicked a loose rock" (paragraph 10)
Nervous	"grin was so big" (paragraph 12)

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: III

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers drag the appropriate feeling and supporting detail for each character into the correct boxes.

Correct Responses

Jason's Feeling

Frightened: Physical evidence of Jason's fright begins in paragraph 1 with his forced smile, his "sweaty palms," and his hard swallow. Internally, he "hoped no one would discover his feelings" about the trip. In paragraph 12, Jason admits to Dawn he is "frightened of the dark." Text evidence clearly shows Jason's fearful reaction to the situation in which he finds himself.

Detail from Text

"heartbeat was also drowning out the sound": In paragraph 5, the loud thumping of Jason's heart is a further symptom of his fear as he enters a place he clearly does not want to be.

Dawn's Feeling

Nervous: Dawn grabs Jason's arm in paragraph 8 and inadvertently blurts out, "I knew it! I knew there would be bats here. I should have told the teacher. She wouldn't have made me come if she had known." Readers can tell she is not enthusiastic about the bats; she is nervous to the point of suddenly exclaiming her anxiety to Jason so loudly she inadvertently allows her classmates to hear.

Detail from Text

"eyes darted back and forth": Readers have a clue to Dawn's nervousness in paragraph 4, long before her actions in paragraph 8. She reluctantly agrees with Jason's false cheer as she is feeling "a bit unsure," and her darting eyes attest to her nervous state. Yet, when compared to Jason's physical and internal reactions as the story progresses, readers can determine Dawn's nervousness about her situation does not equal the degree of angst Jason feels about his situation.

Incorrect Responses

Feeling

Curious: In paragraph 9, Jason asks Dawn, "If she had known what?" Readers may think the question characterizes curious feelings in general, but Jason is asking out of friendly interest and a desire to "calm Dawn."

Excited: In paragraph 1, Jason whispers to Dawn, “This will be great.” In paragraph 3, Jason says, “This will be so great...Don’t you think so?” Readers must realize he is trying to force a positive attitude that he does not really feel. Accompanying details show Jason’s fright.

Detail from Text

“kicked a loose rock”: The reasons people kick loose rocks vary. Some readers may choose this option because they think *excited* or *curious* people will kick loose rocks just to see what will happen. However, in paragraph 10, Dawn kicks a loose rock to cover her embarrassment after admitting her fears to Jason.

“grin was so big”: Jason grins big in paragraph 12 when he knows he is not the only person upset over the cave visit. People who are excited in a positive way grin and show enthusiasm. However, since neither character feels excited, this choice is incorrect.

Question 5

Why does the author write that Jason is “rubbing his arms against the chilly air” in paragraph 6 and has a “warm feeling spreading throughout his heart” in paragraph 12?

- ☐ A. To show that the setting at the end of the story is different from the setting at the beginning
- ☒ B. To show how Jason’s feelings change between the beginning and end of the story
- ☐ C. To show Jason’s actions when he tries to keep warm in a cold part of the cave
- ☐ D. To show that the cave is cold in some places and warm in others

Benchmark: 3.1.6.6

Distinguish their own point-of-view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

DOK: III

Answer: B

Rationale A	Some readers may think the mention of “chilly air” early in the story and “a warm feeling” later in the story indicates a change of setting. However, the students remain in the same location throughout the story; the “warm feeling” of paragraph 12 is not a physical marker of the setting, but rather a metaphorical expression of Jason’s feelings.
Rationale B	Correct: The author’s use of warmth in paragraph 12, in a situation in which Jason is most likely not feeling actual physical warmth because his class is deep in the cave, indicates something—in this case, the extent of his fear—has changed since he felt “chilly air” in paragraph 6.
Rationale C	A literal reading of Jason’s “warm feeling” might suggest he has done something to warm himself (e.g., rubbed his arms, as he does in paragraph 6); however, his “warm feeling” in paragraph 12 is metaphorical, reflecting his “relief to know that he was not alone” (paragraph 12) in his fear of the cave.
Rationale D	In paragraph 6, the “chilly air” is both metaphorical and literal, but in

	paragraph 12, the “warmth” Jason feels is solely metaphorical, in that it is “spreading throughout his heart.” Thus, this option fails to consider the context of both paragraphs.
--	--

Question 6

Read this sentence from paragraph 4.

