

Name _____

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-Series III

Reading Item Sampler
Grade 8



**ITEM SAMPLERS ARE NOT SECURE TEST MATERIALS. THIS ITEM
SAMPLER TEST BOOK MAY BE COPIED OR DUPLICATED.**

Minnesota Department of
Education

Reading Test General Directions

- This test contains four segments.
- You may take notes and highlight in this test book.
- Read each passage, article, or poem, and answer the questions.
- For each question, choose the answer you think is best.
- Look at the sample that shows how to answer the question.

Sample Question Answered in Test Book:

In the article, what does the word sprout mean?

- A.** To dig
- B.** To weed
- C.** To grow
- D.** To watch

- When you finish a segment of the test, stop and check your answers. Then use the sticker given to you to seal it. Once you seal a segment, you cannot go back to it. Each segment must be sealed before you move on to the next segment.



On this test, do your own best work to show what you know and can do.

- Do not accept help finding answers to test questions.
- Do not give answers to other students.
- Do not tell others what is on the test.
- There may be consequences if you do not follow directions or if you behave dishonestly.

Segment 1

You will be told when to begin this segment.

Reading Test – Segment 1

1

Read this passage about a coach and her soccer players. Then answer the questions. Some questions may ask you about certain paragraphs. The paragraphs are numbered on the left side.

The Best Coach

written for the Minnesota Department of Education

- 1 "Dominique, you're supposed to be guarding the net!" Kellan called out. "You're not supposed to be sitting behind it."
- 2 "But I'm making a chain of daisies for you, and I needed to find some more flowers," the curly haired girl replied.
- 3 A few moments later, Dominique sprinted off the field to present Kellan with her gift, proudly reaching up to fasten it around her neck. She had not seemed to notice that the other team had scored two goals while she was busy gathering flowers. Dominique's teammate Jason, meanwhile, was following the slow-motion progress of a striped caterpillar that he had found crawling in the middle of the field, while another player, Rory, was splashing in a near-by pond of rainwater and pretending to be a speedboat. Kellan sighed. When she agreed to coach one of the beginning soccer teams, she had no idea that Coach Williams would assign her the Falcons. This struggling squad was like a catastrophe that never ended.
- 4 "It's important to stand in front of the net when you're playing goalie," Kellan gently instructed, trying to be patient with Dominique.
- 5 "Dominique *always* stands in the wrong place," accused Rory, stooping to tie his muddy shoe after he had run off the field to join Kellan and Dominique. On the field, the opposing team scored another goal.
- 6 "Well, you chase after everything *except* the ball," Dominique retorted. Like an avalanche, other voices coming from the sidelines immediately joined the barrage of accusations and counter-accusations. Kellan blew her whistle to try to divert the arguing and declared that practice was over. As the players on the field and sidelines trotted off, Kellan felt limp and exhausted, as though she had run a marathon.
- 7 "So, how'd your first day go?" Kellan's friend Luis asked after joining Kellan as she headed off the soccer field. "I'm working with the Jets, and they're already dribbling the ball down the field. It's amazing how agile they are."
- 8 "That's pretty good," Kellan admitted, ignoring the stab of jealousy she felt. "I'm, uh, working with the Falcons." She studied the ground as they walked, trying to avoid eye contact with Luis.

- 9 "Ohhhhh," Luis replied. He had witnessed the Falcons' practice the week before and was quite relieved when Coach Williams assigned him the Jets to coach. "They are pretty energetic," he said, searching for something positive to say.
- 10 "Sure," Kellan muttered, and another sliver of jealousy pricked at her as Luis continued to describe the Jets' expertise with their drills. However, that envy sparked a feeling of determination, too. If Luis could teach the Jets how to dribble, then she could teach the Falcons; it just might require more effort. Kellan then raised her head and, with renewed confidence, quickened her pace enough that Luis had to run to catch up to her.
- 11 When she arrived home, Kellan threw herself on the couch and reflected on the practice. The players reminded her of Fourth of July fireworks, exploding in a hundred different directions. They did not recognize each other's strengths and had no idea how to work together. As she twirled the daisy chain still hanging from her neck, an idea slowly started taking shape in her mind.
- 12 The next day, Kellan found her players scattered across the field when she arrived, and she called for them to gather around the bench on the sidelines. Their sweaty faces watched with curiosity as she unrolled the poster she had been carrying and held it up for them to view. The illustration showed the loops of a giant chain, and each one had a team member's name as well as a talent written on it.
- 13 "This poster lists one way each person can help our team," Kellan began explaining. "For instance, Rory has lightning speed, and Jason has sharp eyes for watching the ball."
- 14 "Yes!" Jason said, grinning and throwing his fist in the air. Kellan noticed how everyone in the group slowly transformed before her eyes, sitting up taller and smiling at the others as she mentioned their names and the skills they could contribute. When she finished, she finally pointed to the loops and asked a crucial question. "What will happen if one link is missing?"
- 15 "The chain will fall apart, and it won't be a necklace anymore," Dominique replied.
- 16 "Exactly!" Kellan said. "In order for us to be a team, we need everyone to work together, like links in a chain. I'm wearing Dominique's daisy chain to help you remember that. It won't be easy, but I want every person to try."
- 17 "I'm ready!" Rory chirped enthusiastically as he dashed out on the field. For Kellan, the next hour passed in a furious flash of activity. The Falcons still struggled with their dribbling drills, but, for the first time, they attempted to assist each other. Jerome showed Latisha how to push the ball with her right foot and then flip it to her left one. Tanesha helped Leon to his feet after he fell in the

slippery grass. No players argued with each other or complained about Kellan's instructions. It was a start. Kellan felt a new sense of satisfaction as she waved good-bye to her team at the end of practice.

