



iLeap Prep Grade 7 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 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 Leap ELA test:

- 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-Ended Questions

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.

from “THE LIGHTHOUSE”

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

The rocky ledge runs far into the sea,
And on its outer point, some miles away,
The lighthouse lifts its massive masonry,
A pillar of fire by night, of cloud by day.

Even at this distance I can see the tides,
Upheaving, break unheard along its base,
A speechless wrath, that rises and subsides
In the white lip and tremor of the face.

And as the evening darkens, lo! how bright,
Through the deep purple of the twilight air,
Beams forth the sudden radiance of its light
With strange, unearthly splendor in the glare!

Not one alone; from each projecting cape
And perilous reef along the ocean's verge,
Starts into life a dim, gigantic shape,
Holding its lantern o'er the restless surge. . . .

And the great ships sail outward and return,
Bending and bowing o'er the billowy swells,
And ever joyful, as they see it burn,
They wave their silent welcomes and farewells.

They come forth from the darkness, and their sails
Gleam for a moment only in the blaze,
And eager faces, as the light unveils,
Gaze at the tower, and vanish while they gaze.

The mariner remembers when a child,
On his first voyage, he saw it fade and sink;
And when, returning from adventures wild,
He saw it rise again o'er ocean's brink.

Steadfast, serene, immovable, the same
Year after year, through all the silent night
Burns on forevermore that quenchless flame,
Shines on that inextinguishable light! . . .

The startled waves leap over it; the storm
Smites it with all the scourges of the rain,
And steadily against its solid form
Press the great shoulders of the hurricane. . . .

“Sail on!” it says, “sail on, ye stately ships!
And with your floating bridge the ocean span;
Be mine to guard this light from all eclipse,
Be yours to bring man nearer unto man!”

1. What is the **main** purpose of the poem?

- A. to describe the color of twilight
- B. to honor a special lighthouse
- C. to persuade readers to be sailors
- D. to explain the return of a sailboat

Answer choice A is incorrect because, although Longfellow says that the twilight is purple, that is not the central point of the poem. Answer choice B looks like a good answer because the poem is about a lighthouse guiding ships around reefs and a storm. Answer choice C is incorrect because the author does not address the reader directly. Answer choice D is incorrect because the poem is more focused on the lighthouse than on a boat. Answer choice B is the correct answer.

2. What happens after the storm hits the lighthouse?

- A. The storm floods the lighthouse and washes most of it out to sea.
- B. The sailors give up hope that the lighthouse can lead them to safety.
- C. The lighthouse survives the storm and its lamp continues to shine.
- D. The lighthouse lamp goes out, but is quickly relit to guide the ships.

Answer choice A is incorrect because the lighthouse calls out to the ships; it could not have been destroyed. Answer choice B is incorrect because the sailors don't appear to change their attitudes because of the storm hitting the lighthouse. Answer choice C appears to be correct because the lighthouse does tell the ships to sail on. Answer choice D is incorrect because the lighthouse is meant to guard against an eclipse (i.e., any loss of light). Answer choice C is the correct answer.

3. What can the reader tell about the lighthouse?

- A. It is mysterious.
- B. It is reliable.
- C. It is beautiful.
- D. It is run-down.

Reread the poem to see which sentence best describes the lighthouse. From the way the author describes the lighthouse, it is more predictable than mysterious (answer choice A). It is reliable; in the eighth stanza of the poem, the author describes the lighthouse as “steadfast” and “immovable” and says the lighthouse is the same year after year. This is a good answer choice. The lighthouse is probably beautiful, but answer choice B is a better answer. The author does not imply that the lighthouse is run-down. Answer choice B is the best answer.

4. The poem says that the storm “Smites it with all the scourges of the rain.” What does smites mean?

- A. assists
- B. bypasses
- C. beckons
- D. attacks

Answer choice A is incorrect because the storm brings danger, not assistance, to the lighthouse. Answer choice B is incorrect because the storm and the lighthouse seem to collide with, rather than avoid, each other. Answer choice C is incorrect because there does not seem to be any communication between the storm and the lighthouse. Answer choice D is correct because the storm attacks the lighthouse with “scourges of the rain.”

5. In line 4, the author **most likely** compares the lighthouse to a pillar of fire because
- A. getting close to the lighthouse can be dangerous.
 - B. the lighthouse is taller than it looks from a distance.
 - C. the lighthouse shines very brightly in the dark.
 - D. sailors take comfort in seeing the lighthouse.

In line 4, the author calls the lighthouse “a pillar of fire by night.” This suggests that, like a fire burning in the darkness, a lighthouse is bright and gives off a lot of light at night. Answer choice A is incorrect because the author never mentions that the lighthouse can be dangerous. Answer choice B is incorrect because the phrase “pillar of fire” has nothing to do with the height of the lighthouse. Answer choice C is a good answer. The phrase “pillar of fire” does help to show how bright the lighthouse is at night. Answer choice D is incorrect because while the lighthouse is a comfort to sailors, this phrase from the poem does not convey that message. Answer choice C is the best answer.