'Well, maybe,' Dawn replied, sounding a bit unsure of herself.

Which paragraph explains why Dawn sounds this way?

- ☐ A. Paragraph 5
- ☐ B. Paragraph 6
- ☒ C. Paragraph 11
- ☐ D. Paragraph 12

Benchmark: 3.1.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: III

Answer: C

Rationale A	Some readers may choose this option because of its proximity to paragraph 4, and may infer the narrator will explain the reason for Dawn's uneasiness immediately following the statement. However, paragraph 5 describes why Jason feels "a bit unsure," not Dawn.
Rationale B	Some readers may choose this option if they confuse Jason's and Dawn's reasons for feeling unsure about going into the cave. However, paragraph 6 explains why Jason, not Dawn, feels unsure: he is "afraid of the dark."
Rationale C	Correct: Paragraph 11 makes clear that Dawn's uneasiness is due to being in the cave as she confesses to Jason, "I'm a little afraid of bats," which she suspects make their homes there.
Rationale D	Paragraph 12 details Jason's "relief" at finding out he is not the only one who is afraid of something in the cave. However, Jason's relief in this paragraph does not explain why Dawn sounds unsure of herself at the beginning of the story.

Question 7

Which idea do Jason and Dawn share through most of the story?

- ☐ A. Bats and other scary animals are in the cave with them.
- ☐ B. The tour guide shares facts they already know about the cave.
- ☐ C. Telling their classmates about their fears will make them feel better.
- ☒ D. The teacher would have let them stay home if she knew they were afraid.

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: II

Answer: D

Rationale A	Some readers who focus on Dawn’s belief alone may be attracted to this option, for in paragraph 8, Dawn says, “I knew there would be bats here.” Jason, however, does not believe there are bats in the cave, and in paragraph 12, he reminds Dawn, “Don’t forget that the guide just said bats are no longer here.”
Rationale B	This option may be attractive in that it reinforces the idea that Dawn takes the tour guide’s discussion of bats in paragraph 7 as confirmation of her suspicion that bats inhabit the cave (paragraph 8)—something she says she “knew” would be the case: “I knew it! I knew there would be bats here.” In addition, some readers may be attracted to this option because it offers an alternate explanation for why Jason fails to listen to the tour guide in paragraph 5. The real explanation, however, is that Jason’s “attention [is] on his own thoughts.”
Rationale C	This option may be attractive because of the relief both Dawn and Jason feel once they share their respective fears of the cave; however, this insight only comes at the end of the story, and throughout most of the story, Jason takes pains to hide his anxiety: “Jason hoped that no one would discover how he really felt about this field trip” (paragraph 1).

Rationale D	Correct: Paragraph 6 states, “ <i>I should have told the teacher the truth</i> , Jason thought, rubbing his arms against the chilly air. <i>She would not have made me come.</i> ” Similarly, in paragraph 8, Dawn exclaims, referring to her fear of bats, “‘I should have told the teacher. She wouldn’t have made me come if she had known.’”
-------------	--

Question 8

For each event in Column 1, choose the statement based on "Out of the Dark" that correctly tells what happens.

Drag the statements into the correct boxes in Column 2.

Column 1: What happens	Column 2: Why it happens
Jason tells Dawn the cave will be great.	
Dawn says she knew there would be bats.	
Dawn laughs and makes echoes in the cave.	
Jason changes his mind about the cave.	

Statements

Jason tries to hide how he feels about the cave.	The guide talks about bats.
Dawn says she is afraid of bats.	Jason reminds Dawn of what the guide said.

Question 8 Correct Answers

For each event in Column 1, choose the statement based on “Out of the Dark” that correctly tells what happens.

Drag the statements into the correct boxes in Column 2.