- 18 "Kellan!" a voice called, and she turned to spot Coach Williams striding her way. She had been so intently focused on her practice with the Falcons that she had not been aware of him observing her team.
- 19 "Do you have some coaching tips?" Kellan asked as he joined her.
- 20 "You're doing great," Coach Williams complimented her, giving her an encouraging pat on the back. "I know the Falcons are a challenge, but I also know that you're a strong leader. That's why I placed that group with you. Good work!"
- 21 "Thanks!" Kellan replied, and she chuckled to herself as she grabbed her poster and her duffel bag. Effective coaches seem to know how to motivate their players.

1. Read this sentence from paragraph 6.

Kellan blew her whistle to try to divert the arguing and declared that practice was over.

What does the word divert mean?

- A. Draw attention away from
 - B. Keep energy focused on
 - C. Create a calming effect on
 - D. Send a clear message about
-

2. Which statement best describes Kellan and Coach Williams?

- A. They enjoy coaching beginner soccer teams.
 - B. They think their jobs are challenging.
 - C. They know how to motivate others.
 - D. They like to offer coaching tips.
-

3. Read this sentence from paragraph 11.

The players reminded her of Fourth of July fireworks, exploding in a hundred different directions.

At the first practice under Kellan, the players seem most like “Fourth of July fireworks” because they

- A. are interested in art rather than athletics.
- B. want attention rather than achievement.
- C. are energetic rather than dedicated.
- D. act separately rather than together.

4. Why are the players “sitting up taller and smiling” in paragraph 14?
- A. They believe in their importance.
 - B. They know they will have fun.
 - C. They believe in their coach.
 - D. They know they will win games.
-
5. Which paragraph reveals that coaching the Falcons embarrasses Kellan?
- A. Paragraph 7
 - B. Paragraph 8
 - C. Paragraph 9
 - D. Paragraph 10
-
6. Which idea does Dominique’s daisy chain come to represent in the passage?
- A. The spirit of winning
 - B. The power of teamwork
 - C. The importance of trying
 - D. The purpose of friendship
-
7. Read this sentence from paragraph 10.

Kellan then raised her head and, with renewed confidence, quickened her pace enough that Luis had to run to catch up to her.

The author uses this sentence most likely to illustrate that Kellan is

- A. physically fit.
- B. impatient with Luis.
- C. determined.
- D. angry at Luis.



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Check your work. Then seal this segment.



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Segment 2

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Reading Test – Segment 2

Read this article about calories. Then answer the questions. Some questions may ask you about certain paragraphs. The paragraphs are numbered on the left side.

The Calorie

written for the Minnesota Department of Education

How Much Potential Energy Can *You* Burn?

2

- 1 Although we use the word “calorie” quite frequently, how many of us can explain what a calorie actually is? “Calorie” is a general term referring to two specific units of energy. To scientists, a calorie (cal) is defined as the amount of energy required to raise the temperature of one gram of water one degree Celsius, or 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit. However, most people associate the word calorie with food. The specific type of calorie referred to when discussing food is known as a “food calorie” (Cal), and this unit of energy is equal to 1,000 calories (cal). Food calories are the focus of this article. So when we ask how many calories are in a slice of bread, we are really asking how much potential energy is contained in the bread. Calories are crucial to human health. Like a cell phone that needs recharging periodically, our bodies require energy to function. Without sufficient calories in our bodies, our hearts would cease to pump, our muscles would deteriorate, and our brains would not be able to process information.
- 2 So why are food calories often considered to be negative things that should be avoided? The answer can be found not in the calorie itself, but rather in the number of calories we put into our bodies. Most adults require 1,000 to 1,400 calories just to keep their body systems functioning properly. The minimum number of calories is referred to as the resting metabolic rate (RMR), a variable number that is dependent on age, gender, and muscle mass. However, because we do not just rest all day, we need more than this minimal amount of energy to climb stairs, play basketball, or engage in other physical activity. For most adults, this means an additional 400 to 600 calories per day.
- 3 Gaining one pound of fat takes more than 3,500 calories. If adults consume approximately 2,000 calories daily, they will maintain their current weight. However, if they consume an additional 500 calories daily, they will gain one pound in one week. Those additional 500 calories can come from merely eating several handfuls of nuts or sampling a few extra cookies.
- 4 To lose weight, we have to burn more calories than we take into our bodies, a process accomplished by reducing our caloric intake or by burning calories through exercise. Combining a balanced caloric intake with exercise is the answer to keeping weight under control.
- 5 Does it matter what types of food we eat to reach our recommended daily requirement of calories? A calorie is a calorie, regardless of whether it comes from

protein, fat, or carbohydrates. People will lose weight if they burn more calories than they need and gain weight if they eat more calories than their bodies require. For a balanced and healthy diet, however, carbohydrate and protein calories are more nutritionally acceptable than fat calories. An excess of fat calories can have serious negative health effects.

How Many Calories Should a Teenager Consume Daily?