6. How does the author feel about the lighthouse? Use details from the poem to support your answer.

You have to write out your answer to this question. Begin by rereading the poem and looking for clues as to how the author feels about the lighthouse. In the third stanza, the author says that the lighthouse is very bright. He uses exclamation points to show that he is excited about this brightness. In the fourth stanza, he says that the people on ships are joyful when they see the lighthouse.

Based on these details, you might write an answer like this:

The author seems to value the lighthouse because of its brightness. In the third stanza of the poem, he says the lighthouse “Beams forth the sudden radiance of its light / With strange, unearthly splendor in the glare!” He seems to think the glare from the lighthouse is splendid and wonderful. He uses exclamation points to show that he is excited about this brightness. Also, in the fifth stanza, he says that the people and ships are joyful when they see the lighthouse.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

from “**BURNING DAYLIGHT**”

by Jack London

Few men knew Elam Harnish by any other name than “Burning Daylight,” the name which had been given him in the early days in the land because of his habit of routing his comrades out of their blankets with the complaint that daylight was burning. Of the pioneers in that far Arctic wilderness, where all men were pioneers, he was reckoned among the oldest. Men like Al Mayo and Jack McQuestion antedated him; but they had entered the land by crossing the Rockies from the Hudson Bay country to the east. He, however, had been the pioneer over the Chilcoot and Chilcat passes. In the spring of 1883, twelve years before, a stripling of eighteen, he had crossed over the Chilcoot with five comrades.

In the fall he had crossed back with one. Four had perished by mischance in the bleak, uncharted vastness. And for twelve years Elam Harnish had continued to grope for gold among the shadows of the Circle.

And no man had groped so obstinately nor so enduringly. He had grown up with the land. He knew no other land. Civilization was a dream of some previous life. Camps like Forty Mile and Circle City were to him metropolises. And not alone had he grown up with the land, for, raw as it was, he had helped to make it. He had made history and geography, and those that followed wrote of his traverses and charted the trails his feet had broken.

Heroes are seldom given to hero-worship, but among those of that young land, young as he was, he was accounted an elder hero. In point of time he was before them. In point of deed he was beyond them. In point of endurance it was acknowledged that he could kill the hardiest of them. Furthermore, he was accounted a nervy man, a square man, and a white man.

In all lands where life is a hazard lightly played with and lightly flung aside, men turn, almost automatically, to gambling for diversion and relaxation. In the Yukon men gambled their lives for gold, and those that won gold from the ground gambled for it with one another. Nor was Elam Harnish an exception. He was a man’s man primarily, and the instinct in him to play the game of life was strong. Environment had determined what form that game should take. He was born on an Iowa farm, and his father had emigrated to eastern Oregon, in which mining country Elam’s boyhood was lived. He had known nothing but hard knocks for big stakes. Pluck and endurance counted in the game, but the great god Chance dealt the cards. Honest work for sure but meager returns did not count. A man played big. He risked everything for everything, and anything less than everything meant that he was a loser.

So for twelve Yukon years, Elam Harnish had been a loser. True, on Moosehide Creek the past summer he had taken out twenty thousand dollars, and what was left in the ground was twenty thousand more. But, as he himself proclaimed, that was no more than getting his ante back. He had ante’d his life for a dozen years, and forty thousand was a small pot for such a stake—the price of a drink and a dance at the Tivoli, of a winter’s flutter at Circle City, and a grubstake for the year to come.

1. What will **most likely** happen next?
 - A. Harnish will lose all his money gambling.
 - B. Harnish will continue searching for gold.
 - C. The gold hunters will leave the Yukon.
 - D. Civilization will finally reach the Yukon.

2. The passage says, “Pluck and endurance counted in the game.” What does pluck mean?
 - A. to pull off or pull out
 - B. to remove something (like hair) by plucking
 - C. to play a musical instrument by pulling its strings
 - D. to have courage in the face of difficulties

3. Elam Harnish was known as “Burning Daylight” because he
 - A. had a lot of blond hair.
 - B. hated to waste daylight.
 - C. had very bright eyes.
 - D. slept in the morning.

4. What is the **most likely** reason that Harnish lives in the wilderness?
 - A. He is farming new land.
 - B. He is looking for new cities.
 - C. He is searching for gold.
 - D. He is meeting new people.

5. The **most likely** reason why Harnish takes so many chances is because he
 - A. has had a tough childhood in a mining community.
 - B. wants to be known as a hero.
 - C. has worked on a farm throughout his entire life.
 - D. knows that one day he will settle down and stop traveling.
6. Do you agree with the author's statement that Harnish was "a loser"? Why or why not? Use details from the passage to support your answer.

DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP

Bighorn are true sheep. They are distantly related to domestic sheep. The name “desert bighorn sheep” applies to those bighorn inhabiting hot and dry desert mountain ranges. These are ranges with sparse vegetation and water. Biologists recognize four races of desert bighorn. One race inhabits the Sonoran desert wilderness of the Cabeza Prieta in Arizona.

The desert bighorn has become well adapted to living in the desert heat and cold. Unlike most mammals, their body temperature can safely fluctuate several degrees. During the heat of the day, bighorn often rest in the shade of trees and caves.

Cabeza Prieta’s bighorn are typically found in small scattered bands. They have adapted to a desert mountain environment. Bighorn feed on a wide variety of leaves, twigs, flowers, grasses, and cacti. They can live with little or no permanent water. Some of the bighorn may go for weeks or months without visiting one of the refuge’s water developments. They sustain their body moisture from food and from rain water collected in temporary rock pools. They may have the ability to lose up to 30 percent of their body weight and still survive. After drinking water, they quickly recover from their dehydrated condition.

Wildlife ecologists are just beginning to study the importance of this adaptive strategy. It has allowed these small bands to survive in areas too dry for many of their predators.

Desert bighorn are stocky, heavy-bodied sheep. They are similar in size to mule deer. Weights of mature rams range from 125 to 200 pounds. Ewes are somewhat smaller. Due to their unique padded hooves, bighorn are able to climb the steep, rocky terrain of the desert mountains with speed and agility.

Bighorn rely on their keen eyesight to detect potential predators. Predators include mountain lions, coyotes, and bobcats. The bighorn use their climbing ability to escape.

Both sexes develop horns soon after birth. Horn growth continues throughout life. Older rams have impressive sets of curling horns. They measure over three feet long. They have more than one foot of circumference at the base.

Cabeza’s bighorn often have a unique rusty color on their horns. This is thought to be a result of rubbing against the elephant tree. The ewes’ horns are much smaller and lighter. They do not tend to curl. The head and horns of an adult ram may weigh more than 30 pounds. Annual growth rings indicate the animal’s age. Both rams and ewes use their horns for fighting and as tools to break open cactus, which they consume.

Rams battle to determine the dominant animal. The winner gains possession of the ewes. Facing each other, rams charge head-on from distances of 20 feet or more. They crash their massive horns together with tremendous impact. They keep this up until one or the other ceases.

Bighorn live in separate ram and ewe bands most of the year. They gather during the breeding season. The breeding season is usually from July through October. Gestation lasts about six months. The lambs are usually born in late winter.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, bighorn sheep populations rapidly declined. Domestic cattle and sheep, along with wild horses and burros, competed with bighorn, especially at waterholes. Domestic stock also introduced diseases to bighorn populations.

Activities that influence bighorn sheep numbers include disturbance from a wide variety of sources. These include hunting and other recreational uses of their habitat. Poaching is also a problem. Bighorn's habitats are disturbed by roads, fences, mining, and military and recreational activities. Individual bands become isolated. Eventually whole populations of desert bighorn sheep can be lost as their usable habitat becomes increasingly intruded upon by humans.

1. Which of the following is **most likely** the biggest threat to desert bighorn sheep today?
 - A. domestic cattle
 - B. mountain lions
 - C. human activities
 - D. horse grazing

2. What is the **best** summary of the third paragraph?
 - A. The desert bighorn are closely related to domestic sheep.
 - B. Padded hooves help the bighorn to escape from predators.
 - C. The desert bighorn can survive in places with little water.
 - D. Human interference is damaging the bighorn population.

3. In the sentence "Bighorn rely on their keen eyesight to detect potential predators," what does the word potential mean?
 - A. able
 - B. powerful
 - C. implied
 - D. possible

4. What is the **most likely** reason for rams to charge at each other?
 - A. to gain ewes
 - B. to win water
 - C. to have fun
 - D. to make allies
5. How can we help protect desert bighorn sheep? Identify and explain one way people can help desert bighorn sheep. Use specific details from the passage to support your answer.

“THE CREMATION OF SAM MCGEE”

by Robert William Service

**There are strange things done in the midnight sun
By the men who moil for gold;
The Arctic trails have their secret tales
That would make your blood run cold;
The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,
But the queerest they ever did see
Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge
I cremated Sam McGee.**

Now Sam McGee was from Tennessee,
where the cotton blooms and blows.
Why he left his home in the South to roam
‘round the Pole, God only knows.
He was always cold, but the land of gold
seemed to hold him like a spell;
Though he’d often say in his homely way
that he’d “sooner live in Hell.”