Column 1: What happens	Column 2: Why it happens
Jason tells Dawn the cave will be great.	Jason tries to hide how he feels about the cave.
Dawn says she knew there would be bats.	The guide talks about bats.
Dawn laughs and makes echoes in the cave.	Jason reminds Dawn of what the guide said.
Jason changes his mind about the cave.	Dawn says she is afraid of bats.

Statements

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: III

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers drag the appropriate statement for each event into the correct box.

Correct Responses

Jason tells Dawn the cave will be great

Jason tries to hide how he feels about the cave: Jason is embarrassed by his fear of the dark. Because “he had not wanted to look foolish to the other kids” (paragraph 6), Jason does not tell the teacher of his fear, and tries to save face with false cheer. This ruse includes telling Dawn twice that he thinks the field trip will be great.

Dawn says she knew there would be bats

The guide talks about bats: Dawn’s fear of bats is evident in her knee-jerk reaction to the guide’s statement in paragraph 7. It also explains Dawn’s nervous behavior in paragraph 4, where “Her eyes darted back and forth, searching the ceiling of the cave.” Her phobia is so strong that she misses the guide’s subsequent remark that the students would not see bats because “the bats left this area a long time ago.”

Dawn laughs and makes echoes in the cave

Jason reminds Dawn of what the guide said: Jason’s reiteration of the guide’s message that there are no longer bats in the cave alleviates Dawn’s nervousness about the field trip. This knowledge, coupled with Jason’s reassurance in paragraph 12 that he, too, has fears of being in the cave, helps Dawn relax and see the humor in their similar situations.

Jason changes his mind about the cave

Dawn says she is afraid of bats: Dawn’s professed fear of bats makes Jason realize he is not the only one on the field trip who is anxious and unhappy. Once he recognizes their analogous situations, he experiences a “warm feeling spreading throughout his heart. What a relief to know that he was not alone!” (paragraph 12). After Jason and Dawn admit their fears to each other, both are able to relax, and at the end “Jason began to think that the cave was not so scary after all.”

Incorrect Responses

Any responses other than those indicated are incorrect. Readers who switch the statements around have not made associations based on the evidence in the text.

Question 9

According to the article, how are lava and a hard crust of rock connected?

- ☒ A. Lava that has cooled makes a hard crust of rock.
- ☐ B. A hard crust of rock melts to become lava.
- ☐ C. A hard crust of rock fills a tube of lava.
- ☐ D. Lava flows out of a hard crust of rock.

Benchmark: 3.2.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: 1

Answer: A

Rationale A	Correct: Paragraph 16 states, “As it [lava] cools, a crust of solid rock forms.”
Rationale B	This option is the reverse of what actually happens in the formation of lava caves. According to paragraph 16, lava cools to form “a crust of solid rock,” rather than the other way around.
Rationale C	Some readers may select this option because paragraph 17 mentions the relationship between crust and lava. According to paragraph 17, “lava still flows beneath the crust, like liquid inside a drinking straw.” Thus, lava fills a tube formed by a hard crust of rock, rather than the other way around.
Rationale D	Some readers may be attracted to this option because paragraph 16 states, “Streams of thick lava flow away from a volcano.” Also, paragraph 17 states “lava still flows beneath the [cooled] crust”; this may be taken to mean lava is flowing out of that crust. However, paragraph 16 indicates cooled lava forms “a crust of solid rock.”

Question 10

Select the three details from the article that support the idea that caves form in different ways.

- ☒ Melted rock helps shape one kind of cave.
- ☐ Bedrock is a layer of rock under the soil.
- ☒ Sometimes the ice melts inside a glacier.
- ☐ Caves are mostly found underground.
- ☒ Seawater runs into cracks of cliffs on the seashore.

Benchmark: 3.2.2.2

Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

DOK: III

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the three correct details.

Correct Responses

Melted rock helps shape one kind of cave: The description of lava cave formation in paragraphs 16-17 explains “Melted rock deep inside Earth can make another kind of cave.”