- 6 Just as cars come in all sizes and shapes and require different amounts of gasoline, each teenager's body burns calories at a different rate. As teens grow, they require more fuel, especially if they exercise for more than one hour a day. Everyone has unique caloric requirements; large discrepancies, therefore, exist among organizations that publish dietary caloric intake charts. Registered dietitians can certainly help individuals learn what caloric intake is right for them.
- 7 One of the reasons people consume more calories than they need is because of portion size. A portion is the amount of food that we normally serve ourselves, while a serving size is the recommended amount of food. For example, the information on a box of cereal may indicate that three-fourths of a cup of cereal contains 90 calories. Since people often pay no attention to the serving size, they are unaware of how many calories they are consuming. As many as 150 calories are in a serving of fourteen potato chips. Think of the total number of calories a person takes in when devouring an entire bag of potato chips! Brian Wansink, PhD, a Cornell University professor and researcher, has found that when packages, plates, glasses, and spoons are larger, we tend to eat and drink more by increasing our portions. Since 1960, our plates and bowls have grown by 36 percent. Restaurant portions have doubled or even tripled from what they used to be.
- 8 To reduce portion size, we can estimate the quantity by using some simple references. A cup of cereal or strawberries is roughly the size of a baseball or a person's fist. A four-ounce piece of uncooked meat is the size of the palm of a person's hand or a hockey puck. One teaspoon of sugar is equivalent to the size of a small marble or the tip of a person's thumb. Portion size is important when determining daily caloric intake.
- 9 People should also pay attention to those foods that have large amounts of calories. Many fast-food meals average more than 800 calories, with some containing as many as 1,500 calories. Just one meal can exceed the recommended daily caloric intake for an adult, especially for people with sedentary or inactive lifestyles.
- 10 So, are calories friends or foes? They give us the energy to perform countless tasks. Nevertheless, our nutritional choices also play a valuable role in the quality of our health. The key is to develop and maintain healthy eating habits throughout our lives so that our bodies will continue to operate efficiently for a long, long time.

8. The author's most likely purpose for writing this article was to
- A. explain a way to safely lose weight.
 - B. recommend certain foods over others.
 - C. give readers a basic understanding of the calorie.
 - D. help readers determine their ideal caloric intakes.
-

9. Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

Without sufficient calories in our bodies, our hearts would cease to pump, our muscles would deteriorate, and our brains would not be able to process information.

What does the word deteriorate mean?

- A. Cause pain
 - B. Become weak
 - C. Work even harder
 - D. Use available nourishment
-
10. Why does the author define "calorie" in the first sentence of paragraph 1?
- A. To explain how water is affected by calories
 - B. To describe the many uses of calories
 - C. To establish the fact that food contains calories
 - D. To promote a discussion about calories
-
11. What is the author's underlying argument in the article?
- A. Meals with many calories are unhealthy.
 - B. Each teenager has different nutritional needs.
 - C. People should try to develop healthy eating habits.
 - D. Active people can eat more than those who avoid exercise.

- 12.** According to the article, serving size is most closely related to
- A.** identifying foods high in calories.
 - B.** obtaining energy from calories.
 - C.** controlling intake of calories.
 - D.** exercising to burn calories.
-

- 13.** Based on paragraph 7, readers can conclude that people today
- A.** eat out more than they did many years ago.
 - B.** understand the nutritional value of calories.
 - C.** find serving size recommendations useful.
 - D.** eat more than they did many years ago.
-

- 14.** The author keeps the language of the article from becoming too technical by
- A.** using many examples.
 - B.** defining key terms.
 - C.** mentioning a study.
 - D.** discussing caloric intake.
-

- 15.** Read this sentence from paragraph 7.

Think of the total number of calories a person takes in when devouring an entire bag of potato chips!

Based on paragraph 7, the word devouring suggests eating that is

- A.** messy.
- B.** uncontrolled.
- C.** unsatisfying.
- D.** enjoyable.

- 16.** Which statement from the article supports the idea that people who want to avoid gaining weight must pay attention to how they eat?
- A.** "Those additional 500 calories can come from merely eating several handfuls of nuts or sampling a few extra cookies."
(paragraph 3)
 - B.** "An excess of fat calories can have serious negative health effects."
(paragraph 5)
 - C.** "Registered dieticians can certainly help individuals learn what caloric intake is right for them."
(paragraph 6)
 - D.** "Since 1960, our plates and bowls have grown by 36 percent."
(paragraph 7)



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Check your work. Then seal this segment.



Segment 3

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Reading Test – Segment 3

This poem is an ode, a lyric or songlike poem celebrating an object or person. Read this ode to woolen socks. Then answer the questions. Some questions may ask you about certain lines. The lines are numbered on the left side.

Ode to My Socks

by Pablo Neruda, translated by Stephen Mitchell

1 Maru Mori brought me
a pair
of socks
which she knitted with her own
5 shepherd hands,
two socks as soft
as rabbits.
I slipped my feet
into them
10 as if they were
two
cases
knitted
with threads of
15 twilight
and the pelt of sheep.

Outrageous socks,
my feet became
two fish
20 made of wool,
two long sharks
of ultramarine blue
crossed
by one golden hair,
25 two gigantic blackbirds,
two cannons:
my feet
were honored

in this way
30 by
these
heavenly
socks.
They were
35 so beautiful
that for the first time
my feet seemed to me
unacceptable
like two decrepit
40 firemen, firemen
unworthy
of that embroidered
fire,
of those luminous
45 socks.

