6

Smarter Balanced

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 SBAC Smarter Balanced Grade 8

English Language Arts (ELA)

Practice Tests

A Complete Guide To Building

English Language Mastery And

Excelling On The Smarter Balanced 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 Laila change over the course of the story?

(A) She moves from following instructions mechanically to understanding care as observation and judgment.
(B) She begins confident about gardening and ends overwhelmed by it.
(C) She decides the greenhouse should stay locked permanently.
(D) She loses interest once spring break is over.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) Rules should always be ignored when a person feels uncertain.
(B) Real responsibility involves noticing needs, not just completing assigned steps.
(C) Plants grow best when moved often.
(D) Teachers should avoid giving students independent work.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

12) What does the author suggest by saying the greenhouse became a set of ongoing conversations in paragraph 2?

(A) Laila started talking aloud to the plants every day.
(B) The gardening club met there after school every afternoon.
(C) The plants communicated their needs through patterns Laila learned to notice.
(D) The teacher was giving Laila instructions through hidden speakers.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

13) Why does the author include the teacher's response in paragraph 4?

(A) To show that the teacher had expected the tomatoes to fail
(B) To confirm that careful observation and reasoning mattered more than blind obedience
(C) To reveal that the greenhouse belonged to another class
(D) To explain how watering schedules are designed

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

14) How are the story and poem most alike?

(A) Both argue that written instructions are useless.
(B) Both focus on growing tomatoes for a competition.
(C) Both describe a greenhouse being closed for spring break.
(D) Both show that caring for something living requires attention to signs that go beyond a checklist.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

15) Which **TWO** lines from the poem best support the idea that care involves noticing change?Select **TWO** correct answers.

(A) At first I thought the task was only water,
(B) Then the leaves began speaking in angles,
(C) Now I know care is not only doing what was written.
(D) in the slow grammar of turning toward what they lacked.
(E) a list to finish before the light changed.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) From routine detachment to alert understanding
(B) From humor to embarrassment
(C) From fear to relief
(D) From confusion to annoyance

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) Plants grow best when instructions are ignored completely.
(B) Responsibility is mostly about finishing work quickly.
(C) Care becomes meaningful when people respond to what they notice, not only to what they were told.
(D) Living things should be left alone whenever possible.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

18) Which sentence best summarizes the story?

(A) Laila loses the greenhouse key and has to replace it before school reopens.
(B) While caring for a greenhouse during spring break, Laila learns that responsibility involves observing and responding thoughtfully, not just following directions.
(C) A gardening club elects Laila as its new president.
(D) The biology teacher rewrites the watering checklist during break.

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