Sometimes the ice melts inside a glacier: Paragraphs 18-19 give an overview of glacier cave development, including the detail, “Sometimes part of the ice inside a glacier melts into water.”

Seawater runs into cracks of cliffs on the seashore: Paragraph 20 states, “In some places, bedrock cliffs are near the seashore. Ocean waves crash against the rock. Seawater flows into cracks in the cliffs.”

Incorrect Responses

Bedrock is a layer of rock under the soil: Readers may be drawn to this option because the article “Caves” states, “Bedrock is a thick layer of solid rock under the soil.” However, this is merely a geographical fact about the earth’s crust. As the article goes on to say, it is only after water comes in contact with the bedrock and dissolves it that caves are formed.

Caves are mostly found underground: Although readers may be drawn to this answer from common depictions of underground caves, no textual evidence supports this idea. Instead, the article “Caves,” begins with the assertion, “One cave can be very different from another.” The article goes on to discuss talus caves (paragraph 15), lava caves (paragraphs 16-17), glacier caves (paragraphs 18-19), and sea caves (paragraph 20), none of which are underground.

Question 11

According to the article, what is the ceiling of a talus cave made of?

- ☐ A. Ice
- ☐ B. Cliffs
- ☐ C. Soil
- ☒ D. Boulders

Benchmark: 3.2.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: II

Answer: D

Rationale A	Paragraph 15 describes the formation of talus caves, detailing how “boulders, small rocks, and soil slide down a mountain,” creating a pile at the bottom. After water washes away the debris, the talus cave is “[a] space is left under the boulders;” therefore, the ceiling of the talus cave is made out of rock. In contrast, paragraph 19 clearly states “[the] walls and ceiling of a glacier cave are made of ice.”
Rationale B	Paragraph 20 describes the way in which sea caves form in cliffs made of bedrock (“In some places, bedrock cliffs are near the seashore. Ocean waves crash against the rock.”). The involvement of bedrock and water in the formation of both sea caves and talus caves may lead to confusion regarding the two types of caves. However, these details describe the formation of sea caves, not talus caves.
Rationale C	Paragraph 15 shows that soil is involved in the creation of a talus cave: “Sometimes boulders, small rocks, and soil slide down a mountain. They land in a pile at the bottom.” However, it goes on to say, “Water from rain or a stream washes away the soil and small rocks. A space is left under the boulders,” indicating the cave’s ceiling is made out of rock, not soil.
Rationale D	Correct: Paragraph 15 states that when boulders and other materials “slide down a mountain” and water “washes away the soil and small

	rocks,” the “space...left under the boulders...is called a talus cave.” Thus, boulders form the ceiling of a talus cave.
--	---

Question 12

Water helps form some types of caves.

Select the three cave types that water helps form.



Benchmark: 3.2.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the three correct cave types.

Correct Responses

talus cave: Paragraph 15 describes how “Water from rain or a stream washes away the soil and small rocks. A space is left under the boulders. The space is called a talus (TA-luhs) cave.”

glacier cave: Paragraph 19 states, “water drains out of the glacier. As the water moves, it makes tunnels and caves in the ice. The caves are called glacier caves.”

sea cave: Paragraph 20 discusses the formation of sea caves, which begin when “Ocean waves crash against the rock.” After describing the weakening and erosion process, the paragraph concludes, “Holes made by ocean waves are called sea caves.”

Incorrect Responses

lava tube cave: The text does not mention water in the formation of lava tube caves.

Question 13

In paragraph 20, what does creates mean?

- ☐ A. Melts
- ☐ B. Cracks
- ☒ C. Makes
- ☐ D. Crashes

Benchmark: 3.2.4.4

Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.