Nevertheless,
I resisted
the sharp temptation
to save them
50 as schoolboys
keep
fireflies,
as scholars
collect
55 sacred documents,
I resisted
the wild impulse
to put them
in a golden
60 cage
and each day give them
birdseed
and chunks of pink melon.
Like explorers

65 in the jungle
who hand over the rare
green deer
to the roasting spit
and eat it
70 with remorse,
I stretched out
my feet
and pulled on
the
75 magnificent
socks
and
then my shoes.
And the moral of my ode
80 is this:
beauty is twice
beauty
and what is good is doubly
good
85 when it's a matter of two
woolen socks
in winter.

17. Which word best describes the speaker’s attitude toward the socks?

- A.** Generous
 - B.** Indecisive
 - C.** Grateful
 - D.** Critical
-

18. Based on lines 1–7, what can readers infer?

- A.** Sheep wool is softer than rabbit fur.
 - B.** Maru Mori’s hands are old and worn.
 - C.** Hand-knit socks are more durable than manufactured socks.
 - D.** Maru Mori used wool from her sheep for the socks.
-

19. What happens when the speaker first wears the new socks?

- A.** The speaker’s feet feel much warmer.
 - B.** The speaker imagines the socks are blackbirds or cannons.
 - C.** The speaker’s feet actually turn into fish.
 - D.** The speaker feels silly wearing the socks.
-

20. How does the poet emphasize that the socks are a pair?

- A.** Rhyme: words that have final syllables sounding alike
- B.** Metaphor: comparing one person or item to another
- C.** Repetition: the same word or word pattern over and over
- D.** Alliteration: repeating the beginning sounds of words

21. Which sentence best expresses the main idea of the poem?

- A.** Cost is unimportant when people give gifts.
 - B.** The best things in life cost nothing.
 - C.** Clothes should look unusual and amazing.
 - D.** People enjoy ordinary items for their comfort and beauty.
-

22. The poet most likely assumes readers

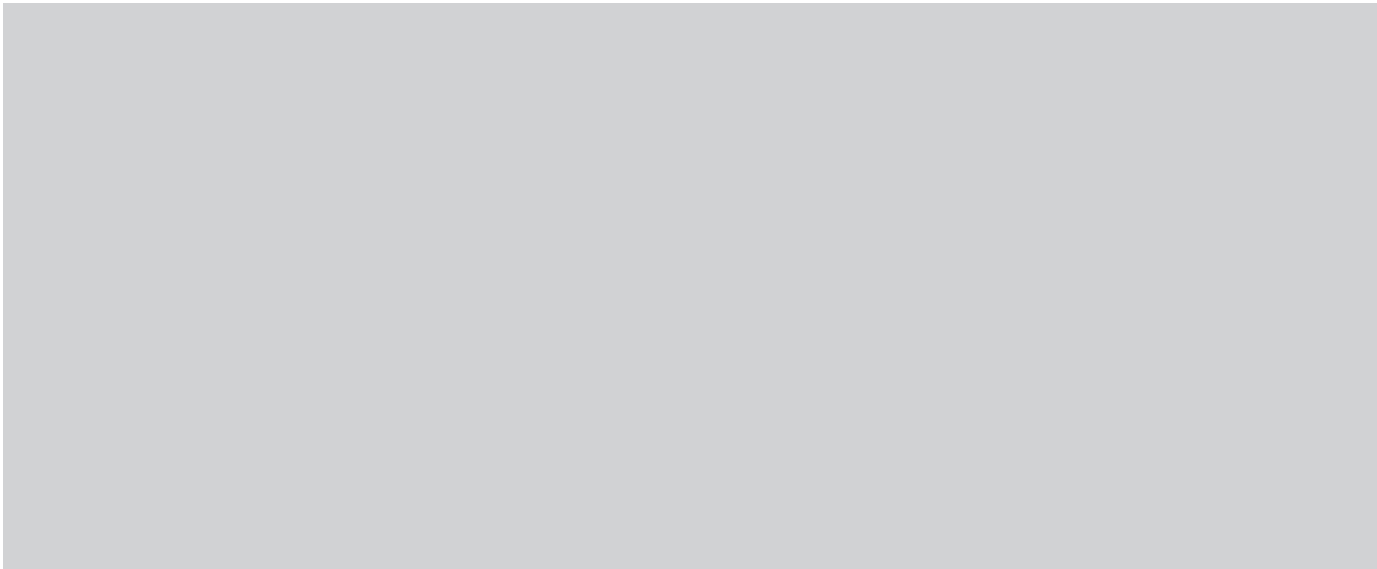
- A.** know what hand-knit, woolen socks are like.
- B.** use socks every day without appreciating them.
- C.** want to own socks like the pair described in the poem.
- D.** share his enthusiasm for a good pair of socks.

23. In the poem, who is the speaker most like?

- A.** “explorers / in the jungle” who consume their prey
(lines 64–70)
 - B.** “schoolboys” who “keep / fireflies”
(lines 50–52)
 - C.** “scholars” who “collect / sacred documents”
(lines 53–55)
 - D.** “firemen” who are “unworthy / of that embroidered / fire”
(lines 40–43)
-

