5 South Dakota Smarter Balanced English Language Arts Practice Tests

Grade 8



Practice Smart. Score Higher.

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

Practice Master Achieve

Reza Nazari

South Dakota Smarter Balanced 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

Copyrighted Material

Copyright © 2026

Effortless Math Education Inc

Published by Effortless Math Education
www.effortlessmath.com

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the author, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law, including Section 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act.

This publication is independently produced and has no official connection to any state, district, or national testing program.

Test names and organizational names used herein are the property of their respective trademark holders.

Copyright © 2026

Copyrighted Material

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

Table of Contents

★ Practice Test 1 ____ 10
★ Practice Test 2 ____ 45
★ Practice Test 3 ____ 79
★ Practice Test 4 ____ 113
★ Practice Test 5 ____ 147
Practice Test Answer Keys ____ 181
Practice Test Answers and Explanations ____ 184

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) He begins as an expert planner and ends confused by maps.
(B) He moves from seeing transit maps as fixed facts to seeing them as records of debate and choice.
(C) He decides museums should display only final drafts.
(D) He stops using public transit after visiting the museum.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) Transit is valuable only in large cities.
(B) Museums should avoid preserving unfinished work.
(C) Systems people take for granted are often shaped by hidden decisions and competing priorities.
(D) Drafts are less meaningful than final versions.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

12) What does the author suggest by saying the maps were not neutral records in paragraph 3?

(A) The maps reflected values and decisions about access and movement.
(B) The maps were inaccurate and unusable.
(C) The museum had organized the drawer incorrectly.
(D) The maps were printed with unusual colors.

Scan Me

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

13) Why does the author include the curator's statement, *Because the final version hides the debate*?

(A) To show that the curator dislikes modern maps
(B) To explain why old maps are more accurate than new ones
(C) To prove that transit planners ignored all public meetings
(D) To summarize the story's idea that finished systems can conceal the arguments that shaped them

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

14) How are the story and poem most alike?

(A) Both treat maps as records of choices that affect daily life, not just lines on a page.
(B) Both argue that every proposed route should be built.
(C) Both focus on tourists getting lost in a city.
(D) Both compare buses to trains in detail.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

15) Which **TWO** lines from the poem best support the idea that maps reflect social priorities?Select **TWO** correct answers.

(A) Some routes remain graphite possibilities,
(B) It is an argument about where a day may go,
(C) Others harden into track and timetable.
(D) whose distance should shorten,
(E) with absence still visible

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) From playful humor to embarrassment
(B) From thoughtful observation to deeper reflective awareness
(C) From panic to relief
(D) From anger to celebration

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) Only experts should study transit maps.
(B) Final plans matter more than drafts.
(C) Public systems carry the traces of decisions about whose movement and access matter most.
(D) The best routes are always the oldest ones.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

18) Which sentence best summarizes the story?

(A) Eli accidentally destroys an important transit plan at the museum.
(B) While sorting archived transit maps, Eli learns that the city's current system reflects past debates and decisions rather than inevitability.
(C) The museum closes its map archive to volunteers.
(D) A curator teaches Eli how to label photographs more efficiently.

Scan Me