DOK: II

Answer: C

Rationale A	Some readers may be attracted to this option because the idea of melting is important to the article as in the case of lava (paragraphs 16-17) and glacier caves (paragraphs 18-19). However, “melts” is used to denote a liquid state in paragraph 18 when the article refers to glacier caves and says, “[i]t is so thick that it doesn’t melt away in the summer.” This context makes it clear that “melts” means the physical change from a solid to a liquid state.
Rationale B	As paragraphs 20-21 explain, cracks in rock contribute to cave formation; however, substituting “cracks” into the first sentence of paragraph 20 would suggest that water damages, rather than creates, caves.
Rationale C	Correct: Paragraph 20 states, “Water <u>creates</u> most other kinds of caves.” The opening sentences of other paragraphs make clear <u>creates</u> is used here to mean “makes”: “Melted rock deep inside Earth can make another kind of cave” (paragraph 16), “Groundwater can make a cave” (paragraph 22).
Rationale D	Paragraph 20 states sea caves begin to form when “[o]cean waves crash against the rock [cliffs].” Some readers may connect the idea of creation with the waves’ crashing. However, context in paragraph 8 (“Water that flows”) makes this assumption incorrect.

Question 14

Put the events in the order they happen in paragraphs 22 and 23.

Drag the events into the correct order.

Order of Events in Paragraphs 22 and 23

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Events in Paragraphs 22 and 23

Groundwater dissolves limestone bedrock.

Crack in limestone bedrock becomes a cave.

Groundwater flows through cracks in limestone bedrock.

Crack in limestone bedrock gets bigger.

Question 14 Correct Answers

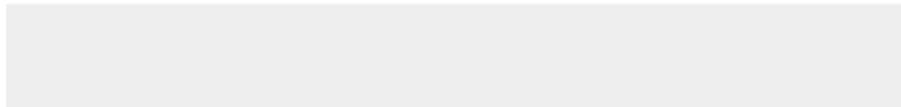
Put the events in the order they happen in paragraphs 22 and 23.

Drag the events into the correct order.

Order of Events in Paragraphs 22 and 23

1. Groundwater flows through cracks in limestone bedrock.
2. Groundwater dissolves limestone bedrock.
3. Crack in limestone bedrock gets bigger.
4. Crack in limestone bedrock becomes a cave.

Events in Paragraphs 22 and 23



Benchmark: 3.2.3.3

Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers drag the events of the article into the correct order as shown.

Correct Responses

1st Groundwater flows through cracks in limestone bedrock: Paragraph 23 begins with the sentence, “Bits of limestone bedrock dissolve when groundwater flows through cracks in the bedrock.” This is the first step in forming a cave.

2nd Groundwater dissolves limestone bedrock: Paragraph 22 explains, “Groundwater can slowly make limestone dissolve.” Although it is not explicitly stated in paragraph 23, readers can infer that this is what happens once the groundwater flows into the limestone cracks.

3rd Crack in limestone bedrock gets bigger: The second through fourth sentences of paragraph 23 state, “The cracks get bigger. Then more groundwater fills the cracks. It causes even more of the limestone to dissolve.” This process repeats itself until it finally becomes a cave.

4th Crack in limestone bedrock becomes a cave: Paragraph 23 ends with the statement, “After many years, the crack becomes a cave.”

Incorrect Responses

Any other order presented is incorrect because it will not reflect the order in which events happened.

Question 15

Which idea would help readers find information in “Caves” more quickly?

- ☒ A. Including pictures of caves at the beginning of the article
- ☐ B. Highlighting words that appear most often in the article, such as “cave”
- ☐ C. Adding information to the article to tell where examples of each kind of cave are found
- ☐ D. Dividing the article into parts with headings such as “Talus Cave,” “Lava Tube,” and “Sea Cave”

Benchmark: 3.2.5.5

Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.

DOK: III

Answer: D

Rationale A	Some readers may choose this option if they feel the article lacks vivid descriptions of the caves it discusses; however, including pictures of caves at the beginning of the article might help readers visualize the caves more easily, the placement at the beginning of the article would not aid readers in locating information within the article.
Rationale B	This option may be appealing, for the words that appear most often in an article are usually key to its main idea. Highlighting those words, however, would most likely create confusion rather than help in locating information, in that having, for example, the word “cave” highlighted each time it appears would most likely be distracting.
Rationale C	Although including examples to indicate the geographic region(s) in which each kind of cave is likely to form would be informative, this addition would be unlikely to help readers access the information in the article itself.
Rationale D	Correct: Adding cave-specific headings to the article would enable readers to locate information about those caves more quickly than the

	current format allows.
--	------------------------

Question 16

Drag each idea about caves into the correct box.