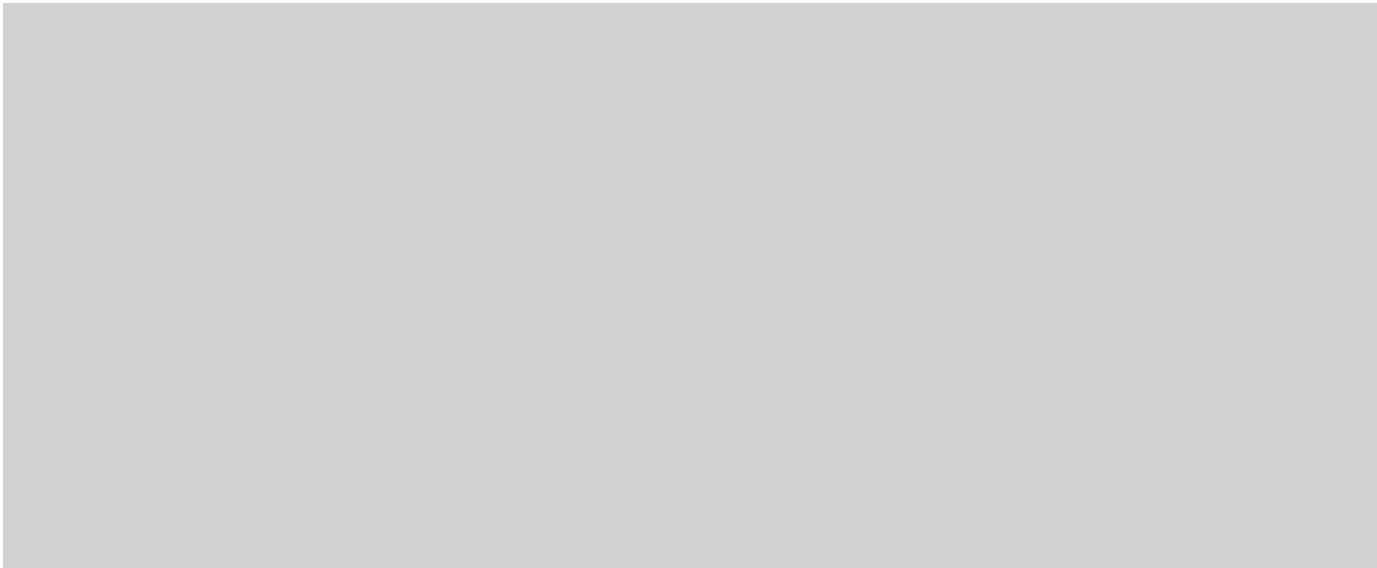
24. What does the poet most likely want readers to know?

- A.** The importance of giving valuable items as gifts
- B.** People should use rather than save treasured items
- C.** The importance of treasuring gifts based on who gives them
- D.** People should value objects based on their appearance



This is the end of Segment 3.
Check your work. Then seal this segment.

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Segment 4

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Reading Test – Segment 4

Read the following two articles about games. Then answer the questions. Some questions may ask you about certain paragraphs. The paragraphs are numbered on the left side.

Selection 1

Got Game? (How to Know for Sure)

by Mary Beth Cox

- 1 **Ludeme (lood-eem), n.** a basic element of a game.
- 2 You probably didn't know that's what they're called. But if you've ever crowned a king, hollered "Bingo," put your right foot on red while your left hand's on blue, or dove for the last chair when the music stopped, then you've done a ludeme. (Hope it worked for you.)
- 3 Ludemes are the focus of a hip new specialty called *ludology*. Ludology (from the Latin *ludus* or "play") is the study of games. Like music, art, and story telling, games are part of every culture. In recent years, the evolution of electronic devices has unleashed an explosion of new games upon the world. Games soak up an incredible amount of human time and effort. Any phenomenon with that kind of effect on people begs to be understood. So, ludologists try to figure out what makes games tick and why people like to play them. Then game designers like Ben Cousins (originator of the word ludeme) can come up with new, better, even more fun ways to fill your hours.
- 4 To study games, ludologists have to know one when they see one. So, they look for these six things that make a game a game:

1. Games are voluntary. People play them of their own free will.
2. Games create an alternate reality. The space and time in which games are played are set aside from everyday space-time. (Think, for example, of a basketball court with its shot clock.)
3. Games are about uncertainty. You can win them. You can lose them.
4. Games do no work and produce no useful goods. (A race to see who can clean their room first is not a game. It's just your parents trying to motivate you.)
5. Games have rules that define how they are played.
6. Games are make-believe. Their consequences are not a matter of life and death. (Hence the old saying, "Don't cry, it's just a game.")

Dissecting a Game

- 5 Ludemes are small pieces of games the way atoms are small pieces of matter, or cells are small pieces of living things. Ludemes can be as different as rounding the base lines, discarding the queen of diamonds, or repeatedly clicking on an icon. They combine to make a game interesting and fun in much the same way that your cells combine to make you interesting and fun.
- 6 It's the job of ludemes to present you, the game player, with a challenging situation. Ludemes set up some kind of problem for you to solve, or they confront you with a series of obstacles to overcome. In doing so, ludemes straddle the thin line that separates boredom from frustration. If you resolve the ludemes' challenge too quickly and too easily, then you will become bored. If you fail to meet their challenge no matter what you do or how hard you try, then you will soon become frustrated. Either of these eventualities makes for a rotten gaming experience.
- 7 Well-designed ludemes work together to strike the perfect balance. They create a challenge that entices your brain to do what it does best: Analyze choices, make decisions, and manage risk and reward. Ludemes might spice things up a little by adding some unpredictable variation to their game play. They might, for instance, throw in a random element of chance. If everything goes according to plan, then ludemes will successfully capture your attention. They will make you crave them. You will agree to finish your math homework, practice the piano, unload the dishwasher, do whatever it takes . . . just so you can get back in there and play that game!
- 8 Games are more than mere child's play. Games teach us a lot. They teach us about the individuals who play them. They teach us about the brains that wrestle with them. They teach us about the cultures that adore them. Games are universal because they explore the core of what human beings essentially are.
- 9 Think about that the next time you encounter a ludeme. When you pass go and collect \$200, or hit the bull's eye, or find a power-up on level twelve, or do what Simon says, or place an X in the center square, or cross the finish line just ahead of the next fastest competitor, please remember there's a word for whatever it is you're doing. While you're huffing and puffing and trying to catch your breath, you might wonder why it is you care so much.

