5 Pennsylvania PSSA

English Language Arts

Practice Tests

Grade 8



Practice Smart. Score Higher.

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

Practice Master Achieve

Reza Nazari

Pennsylvania PSSA Grade 8
English Language Arts:
Five Full Practice Tests
For Confident Prep

Focused Review To Help Students Ace The Test

Quick Start | Skill Check | Confidence

Best for a strong opening stretch

Build momentum with a compact set of full practice tests that sharpen close reading, careful evidence use, and calm decision-making from day one.

Reza Nazari

Built for a strong, steady start to Grade 8 practice

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The Big Day

Your Test Day Playbook.

Calm is a skill. This is how to bring it with you.

◯ The Night Before

- Pack everything tonight. Pencils, eraser, water, ID, approved calculator if needed.
- Do light review only — a single short passage. No new material. No all-nighter.
- Eat something familiar. Tonight is not the night to experiment with anything new.
- Phone out of the room an hour before bed. Protect your sleep like it is part of the grade.

◯ The Morning Of

- Eat protein and complex carbs. Skip the sugar spike — the crash comes during the test.
- Move your body for five minutes. Walk, stretch, shake out your hands. Lower the nerves.
- Arrive early enough to settle, not so early that waiting builds up pressure.
- At the door, four slow breaths: *in for four, hold for four, out for six.* It works.

During the Test

- **Preview the questions**, then read the passage hunting specific answers.
- **Answer every question.** A guess has better odds than a blank — always.
- **Skip hard ones and return.** Easy points protect your time budget. Come back with fresh eyes.
- **Trust your first read.** Change an answer only when you find concrete evidence, not a hunch.
- **Pace by section, not by question.** Check the clock every few minutes, not every question.
- **If anxiety spikes, breathe and reset.** Ten slow seconds saves ten lost minutes.
- **Save 2–3 minutes at the end.** Review flagged items, confirm your bubbled answers.

One last thing.

High school starts soon, but you do not have to wait for it to begin showing up as the reader and writer you want to be. Test day is just a window. Open it, show your thinking clearly, and step through. The next version of you is already on the other side.

— Reza Nazari

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Use the story and poem to answer this question.

10) How does Jo change over the course of the story?

(A) She begins as an expert archivist and ends uninterested in theater.
(B) She decides archives matter more than live performances.
(C) She moves from expecting theatrical excitement to appreciating the hidden labor preserved in the archive.
(D) She becomes frustrated because the archive contains too little information.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

11) Which statement best expresses a theme of the story?

(A) Archives should remain closed to interns.
(B) Theater succeeds only when audiences understand every detail.
(C) Old papers are valuable mainly because they are rare.
(D) Important work is often hidden beneath polished final results.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

12) What does the author suggest by including the note *audience laughed unexpectedly* in paragraph 2?

(A) Even live productions are shaped by observation and adjustment.
(B) Actors prefer comedy to every other genre.
(C) Performances never change once rehearsals begin.
(D) The archive contains mostly unimportant comments.

Scan Me

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

13) Why does the author include Ms. Larkin's statement, *That is true of more than theater*?

(A) To prove that Jo has misunderstood the archive
(B) To show that Ms. Larkin wants Jo to change departments
(C) To suggest that hidden labor and revision matter in many kinds of work
(D) To explain why the theater stores notes underground

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

14) How are the story and poem most alike?

(A) Both argue that audiences should read archives before seeing a play.
(B) Both focus on the danger of storing paper underground.
(C) Both describe actors forgetting their lines on stage.
(D) Both show that records of revision reveal the care behind finished performances.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

15) Which **TWO** lines from the poem best support the idea that revision is part of what lasts?Select **TWO** correct answers.

(A) the crossed-out cue,
(B) a history of revisions,
(C) but what care left behind.
(D) Under the bright event lives a quieter archive,
(E) What lasts is not only what the audience saw,

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

16) How does the mood of the poem shift from beginning to end?

(A) From panic to relief
(B) From humor to embarrassment
(C) From celebratory noise to reflective appreciation
(D) From confusion to anger

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

17) What shared message do the story and poem convey?

(A) Archives matter only to theater professionals.
(B) Finished work often rests on a record of revisions and care that deserves recognition.
(C) Audiences should focus less on performances and more on storage rooms.
(D) Mistakes should always be hidden completely.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

18) Which sentence best summarizes the story?

(A) While interning beneath a city theater, Jo learns that archived notes and corrections reveal the hidden work behind performances.
(B) An archive is closed because no one understands the notes inside it.
(C) Jo spends a week memorizing lines for a play she never performs.
(D) Ms. Larkin asks Jo to throw away old programs and scripts.