Ideas from the Story and Article

Interesting
animals
sometimes
live in caves.

Caves
have very
little light.

Some
caves can
melt.

Rocks can
be found
inside some
caves.

Where the Ideas Appear

"Out of the Dark"	Both "Out of the Dark" and "Caves"	"Caves"
<div data-bbox="328 909 548 1287" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 180px;"></div>	<div data-bbox="654 909 875 1287" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 180px;"></div>	<div data-bbox="987 909 1208 1287" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 180px;"></div>

Question 16 Correct Answers

Drag each idea about caves into the correct box.

Ideas from the Story and Article

Where the Ideas Appear

"Out of the Dark"	Both "Out of the Dark" and "Caves"	"Caves"
Interesting animals sometimes live in caves.	Rocks can be found inside some caves.	Some caves can melt.
	Caves have very little light.	

(Options in "Both" (middle) column may appear in either order.)

Benchmark: 3.1.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: III

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers drag each idea into the appropriate box.

Correct Responses

“Out of the Dark”

Interesting animals sometimes live in caves: As the class explores the cave in paragraph 7 of “Out of the Dark,” the guide notes, “Bats used to live here. They would sleep during the day but become very active at night.” The article “Caves” discusses the physical structure of the caves and how they are formed, but no mention of animals is made.

Both “Out of the Dark” and “Caves”

Rocks can be found inside some caves: In paragraph 10 of “Out of the Dark,” the author writes, “Dawn peered at the ground and kicked a loose rock,” an indication that there are rocks in the cave. In paragraphs 15 of “Caves,” the article discusses talus caves, which are created when “boulders, small rocks, and soil slide down a mountain.” Water from streams or subsequent rains wash away any soil or small rocks, but larger rocks remain. Paragraph 16 of “Caves” describes how lava tube caves are created from hot lava flows, which, when it cools, leaves “a crust of solid rock.” Paragraph 20 of “Caves” focuses on sea caves, which form as seawater flows into rock cliff cracks, eventually widening the cracks into caves. Finally, paragraphs 21-23 of “Caves” discuss the formation of bedrock caves, which form from water flowing through limestone until the cracks become a cave.

Caves have very little light: “Out of the Dark,” focuses on Jason’s fear of the dark, which leads to his anxiety about being in a cave. In paragraph 5, the students follow the guide until “the group could no longer see the light from the entrance. Only a few low lights shone from the sides of the cave.” In “Caves,” readers can infer from the various descriptions of cave formations throughout the article that they have very little light.

“Caves”

Some caves can melt: Paragraph 18 in “Caves” discusses glacier caves, which can form inside of ice. The article notes, “Sometimes part of the ice inside a glacier melts into water.” The process of water melting and draining out of the glacier creates the caves. “Out of the Dark” does not include a discussion of caves that can melt.

Incorrect Responses

There are no extra responses. Readers who switch ideas may not have made correct associations based on text evidence.

Question 17

Based on the story and the article, if Jason touched the wall of the cave, how would it feel?

- ☐ A. Smooth
- ☐ B. Warm
- ☐ C. Soft
- ☒ D. Cool

Benchmark: 3.1.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: III

Answer: D

Rationale A	The interior of a glacier cave, which is made of ice (paragraph 19), might be smooth, but since the story makes no mention of extreme cold, Jason is most likely not inside a glacier cave. A more reasonable conclusion is that the cave he is in is made of rock, with a somewhat rough surface.
Rationale B	According to the article, the only cave that involves heat is the lava tube, and only during its initial formation (paragraphs 16-17). Paragraph 6 of the story indicates the air in the cave is “chilly” so it is unlikely that the walls are warm.
Rationale C	Some readers may take the dissolving of limestone, described in paragraph 22 of the article, as an indication that limestone is in some way soft. According to the article, however, caves are made of either rock or ice, so the wall of the cave is more likely to be hard rather than soft.
Rationale D	Correct: According to the article, most caves are underground. In the case of talus caves, they have “space...left under the boulders” (paragraph 15); lava tubes form under “a crust of solid rock” (paragraph 16); sea caves form inside “bedrock cliffs” (paragraph 20); and the final paragraphs of the article discuss the formation of limestone caves “in