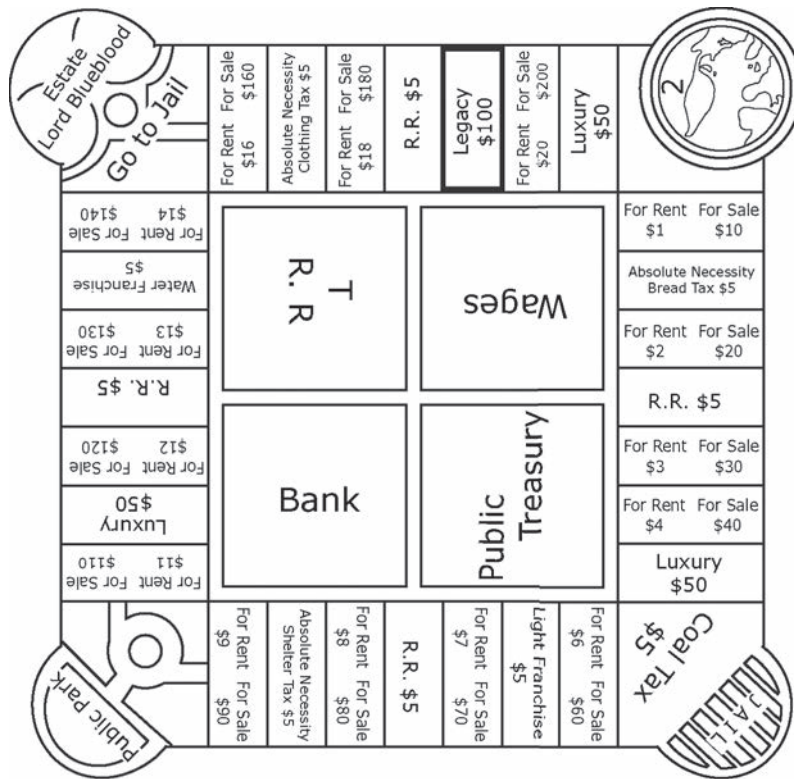
Selection 2

The Game that Taught a Theory

written for the Minnesota Department of Education

A monopoly happens when a person, group, or company owns the exclusive rights to a product or service. In the Monopoly board game, the goal is to become the wealthiest player by buying, renting and selling property. When players land on a property, they can purchase that property and then charge excessively high rent to others who land there. The game is also known for its unique game pieces, featuring objects such as thimbles, lanterns, rocking horses, and top hats, which were once common in households across the United States.

- 10 Have you ever been the first to land on Boardwalk or argued about whose turn it was to use the top hat as a game piece? If you have ever enjoyed playing Monopoly®, you should give thanks to Elizabeth “Lizzie” Magie, a woman who invented the game as a way to educate people about a complicated economic theory.
- 11 Elizabeth Magie invented a game that was the forerunner to the modern Monopoly game. She designed it with the goal of making the somewhat arid subject of economics more interesting. Magie was interested in the issues facing Americans of her day, especially those involving economics. She became acquainted with the theories of Henry George, a writer who believed that responsible land ownership and fair taxation were necessary for community growth. Magie agreed with these ideas and created The Landlord’s Game as a way to simplify some aspects of George’s theory.
- 12 Magie created the original game board and rules in 1903. Unlike the modern Monopoly board, Magie included spots that required purchases of “absolute necessities.” These included bread, clothing, shelter, and coal. With one of these spaces on each row of the game board, all players would eventually be forced to pay for these necessities. A ride on the train cost \$5, light and water \$5 each, and rents varied from \$1 to \$22. These expenses reflected the real-life lessons that Magie wanted to teach. Players would receive a wage of \$100 each time they rounded the board.



1904 Monopoly Game

- 13 The original board was very basic. No properties had street names but were instead blocks labeled with the amount of rent owed if a player happened to land in that space. Utilities like the water and electric companies were called franchises, and the railroads all had the designation "R.R." One corner, labeled as the estate of Lord Blueblood, was similar to the "Go to Jail" space found on current Monopoly games.
- 14 Magie encouraged variations of Monopoly from other game creators. After all, she had designed the game as a method of demonstrating an economic theory. The names and arrangement of properties, utilities, and "absolute necessities" were changed. People became less interested in understanding the complicated financial ideas of Henry George and more interested in having fun building a fortune in play money.
- 15 George's economic theories became less popular over time. However, the game continued evolving until 1935, when a version called "Monopoly" was bought by a large game company. This company then bought the rights to all other versions of the game, thus ensuring that the company would have a monopoly on Magie's creation. With so many people involved, it is not surprising that a game designed to teach an economic theory evolved over the years to become the game where pretend fortunes are made by moving a top hat around a game board.