On a Christmas day we were mushing our way
over the Dawson trail.
Talk of your cold! through the parka’s fold
it stabbed like a driven nail.
If our eyes we’d close, then the lashes froze
till sometimes we couldn’t see,
It wasn’t much fun, but the only one
to whimper was Sam McGee.

And that very night, as we lay packed tight
in our robes beneath the snow,
And the dogs were fed, and the stars o’erhead
were dancing heel and toe,
He turned to me, and “Cap,” says he,
“I’ll cash in this trip, I guess;
And if I do, I’m asking that you
won’t refuse my last request.”

Well he seemed so low that I couldn’t say no;
then he says with a sort of moan,
“It’s the cursed cold, and it’s got right hold
till I’m chilled clean through to the bone.
Yet ‘taint being dead—it’s the awful dread
of the icy grave that pains;
So I want you to swear that, foul or fair,
you’ll cremate my last remains.”

A pal's last need is a thing to heed.
so I swore I would not fail;
And we started on at the streak of dawn;
but God! he looked ghastly pale.
He crouched on the sleigh, and he raved all day
of his home in Tennessee;
And before nightfall a corpse was all
that was left of Sam McGee.

There wasn't a breath in that land of death,
and I hurried, horror-driven,
With a corpse half hid that I couldn't get rid,
because of a promise given;
It was lashed to the sleigh, and it seemed to say:
"You may tax your brawn and brains,
But you promised true, and it's up to you
to cremate these last remains."

Now a promise made is a debt unpaid,
the trail has its own stern code,
In the days to come, though my lips were dumb
in my heart how I cursed that load!
In the long, long night, by the lone firelight,
while the huskies, round in a ring,
Howled out their woes to the homeless snows—
Oh God, how I loathed the thing!

And every day that quiet clay
seemed to heavy and heavier grow;
And on I went, though the dogs were spent
and the grub was getting low.
The trail was bad, and I felt half mad,
but I swore I would not give in;
And I'd often sing to the hateful thing,
and it hearkened with a grin.

Till I came to the marge of Lake Lebarge,
and a derelict there lay;
It was jammed in the ice, but I saw in a trice
it was called the *Alice May*,
And I looked at it, and I thought a bit,
and I looked at my frozen chum;
Then "Here," said I, with a sudden cry,
"is my cre-ma-tor-e-um"!

Some planks I tore from the cabin floor
and I lit the boiler fire;
Some coal I found that was lying around,
and I heaped the fuel higher;
The flames just soared, and the furnace roared
such a blaze you seldom see,
And I burrowed a hole in the glowing coal,
and I stuffed in Sam McGee.

Then I made a hike, for I didn't like
to hear him sizzle so;
And the heavens scowled, and the huskies howled,
and the wind began to blow,
It was icy cold, but the hot sweat rolled
down my cheeks, and I don't know why;
And the greasy smoke in an inky cloak
went streaking down the sky.

I do not know how long in the snow
I wrestled with grisly fear;
But the stars came out and they danced about
ere again I ventured near;
I was sick with dread, but I bravely said,
"I'll just take a peep inside.
I guess he's cooked, and it's time I looked".
Then the door I opened wide.

And there sat Sam, looking cool and calm,
in the heart of the furnace roar;
And he wore a smile you could see a mile,
and he said, "Please close that door.
It's fine in here, but I greatly fear
you'll let in the cold and storm—
Since I left Plumtree, down in Tennessee,
it's the first time I've been warm."

**There are strange things done in the midnight sun
By the men who toil for gold;
The Arctic trails have their secret tales
That would make your blood run cold;
The Northern Lights have seen queer sights,
But the queerest they ever did see
Was that night on the marge of Lake Lebarge
I cremated Sam McGee.**

1. In the sentence “There are strange things done in the midnight sun / by the men who moil for gold,” what does the word moil mean?
 - A. fight
 - B. melt
 - C. labor
 - D. trade

2. Which words **best** describe how the speaker feels about traveling with Sam McGee’s body?
 - A. scared but content
 - B. troubled but determined
 - C. excited but uncomfortable
 - D. pleased but mournful

3. In the line “It stabbed like a driven nail,” what figure of speech does the author use?
 - A. simile
 - B. metaphor
 - C. personification
 - D. onomatopoeia

4. What is the narrator’s **main** problem in the poem?
 - A. He must keep a difficult promise to his friend.
 - B. He must find his way through the snow.
 - C. He must decide what to do with the gold he has found.
 - D. He must race to keep Sam McGee alive.

5. Why did Sam McGee **most likely** stay in the Arctic?

- A. He liked the climate.
- B. He grew up there.
- C. He loved the cold.
- D. He wanted gold.

6. What was Sam McGee afraid of?

- A. dying before the end of the trip
- B. resting in a cold grave
- C. never finding enough gold
- D. having to meet the narrator

7. Explain what happened to Sam McGee. Use specific details from the poem to support your answer.

[illegible]