	bedrock that is underground” (paragraph 21). Based on these descriptions, and paragraph 6 of the story, where the narrator mentions the air is “chilly,” readers can infer that the walls of the cave are cool.
--	---

Question 18

Which emotions do Jason and Dawn show while they are in the cave?

Select the emotions that correctly fit each character. Some emotions may apply to both characters.

Emotion	Jason	Dawn
Amusement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Calm	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Embarrassment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fear	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Benchmark: 3.1.3.3

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

DOK: II

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the character(s) who demonstrate(s) the emotion listed in the first column.

Correct Responses

Amusement

Jason: Jason relaxes in paragraph 12, sees the humor of the situation, and enjoys the laughter around him. He grins “so big that he thought it might split his face.”

Dawn: After getting help and friendship from Jason, Dawn laughs in paragraph 13: “Then she laughed, the sound bouncing around the darkness.”

Calm

Jason: After helping Dawn relax when he learns of her nervousness, Jason also relaxes into the situation. He eases Dawn's nervousness by reminding her the guide said bats no longer live in the cave (paragraph 12), and he begins to have a good time.

Embarrassment

Dawn: In paragraph 10, Dawn peers sheepishly at the ground and kicks a loose rock to divert her embarrassment. In paragraph 11, she whispers her fears so no one except Jason will hear.

Fear

Jason: Jason exhibits signs of fear in paragraphs 1-5. He has sweaty palms, swallows hard, takes a deep breath, hears the thudding of his heart, and tries to summon up courage, but feels like the cave is swallowing him.

Dawn: Readers learn in paragraph 4 that Dawn is unsettled about something. Her eyes dart, and she searches the cave ceiling. She is reluctant to agree the trip "will be fun." In paragraphs 8-11, she reveals her anxiety about bats to Jason.

Incorrect Responses

Calm

Dawn: In trying to help Dawn feel calmer beginning in paragraph 9, Jason himself finds calmness by the end of paragraph 12. He knows he has found an ally in Dawn, and he relaxes and comes to have a good sense of humor about his fear. Dawn, however, is nervous throughout the story. Although she laughs in paragraph 13, her laughter is accompanied by the fact that she is holding Jason's arm "in a slow, careful way." While Dawn may be beginning to sense relief from her anxiety, she does not reach a definitive sense of calmness during the action of the story.

Embarrassment

Jason: Although Dawn feels embarrassment in paragraphs 9 and 10 after her classmates giggle at her outburst and when she admits her fears to Jason, Jason himself does not display this trait during the story. He shows no sign of embarrassment when he admits his fear of the dark.

Question 19

The article describes different types of caves.

Select the words that complete the sentence about a certain cave.

A cave is made of and is created when water from a river or stream washes away .

Question 19 Correct Answers

The article describes different types of caves.

Select the words that complete the sentence about a certain cave.

A cave is made of and is created when water from a river or stream washes away .

Benchmark: 3.2.1.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

DOK: 1

Answer: x

Rationale:

For a full credit response, readers select the words in the dropdowns that correctly complete the sentence.

Correct Responses

1st inline choice

talus

2nd inline choice

boulders

3rd inline choice

soil and rocks

Paragraph 15 explains: “A space is left under the boulders. The space is called a talus (TA-luhs) cave.”

Incorrect Responses

1st inline choice

sea: While a sea cave is one of the types described in the article (paragraph 20), none of the drop down choices represents what it is made of or how it is created.

limestone: Although limestone caves are the subject of paragraphs 22 and 23, none of the drop down choices represents what they are made of or how they are created.