- 25.** According to the article, today's rapid growth of games is a result of
- A.** advancing technology in electronic devices.
 - B.** increasing the challenges for youth in sports.
 - C.** emerging specialties in individual sports.
 - D.** changing the culture of international competitions.
-

- 26.** Based on paragraph 6, the phrase "straddle the thin line" suggests a player's
- A.** tendency to panic.
 - B.** need for balance between pace and difficulty.
 - C.** urge to quit.
 - D.** desire for strength over speed.
-

- 27.** Which sentence states the main idea of paragraph 8?
- A.** Games help us to view ourselves as individuals.
 - B.** Games allow us to see ourselves as explorers.
 - C.** Games allow us to understand each other.
 - D.** Games help us to compete better against each other.

- 28.** Based on “The Game that Taught a Theory,” Elizabeth Magie was most likely a person with
- A.** ambitions for wealth.
 - B.** a selfish attitude.
 - C.** much private property.
 - D.** a sense of fairness.
-

- 29.** What is the main purpose of the opening paragraph of “The Game that Taught a Theory”?
- A.** To instruct readers on the history of board games
 - B.** To offer readers background information about Monopoly
 - C.** To educate readers about the historical roots of Monopoly
 - D.** To enlighten readers with the basic principles of economics
-

- 30.** Based on paragraph 15, with which statement would the author most likely agree?
- A.** Henry George thought people should live simply.
 - B.** Elizabeth Magie’s game was more meaningful than Monopoly.
 - C.** Henry George’s economic theories were superior to other theories.
 - D.** Elizabeth Magie thought the company that purchased Monopoly was greedy.

31. According to paragraph 14, over time Monopoly players wanted

- A.** more fun.
 - B.** different games.
 - C.** more education.
 - D.** different theories.
-

32. Read this sentence from paragraph 15.

George's economic theories became less popular over time. However, the game continued evolving until 1935, when a version called "Monopoly" was bought by a large game company.

In this quotation, what does evolving mean?

- A.** Constantly developing
 - B.** Failing attempts
 - C.** Losing enthusiasm
 - D.** Finally ending
-

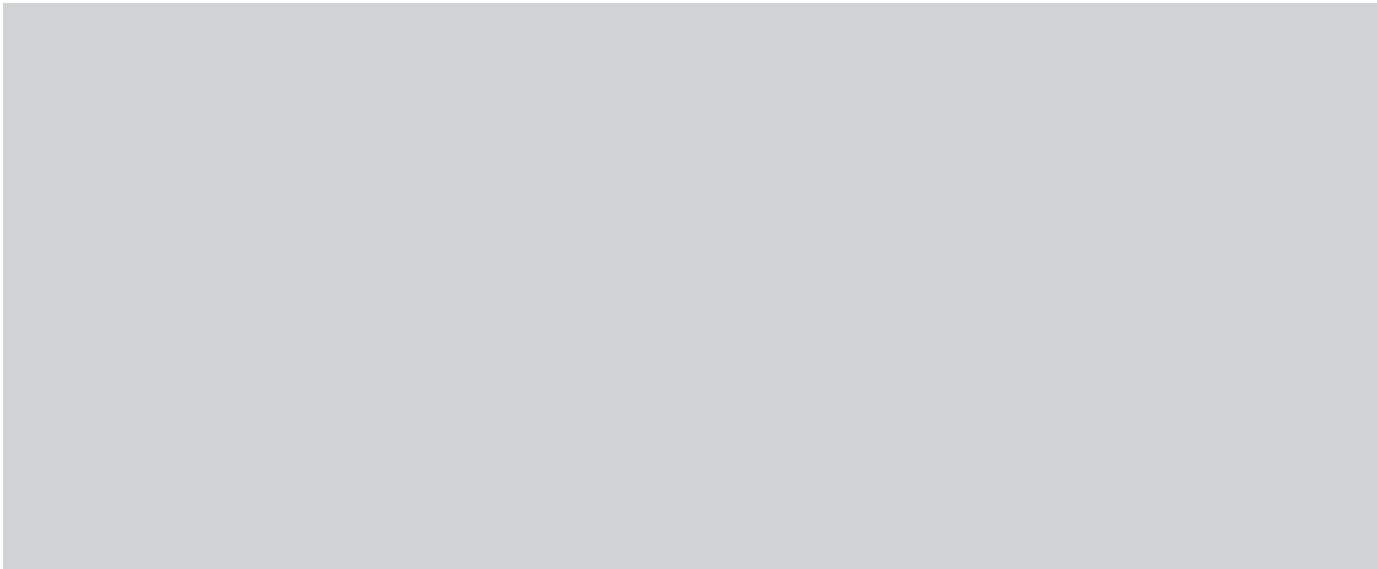
33. Paragraph 4 of "Got Game?" states, "Games are about uncertainty." In "The Game that Taught a Theory," which part of Elizabeth Magie's game represents the most uncertainty?

- A.** Playing with a particular game piece
- B.** Paying \$180 to buy a game property
- C.** Earning \$100 for going around the game board
- D.** Landing on a particular spot on the game board



There is no test material on this page.





This is the end of Segment 4.
Check your work. Then seal this segment.



