



Kansas Assessment Prep Grade 6 Reading Comprehension

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To the Students

Tips for Answering Multiple-Choice Questions

Multiple-choice questions have a stem, which is a question or an incomplete sentence, followed by four answer choices. You should select only one answer choice. The following are some tips to help you correctly answer multiple-choice questions on the Grade 6 Kansas Reading Assessment:

- Read each passage carefully.
- Read each question and think about the answer. You may look back to the reading selection as often as necessary.
- Answer all questions on your answer sheet. Do not mark any answers to questions in your test booklet.
- For each question, choose the best answer, and completely fill in the circle in the space provided on your answer sheet.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, skip it and go on. You may return to it later if you have time.
- If you finish the section of the test that you are working on early, you may review your answers in that section only. Don't go on to the next section of the test.

Tips for Answering Open-Response Questions

In this book, students will also be asked to answer open-response questions once they have finished reading some of the passages. Open-response items allow the students to practice their writing skills by answering questions about a passage in their own words.

Remember to:

- Read the question carefully. Be sure you understand it before you begin writing.
- Be sure your essay has a main idea. This should be in your introduction.
- Support your main idea with details, explanations, and examples.
- State your ideas in a clear sequence.
- Include an opening and a closing.
- Use a variety of words and vary your sentence structure.
- Check your spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
- Write neatly.

THE MYSTERY OF DREAMS

Have you ever wondered why you dream at night? Have you ever had a bizarre dream that didn't make any sense? While scientists believe that everyone dreams, they are still unsure about why they do. A long time ago, people believed that the dreams they had at night were real worlds that they entered and exited whenever they slept. We know today that this isn't true but, for the most part, dreams still remain a mystery.

Stages of Sleep

Each night, we go through five stages of sleep, the first of which is very light. You will wake up easily during this stage but, as you progress from stage to stage, your sleep deepens and you become harder to awaken. The very last stage of sleep, the fifth stage, is called REM sleep and is the stage in which you dream. When your body reaches REM sleep, your brain releases a chemical that makes the rest of your body stay still. Some scientists think that this happens so that we don't act out our dreams and accidentally hurt ourselves.

What Dreams Mean

Amazingly, scientists can only theorize about why we dream and what our dreams mean. Some think that we dream simply because our brains don't sleep in the same way that our bodies do. They think that dreams occur because our brains are active and alert during sleep. Other scientists think that dreaming is more complicated and that we often dream in order to go over problems in our lives that need more attention. According to these scientists, if you have the same dream over and over again, it means that you have a problem in your life that you haven't yet solved. They also think that, since your brain is active at night, you might actually be able to solve some problems while you sleep!

Some people think that they can interpret the meaning of dreams. It has been said that, if you dream you are falling, you might be worried about something, like a test at school. If you dream that you are flying on an airplane, you might want to see a new place and, if you have a "chase dream," a dream in which someone or something is chasing you, you might be under too much pressure during the day and may doubt yourself. Many inventors have said that the answers to their trickiest problems—and some of their best ideas—have come to them in dreams. Many artists claim that the ideas for some of their greatest works were inspired by their dreams.

While it is fun to try to interpret dreams, most scientists agree that only the person who has had a dream actually knows what it means. This is because dreams are most likely a response to our daily thoughts and activities.

Remembering Dreams

Some people claim that they never dream, but scientists believe that all people dream for at least an hour during the night. The problem is that some people think that they don't dream because they can't remember their dreams. Even those who can remember dreams often can only remember the last dream they had before waking up.

Some scientists believe that people only remember ideas or events by repeating them and, since we normally only get to experience a dream once, we don't remember dreams well. Other scientists think that we can't remember many of our dreams simply because we are not awake during them but, if someone were to wake us up during our dreams, we would remember the dreams perfectly.

Trying to remember your dreams can be fun. If you think about dreaming before you fall asleep at night, you might be better able to remember your dreams. If you keep a pen and paper at your bedside, you can write down your dreams as soon as you wake up, when you are most likely to remember them. If you do this, you might be able to better find meaning in your dreams.

1. Why do some people claim to never dream?
 - A. They are embarrassed by their dreams.
 - B. They don't remember dreams after they wake up.
 - C. They have scary dreams that they don't want to discuss.
 - D. They don't believe that dreams mean anything.

The author tells you that some people believe that they don't dream, even though scientists disagree. Some people might be embarrassed by their dreams (answer choice A), but that probably wouldn't keep them from admitting to having dreams. If a person doesn't remember a dream (answer choice B), he or she might think that the dream never took place. This seems to be the right answer. Answer choice C is possible, but scary dreams would probably not make someone deny having any dreams at all. And even if someone didn't think dreams had meaning (answer choice D), they'd have no reason to say that they never have dreams. Answer choice B is best.

