6

South Dakota

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 South Dakota Smarter Balanced Grade 8

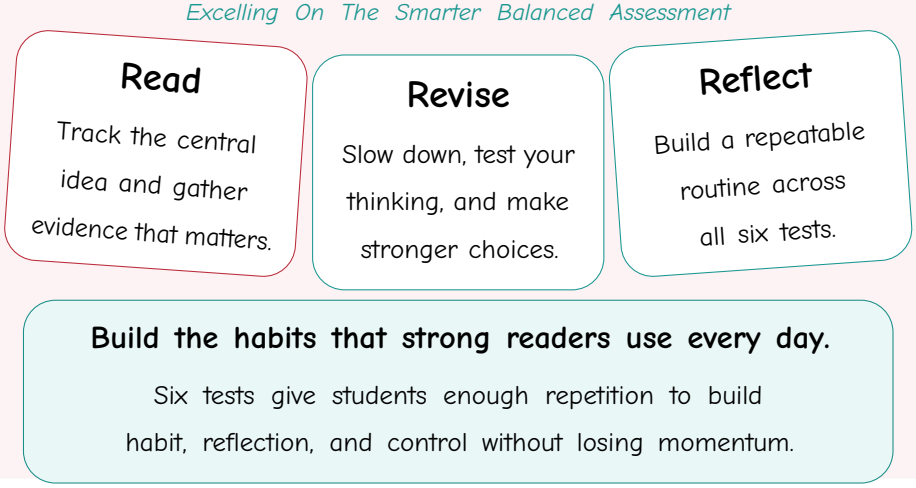
English Language Arts (ELA)

Practice Tests

A Complete Guide To Building

English Language Mastery And

Excelling On The Smarter Balanced Assessment



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 Hana change over the course of the story?

(A) She begins as an expert forecaster and ends less interested in storms.
(B) She decides notebooks are more accurate than every digital tool.
(C) She moves from doubting the old notebook to valuing it as a way of learning how to notice weather directly.
(D) She abandons the program because the technology is too complicated.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) Older methods should always replace modern technology.
(B) Weather is impossible to understand without satellite images.
(C) Students learn best when they work alone.
(D) Careful observation can deepen knowledge in ways that tools alone cannot.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

12) What does the author suggest by saying data no longer felt separate from experience in paragraph 3?

(A) Hana began connecting measurements with what she could observe in the world around her.
(B) Hana stopped using any scientific information at all.
(C) The program decided to cancel its use of instruments.
(D) Hana found the notebook easier to read than maps.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

13) Why does the author include the uncle's note about light flattening before a storm?

(A) To prove the uncle worked without any formal training
(B) To show how the notebook teaches Hana to observe subtle signs in the environment
(C) To explain why the tablets in the program are outdated
(D) To show that storms always arrive during the afternoon

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

14) How are the story and poem most alike?

(A) Both argue that weather maps are unreliable.
(B) Both describe a family argument about science.
(C) Both focus on fear of severe storms.
(D) Both present attention as something that can be shared across generations or readers.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

15) Which **TWO** lines from the poem best support the idea that observation is being handed down?Select **TWO** correct answers.

(A) Someone wrote that down once
(B) the one crossing the sky,
(C) for another pair of eyes.
(D) A map can show the storm's direction,
(E) before the first branch moves.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) From joy to panic
(B) From skeptical to mocking
(C) From alert observation to reflective continuity
(D) From confusion to boredom

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

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

(A) Weather is best studied without any written record.
(B) Knowledge grows when people learn to notice carefully and build on what others observed before them.
(C) Personal notes should stay private and unused.
(D) Only experts can understand environmental change.

Use the story and poem to answer this question.

18) Which sentence best summarizes the story?

(A) Hana loses a notebook during a thunderstorm and must replace it.
(B) During a storm-tracking program, Hana learns that her uncle's old notebook teaches her how to connect weather data with close observation.
(C) A program instructor bans students from using tablets in the field.
(D) Hana's uncle returns to teach the summer program himself.

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