Put sticker
here



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**ITEM SAMPLERS ARE NOT SECURE TEST MATERIALS. THIS
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DUPLICATED.**

**Grade 8
Reading
Item Sampler**

An Introduction to the MCA

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments are reading, mathematics and science tests that help schools and districts measure student progress toward the state's academic standards. The grades 3–8 mathematics assessments became operational in 2011 as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-Series III (MCA-III) and are aligned to the 2007 Minnesota Academic Standards. In 2012, the science assessments became operational as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-Series III (MCA-III) and are aligned to the 2009 Minnesota Academic Standards. In 2013, the grades 3-8 and 10 reading assessments are aligned to the 2010 Minnesota Academic Standards as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-Series III (MCA-III). In 2014, the grade 11 mathematics assessment is aligned to the 2007 Minnesota Academic Standards as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-Series III (MCA-III).

The Purpose of the MCA Item Samplers

An item sampler is not a complete test. It contains a smaller number of the items than students will see on a full-length test in the spring. The MCA Item Samplers were developed to familiarize students and teachers with the format of the MCA and the kinds of items that will appear on them.

This MCA Item Sampler is not a real test. It should not be used to predict how well students will do on the tests. However, students may feel more comfortable with the tests if they have reviewed the Item Samplers prior to the test.

How the MCA Item Samplers Were Created

The Item Samplers mirror the format of the MCA. The student directions, segment layouts and answer document each reflect the way the test will look in the spring, except that the Item Sampler is shorter than the actual test. As with all MCAs, the reading passages and the math and reading questions have been thoroughly reviewed by Minnesota teachers prior to testing. Minnesota students have answered these questions on previous tests.



Grade 8 Teacher's Guide

The distribution of question types and their aligned content selected for the Item Sampler generally reflects a range of items from each strand in the Minnesota Academic Standards. Whenever possible, the Item Samplers have the following designs:

Reading:

- Four segments similar to the actual MCA
- Four passages
 - Literature passages, informational passages and text sets will be used if available and aligned for test specifications for that grade level.
- Multiple-choice items
 - Six to eleven multiple-choice items for single passages
 - Twelve to fifteen multiple-choice items for text sets
- Appropriate Lexile of passages for the test specifications of the grade

The Contents of This Teacher's Guide

The Answer Key identifies the answers to the questions. The key also identifies the strand/sub-strand/standard/benchmark from the Minnesota Academic Standards to which each question is aligned.

State Standards and Test Specifications

The Item Samplers are primarily intended to familiarize teachers and students with the **format** of the MCA. The best preparation for the **content** of the MCA is done as a part of your curriculum planning. When doing that, reference the Minnesota Academic Standards and the test specifications for the MCA. For further questions about the MCAs, email us at mde.testing@state.mn.us.

Grade 8 Teacher's Guide

MCA-III Item Sampler Answer Key

Grade 8 Reading

Item #	Correct Answer	Item Type	Skill Domain	SSB	Depth of Knowledge
1	A	MC	Craft and Structure	8.4.4.4	II
2	C	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.4.3.3	II
3	D	MC	Craft and Structure	8.4.4.4	II
4	A	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.4.3.3	II
5	B	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.4.1.1	II
6	B	MC	Craft and Structure	8.4.4.4	II
7	C	MC	Craft and Structure	8.4.6.6	I
8	C	MC	Craft and Structure	8.5.6.6	II
9	B	MC	Craft and Structure	8.5.4.4	II
10	D	MC	Craft and Structure	8.5.6.6	II
11	C	MC	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	8.5.8.8	III
12	C	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.5.1.1	II
13	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.5.1.1	II
14	A	MC	Craft and Structure	8.5.6.6	II
15	B	MC	Craft and Structure	8.5.4.4	II
16	A	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.5.2.2	II
17	C	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.4.3.3	II
18	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.4.1.1	II
19	B	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.4.3.3	I
20	C	MC	Craft and Structure	8.4.5.5	III
21	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.4.2.2	II
22	B	MC	Craft and Structure	8.4.6.6	II
23	A	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.4.3.3	III
24	B	MC	Craft and Structure	8.4.6.6	III
25	A	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.5.1.1	II
26	B	MC	Craft and Structure	8.5.4.4	II
27	C	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.5.2.2	II
28	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.5.3.3	II
29	B	MC	Craft and Structure	8.5.6.6	II
30	B	MC	Craft and Structure	8.5.6.6	III
31	A	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.5.1.1	I
32	A	MC	Craft and Structure	8.5.4.4	II
33	D	MC	Key Ideas and Details	8.5.1.1	III

Passage Characteristics

Segment	Title	Type	Lexile	Word Count
1	The Best Coach	L	990	986
2	The Calorie	I	1200	854
3	Ode to My Socks	L	N/A	216
4	Got Game? (How to Know for Sure) / The Game that Taught a Theory	I/I	950/1160	1290

Grade 8 Teacher’s Guide

Legend:

Correct Answer — Answers to multiple-choice questions are listed.

Item Type — Multiple Choice (**MC**)

Skill Domain — The skill domain to which the item is aligned. The Skill Domains are the following:

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

SSB — The SSB includes the grade, sub-strand, standard and benchmark to which an item is aligned.

Depth of Knowledge (DOK) — A classification of the complexity of an item based on Norman L. Webb’s Depth of Knowledge. See the test specifications for an explanation of DOKs.

- Level I: Recall
- Level II: Skill/Concept
- Level III: Strategic Thinking

Passage Characteristics — Each passage has several characteristics that are used when constructing the MCAs.

- Type: The reading MCAs use literature passages, informational passages and text sets.
- Lexile: Lexile is a readability measure used on the MCAs to determine text difficulty. (Lexile does not apply to poems.)
- Word Count: The total number of words in the passage, not including the introduction contained before the title.