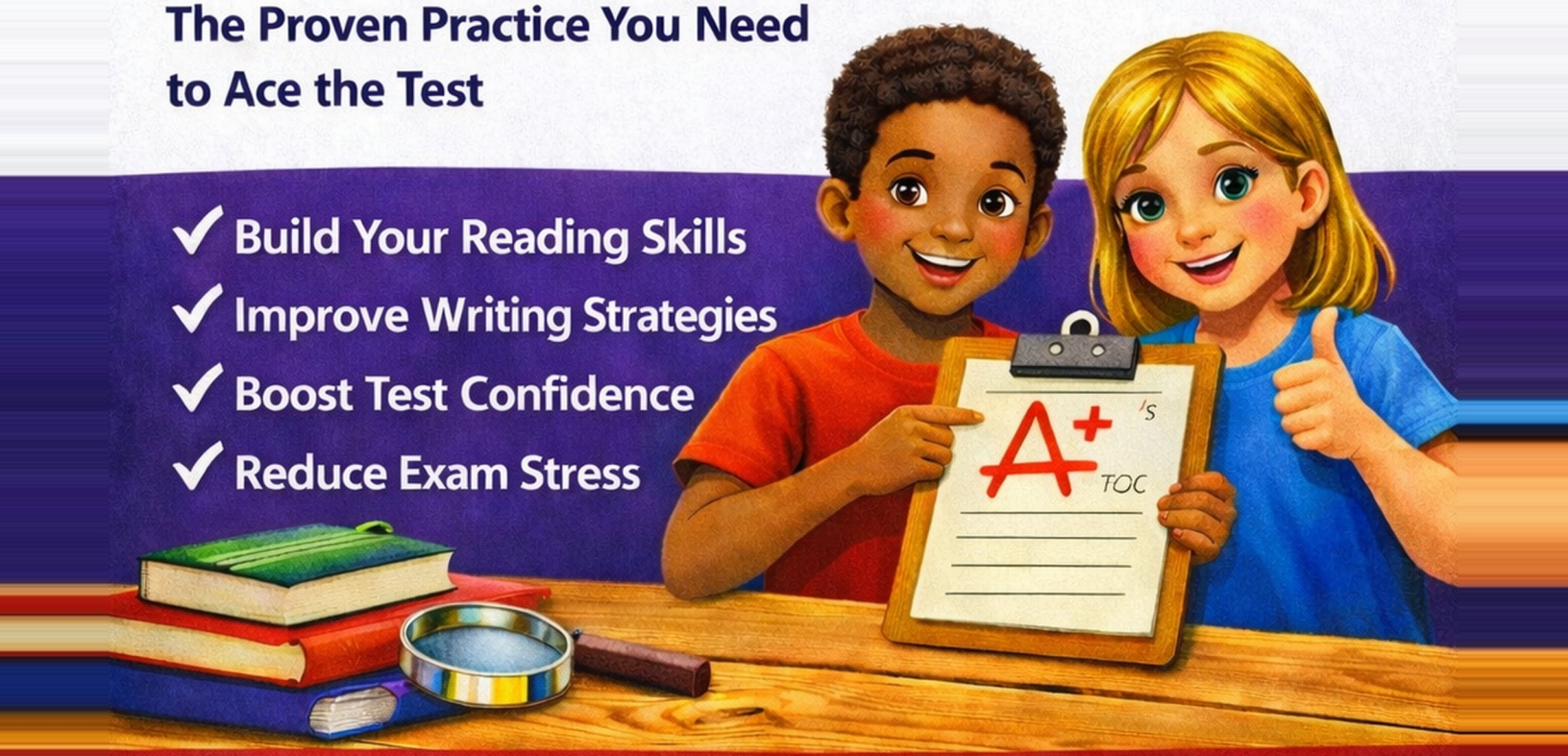
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8 New Mexico NM-MSSA Grade 3 English Language Arts (ELA) Practice Tests

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Full-Length Practice for NM-MSSA Preparation
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Grade 3 English

English Language

1

Questions: Varies by section **Duration:** No time limit

Important Test Information

These practice items follow the style of third-grade English Language assessments. Formats can vary by section: you may see reading passages and graphics, different kinds of questions, or other tasks—follow the instructions on each page.

Test-Taking Tips:

- Read each question and every answer choice before you decide.
- Look back at the reading material or graphic when a question is based on them.
- Work carefully—there is no time limit on these practice tests, so use the time you need.

Remember: Take your time, stay calm, and do your best. You've prepared well for this practice—you've got this!

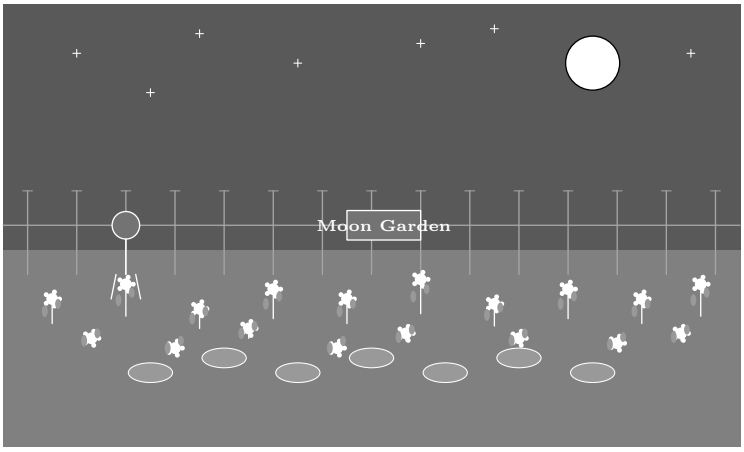


Icy shots?
Spot the clue.