2. What meaning does the author give to a dream about flying on an airplane?
- A. The dreamer might be under pressure.
 - B. The dreamer might be afraid of something.
 - C. The dreamer might be eager to see new places.
 - D. The dreamer might be worried about school.

This question asks you about a detail in the passage. If you're not sure of the answer, scan the passage to find the word "flying." This is where you will find the answer to this question. Answer choice A is not correct; the passage says that if you are under too much pressure, you might have a "chase dream." Answer choice B is also not the correct answer. According to the passage, if you dream that you are flying on an airplane, you might like to travel to some new place. Answer choice C is the correct answer. Answer choice D is not connected to dreams of flying.

3. Which sentence **best** summarizes the passage?
- A. "While scientists know some things about dreams, they still aren't sure why we dream."
 - B. "You can remember your dreams better if you think about dreaming before you fall asleep."
 - C. "Some people think that if you dream you are falling, you might be worried about something."
 - D. "The fifth and final stage of sleep, known as REM sleep, is the sleep stage in which people dream."

This question asks you to choose the best summary. Always look for the answer choice that gives a sentence or two expressing the main idea of the entire passage, not just a part of the passage. Answer choice A does seem to summarize the entire passage, but always read each answer choice before making a decision. Answer choice B is not the best summary; it gives only one minor detail presented in the passage. Answer choices C and D also give details, not main ideas. Therefore, answer choice A is the best answer.

4. Read the sentence below from the passage.

Have you ever had a bizarre dream that didn't make any sense?

In the sentence, the word bizarre probably means

- A. strange.
- B. scary.
- C. brief.
- D. forgotten.

This question asks you to determine the meaning of a word from the passage. Read the sentence carefully and look for hints as to the meaning of the word. Answer choice A looks promising—a strange dream would likely not make much sense. But be sure to read the rest of the answer choices before making a decision. A nonsensical dream might be scary (answer choice B), but it doesn't have to be. Answer choice C has nothing to do with how much sense a dream makes. Finally, if the dream was forgotten (answer choice D), you wouldn't remember whether it made sense or not. Answer choice A is best.

5. What is the author's **main** purpose for writing the passage?

- A. to teach readers how to remember more of their dreams
- B. to convince readers that dreams can help solve problems
- C. to describe to readers what it feels like to have a dream
- D. to inform readers about scientists' beliefs about dreams

This question asks you why the author wrote this passage. While the passage does tell you some ways you can remember your dreams, this is just a detail and not the main reason the author wrote it. Therefore, answer choice A is not the best answer. The passage really isn't convincing; it informs and doesn't persuade, so you can eliminate answer choice B. Most readers know what it feels like to have a dream, so answer choice C is not the best answer. Answer choice D is the correct answer.

6. The reason that dreams are still a mystery is that
- A. there are many simple ways to remember more of your dreams.
 - B. sometimes inventors and artists find inspiration in their dreams.
 - C. scientists can only theorize why people dream and what dreams mean.
 - D. dreaming about falling down might represent tension in the dreamer's life.

Each of these answer choices contains an idea from the passage, but which one pertains most to the idea that dreams are mysterious? Answer choice A is a detail from the passage which relates to remembering dreams, not understanding them. Answer choice B does not mention dreams being mysterious in any way. Answer choice C, on the other hand, says that scientists can only make theories about dreams. They have no definite knowledge of dreams, which makes dreams mysterious. Since answer choice D is just another minor detail, answer choice C is the right answer.

7. According to the passage, some scientists think we can solve our real-life problems through dreaming. Imagine you could meet them. What questions would you ask those scientists? How might their answers affect how you think and feel about dreaming? Use information from the passage to support your response.

This question asks you to develop questions about the information in the passage. Is there anything that you are still wondering about dreams after reading the passage? Is there anything that you would like to learn more about? After you write some questions for the scientists, think about what answers you might receive. Then answer the second question. How would these answers change how you think and feel about dreaming?

from “THE HAPPY PRINCE”

by Oscar Wilde

HIGH above the city, on a tall column, stood the statue of the Happy Prince. He was gilded all over with thin leaves of fine gold, for eyes he had two bright sapphires, and a large red ruby glowed on his sword-hilt.

He was very much admired indeed. “He is as beautiful as a weathercock,” remarked one of the town councillors who wished to gain a reputation for having artistic tastes; “only not quite so useful,” he added, fearing lest people should think him unpractical, which he really was not.

