# Washington

# 5 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

# Washington 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

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www.effortlessmath.com

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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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**2** Leila's grandfather was already reaching for the emergency radio he kept in the hall closet, a portable device he had maintained for decades along with spare batteries and backup supplies. He had grown up in a village in another country where power outages were common and prolonged, and he had developed a practical resilience that made him trust concrete tools—flashlights, spare batteries, canned food, a first-aid kit—more than speculation or complaints. *We check first, guess later*, he said with characteristic calm, handing Leila a sturdy flashlight and asking her to join him on the roof to assess the extent of the outage.

**3** From the top of the building they could see definitively that the blackout stretched well beyond their block, affecting a large swath of the city. Traffic lights at three major intersections were dark, creating dangerous confusion for the few vehicles still moving cautiously through the streets. Stores on the avenue had already pulled their metal security gates halfway down, a precautionary measure taken when power failed and security systems went offline. Across the street, an elderly woman stood in the doorway of her building, peering out into the darkness with one hand shielding her eyes against the remaining daylight, trying to understand what was happening. Leila recognized her immediately as Mrs. Alvarez from the corner apartment, a resident Leila's grandfather had known for many years.

4 *Signal to her*, Grandfather said, his voice calm and purposeful. Leila hesitated for just an instant—the fear of the blackout still present—then flashed the beam twice, paused deliberately, and flashed it twice again in a simple code he had taught her years earlier when she was younger and they had played signal games on summer evenings. Mrs. Alvarez, seeing the light and understanding it as a deliberate message, raised a lantern in reply from her doorway, confirming she had received the signal. The simple exchange created a moment of connection in the darkness. A few minutes later, after Leila and her grandfather carefully carried extra batteries and flashlights downstairs to the courtyard, other neighbors, inspired by that first gesture, began checking on one another too. Someone shared bottled water from their pantry. Someone else brought down a charger from a backup battery pack. The courtyard, which had been a place of isolated apartment dwellers, began to become something different.

5 By the time electricity returned several hours later, the courtyard buzzed not with frustration or impatience but with genuine conversation and laughter, with the sound of human connection replacing the hum of machines. Leila realized in that moment something profound about the building: the blackout had revealed something the structure usually concealed behind closed apartment doors and the separation created by modern urban living—a network of people who possessed the potential to become a real community the moment someone chose to act first, to reach out, to share. The flashlight felt unexpectedly heavy in her hand as she held it, not because it weighed much physically, but because it had become a kind of invitation, an object that had initiated something that could not be undone. The neighbors now knew one another in a new way.

## After the Siren

When the noise stopped, the silence kept ringing
between the buildings and inside my ribs,
as if the air were waiting for instructions.

One window opened, then another.
A hand lifted a light.
Someone called across the dark not loudly,
but clearly enough for fear to loosen.

The street did not brighten all at once.
It learned itself back together
in voices, in footsteps, in the scrape of a chair
offered to a neighbor who needed to sit.

By morning, the power returned.
What stayed was the knowledge
that even in darkness
people can become lanterns for one another.

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**9)** What does the word *concealed* mean as it is used in paragraph 5 of the story?

(A) repaired with effort
(B) damaged beyond use
(C) measured very carefully
(D) hidden from view



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