6

New Mexico NM-MSSA

English Language Arts Practice Tests

for Grade 8

A Complete Guide to Building Math Mastery and Excelling on the Test



- **Real Practice. Real Results.**
- Small Steps, Big Gains!
- **Practice Smart.** Score Higher:
- Detailed Explanations
- Practice
- Master
- Achieve

Reza Nazari

6 New Mexico NM-MSSA Grade 8

English Language Arts (ELA)

Practice Tests

A Complete Guide To Building

English Language Mastery And

Excelling On The NM-MSSA Assessment

Read

Track the central idea and gather evidence that matters.

Revise

Slow down, test your thinking, and make stronger choices.

Reflect

Build a repeatable routine across all six tests.

Build the habits that strong readers use every day.

Six tests give students enough repetition to build habit, reflection, and control without losing momentum.

Reza Nazari

Built for deliberate practice and steady revision

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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 Mira change over the course of the story?

(A) She begins as a confident performer and ends too embarrassed to play.
(B) She moves from judging the cello by its worn appearance to appreciating the depth and discipline it demands.
(C) She replaces the cello before the performance begins.
(D) She decides loaned instruments should never be used in concerts.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) Newer instruments are always easier to play well.
(B) Public performances matter more than practice.
(C) Surface appearance can hide value that becomes clear only through patience and attention.
(D) Visible damage makes an object unreliable.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

12) What does the author suggest by describing Mira's feeling as embarrassment in reverse in paragraph 4?

(A) She realizes she was wrong to underestimate the cello because of how it looked.
(B) She feels ashamed that the audience noticed her mistake.
(C) She regrets volunteering for the concert.
(D) She wishes she had played a different part in the piece.

Scan Me

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

13) Why does the author include the repaired tuning peg in paragraph 1?

(A) To show that the music teacher repaired all school instruments alone
(B) To explain why the cello cannot hold tune during rehearsal
(C) To suggest that the concert will be canceled
(D) To establish why Mira initially sees the cello as worn and inferior

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

14) How are the story and poem most alike?

(A) Both argue that older objects should always replace newer ones.
(B) Both focus on fear of performing for an audience.
(C) Both describe a damaged instrument being repaired.
(D) Both show that patience can reveal value beneath an unremarkable or worn surface.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

15) Which **TWO** lines from the poem best support the idea that real value appears through attention rather than surface appearance?Select **TWO** correct answers.

(A) The shine was only the first language,
(B) one spoken by patience,
(C) Now I trust the worn edge differently.
(D) by pressure held steady,
(E) easy for the eye,

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) From quick impression to thoughtful trust
(B) From humor to embarrassment
(C) From joy to anger
(D) From panic to relief

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) Objects lose all value once they show wear.
(B) Performance matters more than practice or listening.
(C) Only experts can judge quality accurately.
(D) Careful attention can uncover depth and worth that surface appearance hides.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

18) Which sentence best summarizes the story?

(A) Mira damages a school instrument and must repair it before a concert.
(B) After reluctantly borrowing a worn cello, Mira learns to value the instrument's depth and the patience it requires.
(C) A teacher lends Mira a new cello for a performance.
(D) Mira decides that community concerts are not worth the trouble.