“Why can’t you be like the Happy Prince?” asked a sensible mother of her little boy who was crying for the moon. “The Happy Prince never dreams of crying for anything.”

“I am glad there is someone in the world who is quite happy,” muttered a disappointed man as he gazed at the wonderful statue.

“He looks just like an angel,” said the charity children as they came out of the cathedral in their bright scarlet cloaks and their clean white pinafores.

“How do you know?” said the Mathematical Master, “you have never seen one.”

“Ah! but we have, in our dreams,” answered the children; and the Mathematical Master frowned and looked very severe, for he did not approve of children dreaming.

One night there flew over the city a little swallow. “Where shall I put up?” he said; “I hope the town has made preparations.”

Then he saw the statue on the tall column. “I will put up there,” he cried; “it is a fine position with plenty of fresh air.” So he alighted just between the feet of the Happy Prince.

“I have a golden bedroom,” he said softly to himself as he looked round, and he prepared to go to sleep; but just as he was putting his head under his wing, a large drop of water fell on him. “What a curious thing!” he cried. “There is not a single cloud in the sky, the stars are quite clear and bright, and yet it is raining. The climate in the north of Europe is really dreadful. The reed used to like the rain, but that was merely her selfishness.”

Then another drop fell. “What is the use of a statue if it cannot keep the rain off?” he said; “I must look for a good chimney-pot,” and he determined to fly away.

But before he had opened his wings, a third drop fell, and he looked up and saw—ah! what did he see?

The eyes of the Happy Prince were filled with tears, and tears were running down his golden cheeks. His face was so beautiful in the moonlight that the little swallow was filled with pity.

“Who are you?” he said.

“I am the Happy Prince.”

“Why are you weeping then?” asked the swallow; “you have quite drenched me.”

1. What causes the swallow to want to leave the statue?
 - A. The swallow thinks the statue’s tears are rain.
 - B. The statue comes to life and frightens the swallow.
 - C. The swallow is jealous of statue’s beauty.
 - D. The statue refuses to keep the rain off the swallow.

2. Which **best** describes the reason that the Happy Prince started to cry?
 - A. It had begun to rain on the city.
 - B. He was not as happy as people thought.
 - C. The swallow hurt him when he landed.
 - D. The people of the city had forgotten about him.

3. Which **best** describes what the people thought about the Happy Prince?
 - A. They were annoyed by the gold and jewels on the statue.
 - B. They were happy that a swallow would live on the statue.
 - C. They were embarrassed at the statue’s poor appearance.
 - D. They were impressed by the magnificence of the statue.

Barbara Frietchie was born Barbara Hauer in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Her father was a hatter. She married John Casper Frietchie in 1806. He was a glovemak-
er.

Barbara Frietchie became famous for her courage and patriotism during the Civil War. On September 6, 1862, Confederate soldiers passed by her home in Frederick, Maryland. She bravely displayed the Union flag. She was 95 years old. In tribute to her bravery, she was not harmed.

John Greenleaf Whittier heard about the incident. Inspired, he wrote this poem.

“BARBARA FRIETCHIE”

by John Greenleaf Whittier

UP from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as a garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee marched over the mountain wall,—

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down.
In her attic-window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
“Stonewall” Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced: the old flag met his sight.

“Halt!”—the dust-brown ranks stood fast,
“Fire!”—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf;

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

“Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country’s flag,” she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman’s deed and word:

“Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!” he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.
Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

1. The author's **main** purpose for writing the poem is to
 - A. challenge ideas about the flag.
 - B. explain how the flag was made.
 - C. tell the story of a brave lady.
 - D. describe how a battle was won.

2. How did Stonewall Jackson feel when he realized that he had ordered his men to fire at a flag waved by an old woman?
 - A. frightened
 - B. foolish
 - C. confused
 - D. determined

3. Why did Stonewall Jackson **probably** order his men to stop firing at Barbara Frietchie?
- A. He was impressed that an old woman would stand up to an entire army of soldiers.
 - B. He was afraid that he would get in trouble for firing at an old woman waving a flag.
 - C. He decided that he didn't want his army to waste bullets when they weren't in battle.
 - D. He realized that he wanted to fight with the Union and not with the Confederacy.
4. In the thirty-ninth line, the phrase "nobler nature within him stirred" probably means that Stonewall Jackson
- A. listened to Barbara and decided that he truly liked her.
 - B. did not think that he had done anything really wrong.
 - C. did not care about the flag as much as the Barbara did.
 - D. listened to his heart and decided to do the right thing.
5. The **main** theme of the poem is
- A. protecting yourself from harm.
 - B. showing older people respect.
 - C. always doing as you're told.
 - D. standing up for your beliefs.

