South Dakota 5 Smarter Balanced English Language Arts 6th Grade Practice Tests



Practice Smart. Score Higher.

Small Steps, Big Gains! Small Steps, Big Gains!

Practice Master Achieve

Reza Nazari

Grade 6 · South Dakota SDCA

5 Realistic South Dakota SDCA Grade 6 English Language Arts Practice Tests

Full-Length Practice for SDCA Preparation and Academic Confidence

Built for steady confidence and dependable first-pass practice.

Reza Nazari

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The Big Day

Your Test Day Playbook.

Tear this page out in your head. Take it with you.

◯ The Night Before

- Pack your bag now, not in the morning. Sharpened pencils, eraser, water bottle, ID if needed.
- Do *not* cram. A short, easy review is fine. A four-hour panic session is not.
- Eat a normal dinner. Tonight is not the night to try something new.
- Go to bed the same time you do on a school night. A tired brain reads slower.

◯ The Morning Of

- Eat breakfast — something with protein, not just sugar. Your brain is about to work hard.
- Move a little. A walk, stretching, even bouncing on your toes wakes up your body.
- Arrive early. Rushing in a few minutes late sets a rattled mood for the whole test.
- Take one slow, deep breath at the door. *In for four, out for six.* Try it.

◯ During the Test

- **Skim the questions first**, then read the passage with purpose.
- **Never leave a question blank.** A careful guess can be right; empty is always wrong.
- **Stuck? Circle it and move on.** Easier points are waiting. Come back when your brain is fresh.
- **Trust your first read.** Changing answers without a real reason almost always hurts.
- **Watch the clock but do not stare at it.** Glance every few questions. That is enough.

One last thing.

When you sit down on test day, remember: you are not starting this test alone. Every passage you read, every question you untangled, every morning you chose to open this book — all of it is sitting there in your head, on your team. Now go show it what you can do.

— Reza Nazari

Table of Contents

★ Practice Test 1 ____ 10
★ Practice Test 2 ____ 45
★ Practice Test 3 ____ 80
★ Practice Test 4 ____ 114
★ Practice Test 5 ____ 150
Practice Test Answer Keys ____ 186
Practice Test Answers and Explanations ____ 189

14) How do the story and poem approach a similar idea?

(A) Both texts suggest that quick results matter more than careful choices.
(B) Both texts suggest that thoughtful decisions can shape what remains afterward.
(C) Both texts treat strong feelings as more important than lasting consequences.
(D) Both texts show characters acting mainly to gain approval from others.

Use both "Reeds on the Water" and "Platform in the Pond" to answer this question.

15) **This question has two correct answers.** Choose the **two** details from the story and the poem that **together** best support the shared theme.

(A) "Rather than avoid the decision, Cole changes the design after testing proves the wider frame is steadier." (story, paragraph 4)
(B) "Before the work even begins at the pond dock during science club, Cole knows that a sketchbook with three raft designs will make the day harder to ignore." (story, paragraph 1)
(C) "What the data shows can shape a steadier plan, / and careful effort leaves a start." (poem, second stanza)
(D) "Ordinary tools can hold a choice, / more sharp than anyone expects." (poem, first stanza)
(E) "For the first time, the adults leading the work let Cole handle part of the decision-making." (story, paragraph 2)

Use both "Reeds on the Water" and "Platform in the Pond" to answer this question.

16) Which sentence best summarizes the connection between the two texts?

(A) The story and poem each show that careful decisions can leave a meaningful mark.
(B) The story focuses on a specific decision, while the poem mostly recalls a moment from the past.
(C) The story shows a practical choice, while the poem suggests that effort matters only when others notice it.

(D) Both texts suggest that immediate results matter more than what lasts over time.

Read the article. Then answer questions 17–23.

The Bison Come Back

1 Before the late eighteen-hundreds, great herds of American bison moved across the plains in numbers that reached into the millions. Within a few decades, hunting reduced that number to fewer than one thousand. Many scientists at the time feared the bison would disappear entirely.

2 A handful of ranchers, along with a few early conservationists and Native nations, worked quietly to save the remaining animals. They fenced small herds, shared pairs between ranches, and protected them from further loss. In 1905, the American Bison Society formed to bring groups together and publish what they learned.

3 Today, bison live again in places they had been missing for more than a century. Some live in national parks; others roam land managed by Native tribes and by state wildlife agencies. Their return is slow and steady rather than dramatic, and it depends on careful choices about space, disease, and food.

4 Bison are sometimes called "keystone" species because so many other parts of a grassland depend on them. Their heavy hoofprints press seeds into soil. Their dust baths create small patches that become homes for insects, lizards, and ground-nesting birds. Where bison return, the grass grows in a different way.

5 The recovery has not been simple. Bison need more open space than most animals, and some neighbors of bison herds worry about disease or wandering animals. Tribal nations, state agencies, and private ranchers spend time each year in meetings that are patient and sometimes tense.

6 Still, bison have become a symbol of what careful, long-term work can accomplish. What was once a rare sight is now part of many school field trips, and a few tribes have begun to restore hunting traditions that had nearly been lost. The prairie is not what it once was, but it is again a place where bison belong.

17) Which statement best expresses the central idea of the article?

(A) Bison were never in real danger of disappearing.
(B) The slow recovery of bison shows how careful work by many groups can bring a species back.
(C) Bison recovery is complete, and herds are now everywhere on the plains.
(D) The story of bison is mainly about ranches that failed.

Use the article "The Bison Come Back" to answer this question.

18) Why does the author include the early work of ranchers, conservationists, and Native nations?

(A) To show that only one group saved the bison.
(B) To show that the early recovery depended on cooperation among different groups.
(C) To argue that national parks caused the decline of bison.
(D) To suggest that bison were never hunted.

Use the article "The Bison Come Back" to answer this question.

19) What does the word *keystone* most nearly mean in paragraph 4?

(A) a key that opens locks
(B) a species that many other species depend on
(C) a rare mineral found in grasslands
(D) an animal that is easily replaced

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