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Read the passage below. Then answer questions 1–8.

The Moon Garden at Maple School



1 Behind Maple School, there is a small garden that looks simple during the day. It has pale stones, silver-green leaves, and many white flowers. But when evening comes, the garden seems to change. The white petals glow softly in the moonlight, and the whole space looks bright and peaceful.

2 The students call it the Moon Garden. They helped create it after learning that some flowers are easiest to see at dusk or at night. Their teacher, Mrs. Hale, wanted the class to build a place that would be beautiful in a different way from the sunny flower beds near the playground.

3 First, the class chose plants with pale colors, such as white daisies and silvery leaves. Then they added smooth stepping-stones and a small sign. Some students drew plans for where each flower should go. Others helped dig holes, carry water, and spread mulch around the plants.

4 After a few weeks, the Moon Garden began to bloom. The children visited it one evening with their families and noticed how clearly the flowers shone in the fading light. They also heard crickets singing nearby and felt the cool air move through the leaves. The garden was not loud or flashy. It was calm and gentle.

5 The garden became a favorite place for quiet observation. Students sketched flowers in science notebooks, wrote poems about moonlight, and compared the Moon Garden with the bright butterfly garden near the fence. They learned that a garden can be exciting without being full of bold colors.

6 Mrs. Hale says the Moon Garden reminds students to notice beauty that is easy to miss. On busy days, people may hurry past small and quiet things. But in the soft evening light, the little garden teaches them to slow down, look closely, and wonder.

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1) What is the **central idea** of the article?

(A) Evening is the best time for every school activity.
(B) White flowers are the only flowers worth planting.
(C) Maple School built a special garden that helps students notice quiet beauty and learn in a new way.
(D) The playground garden is more colorful than the Moon Garden.

Use the article "The Moon Garden at Maple School" to answer this question.

2) What does the word *glow* mean as it is used in paragraph 1?

(A) To fall quickly
(B) To smell sweet
(C) To grow taller
(D) To shine softly



Warm tips? More on site.
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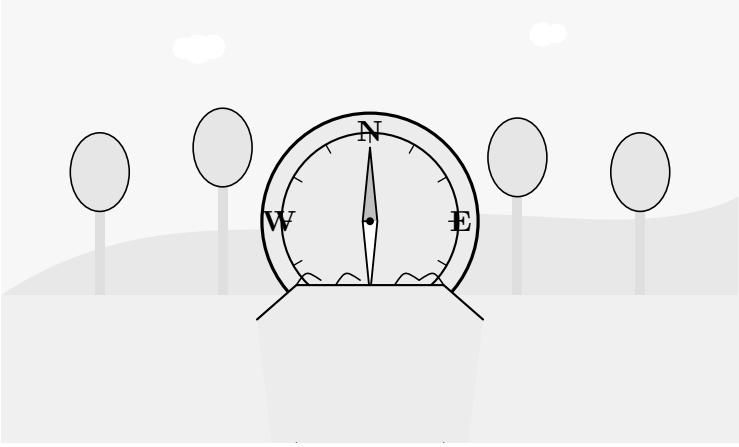
Use both "The Pocket of Seeds" and "Little Seeds" to answer this question.

19) What important idea is found in both the story and the poem?

(A) Only spring gardens are worth growing.
(B) Big change can begin in quiet, small ways.
(C) Seed packets are hard to open.
(D) Wildflowers grow faster than all other plants.

Read the passage below. Then answer questions 20–26.

How a Compass Helps



1 When people hike on a trail or explore a new place, they need to know which direction they are going. One helpful tool for this is a compass. A compass is small enough to fit in a pocket, but it can help a person find north, south, east, and west.

2 Inside a compass is a needle that moves. The needle points north because it reacts to Earth like a tiny magnet. Once a person knows where north is, the other directions become easier to find.



3 A compass can help in many situations. Hikers may use one on forest trails. Campers may use one to understand a map. Even students can use compasses during outdoor science lessons to practice finding directions around the schoolyard.

4 A compass works best when it is held flat and away from objects that might affect the needle. If the needle is free to move, it can point correctly. Then the user can turn until the compass matches the direction he or she wants to travel.

5 Today, many people use phones or other devices to help with directions. Even so, a compass is still useful because it does not need a battery. It is a simple tool, but it can be very dependable.

6 Learning to use a compass can help people feel prepared and confident outdoors. It is one more way to understand the world around us. A tiny needle can point the way toward a big adventure.

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20) What is the **central idea** of the article?

(A) Needles are the most important part of every tool.
(B) Phones are always better than maps.
(C) Only hikers need to know directions.
(D) A compass is a useful tool that helps people find directions.

Use the article "How a Compass Helps" to answer this question.

21) What does the word *dependable* mean as it is used in paragraph 5?

(A) Very expensive
(B) Able to be trusted
(C) Difficult to carry
(D) Bright and shiny

Use the article "How a Compass Helps" to answer this question.

22) Why does the author include the information in paragraph 3?

(A) To compare compasses with clocks
(B) To show that maps are not useful
(C) To explain how to build a trail
(D) To give examples of times when people can use a compass

Use the article "How a Compass Helps" to answer this question.

23) Which detail best supports the idea that a compass is simple but useful?

(A) The needle reacts to Earth.
(B) A compass is small enough to fit in a pocket.
(C) Campers may use one with a map.
(D) A compass does not need a battery.

Use the article "How a Compass Helps" to answer this question.

24) Which sentence from the article is an **opinion**?

(A) Hikers may use one on forest trails.
(B) A tiny needle can point the way toward a big adventure.
(C) A compass can help a person find north, south, east, and west.
(D) The needle points north.

Use the article "How a Compass Helps" to answer this question.

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