2nd inline choice

ice: Ice is the material from which glacier caves are formed, but glacier caves are not a 1st inline choice option. Readers who choose this option may misread the association of the type of cave and its material.

cliffs: Readers who choose sea caves may note in paragraph 20 that “bedrock cliffs are near the seashore.” However, sea caves are not made from bedrock cliffs; they are formed within them.

3rd inline choice

lava flow: Although lava flowing beneath the surface of the crust is the formation process of a lava tube cave (paragraphs 16 and 17), this cave type is not an option in inline choice 1.

hard crust: Readers who choose this option may interpret the hard crust as the material from which a lava tube is made (paragraphs 16 and 17). Technically, however, the cave forms under the crust, and this type of cave is not an option in inline choice 1.

MCA-III Item Sampler Paper Answer Key
Grade 3 Reading

Segment 1
7 Questions

Item #	Correct Answer	Item Type	Online Sampler Location	Skill Domain	SSB	Depth of Knowledge
1	B	MC	Sec. 1, #1	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
2	D	MC	N/A	Craft and Structure	3.1.4.4	II
3	D	MC	Sec. 1, #3	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
4	A	MC	Sec. 1, #4	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
5	B	MC	N/A	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	I
6	B	MC	Sec. 1, #6	Craft and Structure	3.1.4.4	II
7	D	MC	Sec. 1, #7	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	I

Segment 2
7 Questions

Item #	Correct Answer	Item Type	Online Sampler Location	Skill Domain	SSB	Depth of Knowledge
8	D	MC	Sec. 2, #1	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	II
9	B	MC	Sec. 2, #2	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	II
10	A	MC	Sec. 2, #3	Craft and Structure	3.2.6.6	III
11	B	MC	Sec. 2, #5	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	I
12	C	MC	Sec. 2, #6	Craft and Structure	3.2.5.5	III
13	C	MC	Sec. 2, #8	Craft and Structure	3.2.4.4	III
14	D	MC	Sec. 2, #9	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	II

Segment 3
9 Questions

Item #	Correct Answer	Item Type	Online Sampler Location	Skill Domain	SSB	Depth of Knowledge
15	D	MC	Sec. 3, #1	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	I
16	D	MC	Sec. 3, #2	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	I
17	A	MC	Sec. 3, #3	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
18	B	MC	N/A	Craft and Structure	3.1.4.4	II
19	B	MC	Sec. 3, #6	Craft and Structure	3.1.4.4	II
20	C	MC	Sec. 3, #7	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	III
21	D	MC	N/A	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.2.2	III
22	A	MC	Sec. 3, #10	Craft and Structure	3.1.6.6	II
23	C	MC	Sec. 3, #11	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.2.2	III

Segment 4
11 Questions

Item #	Correct Answer	Item Type	Online Sampler Location	Skill Domain	SSB	Depth of Knowledge
24	D	MC	Sec. 4, #1	Craft and Structure	3.1.6.6	II
25	A	MC	Sec. 4, #3	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	III
26	C	MC	N/A	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	II
27	B	MC	Sec. 4, #5	Craft and Structure	3.1.6.6	III
28	C	MC	Sec. 4, #6	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	III
29	D	MC	Sec. 4, #7	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.3.3	II
30	A	MC	Sec. 4, #9	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	I
31	D	MC	Sec. 4, #11	Key Ideas and Details	3.2.1.1	II
32	C	MC	Sec. 4, #13	Craft and Structure	3.2.4.4	II
33	D	MC	Sec. 4, #15	Craft and Structure	3.2.5.5	III
34	D	MC	Sec. 4, #17	Key Ideas and Details	3.1.1.1	III

Passage Characteristics

Segment	Title	Type	Online Sampler Location	Lexile	Word Count
1	A Dress for the Moon	L	Sec. 1	640	116
2	Helen Keller: The World in Her Heart	I	Sec. 2	600	632
3	My Special Day at Third Street School	L	Sec. 3	N/A	261
4	Out of the Dark/Caves	L/I	Sec. 4	670/660	1030