7 Full-Length Montana MAST

English Language Arts (ELA) Practice Tests

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

Grade 8



Practice Master Achieve

Reza Nazari

7 Full Length Montana MAST Grade 8 English Language Arts (ELA) Practice Tests:

Proven Practice With Detailed Explanations To Help Students

Climb Milestones

1. Start with focus 2. Compare ideas 3. Infer carefully 4. Revise clearly 5. Explain with evidence 6. Build stamina 7. Finish strong

Step by step, skill by skill.

Reza Nazari

Built for sustained growth across a longer practice climb

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Smart Practice

The Difference Between Busy and Better.

Busy practice fills time. Better practice changes you. The quiet truth: the thirty minutes after a test matters more than the ninety minutes of the test itself. That is where real learning lives — in the review, not the rep. Here is what separates a score plateau from a score climb:

✓ Six Moves That Raise Real Scores

1. **Simulate the pressure.** One seat, one timer, no phone, no interruptions. Stamina is its own skill and you can only train it by using it.
2. **Preview the questions, then attack the passage.** Skim the question stems first. That turns reading from passive intake into a directed search.
3. **Annotate with purpose.** Circle transitions (*however*, *therefore*, *in contrast*). Bracket claims. Underline evidence. These marks become your map back to the answer.
4. **Do a miss audit after every test.** Sort your wrong answers into four piles: *knowledge gap*, *careless misread*, *time pressure*, *trap answer*. Each one demands a different fix.
5. **Upgrade one skill per week.** Pick one weakness — inference, vocabulary in context, claim-and-evidence writing — and make it the focus. Narrow practice beats broad review.
6. **Protect sleep like it is part of the test.** Working memory, focus, and stamina all collapse on less than seven hours. You cannot out-study exhaustion.

⋆ The Rewrite Habit

After each test, pick one short response and rewrite it — cleaner claim, tighter evidence, sharper analysis. Do this just three times across this book and your writing will visibly level up. The rewrite, not the first draft, is where eighth-grade writing becomes high-school-ready.

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.

Read the story and the poem. Then answer questions 9–19.

The Archive Key

1 On the very first day of her internship at the historical society, June was assigned what sounded emphatically like the smallest, most tedious task in the entire building: carefully label a substantial cardboard box of old keys whose original locks had long since disappeared, leaving them isolated and purposeless. The keys were heavy, cold metal objects, mostly anonymous and indistinguishable from one another, each already tagged with a mysterious number that meant absolutely nothing to her yet. She assumed the afternoon would pass quietly in silence and accumulated dust, without anything interesting happening or anyone noticing her work.

2 Instead, Mr. Liao, the building's principal archivist with decades of experience, placed a large leather-bound ledger beside the box and instructed her to begin matching the numbers systematically to old room lists and building records. Some keys opened cabinets and lockboxes that no longer existed or remained in the building, leaving their purpose mysterious, but other keys actually belonged to specific places June had walked past hundreds of times without consciously noticing or understanding their historical significance: the trapdoor concealed under the stage, the antique map case in the council chamber, the decorative iron gate behind the old courthouse. The more patterns she matched and understood, the less random and meaningless the collection of keys seemed.

3 Near the very bottom of the box, lying beneath all the numbered keys, she discovered a brass key with absolutely no tag or identification attached to it. Its teeth were noticeably narrower and more delicate than the others, and its handle—the bow—had been worn perfectly smooth by decades of regular use. Mr. Liao studied the mysterious key carefully for a long moment before leading June to a locked glass cabinet located in the reading room upstairs. Inside the cabinet were numerous cardboard folders containing handwritten transcripts of oral-history interviews—people's recorded memories and stories—that had never been digitized or transferred to computers. *People keep asking what archives are really for*, he said quietly. *Sometimes the answer is waiting behind the last unlabeled key.*

4 For the remainder of the afternoon, June read page after page filled with the remembered voices and detailed memories of townspeople: descriptions of factory whistles signaling shifts, dense train schedules that shaped daily life, accounts of strike meetings and labor disputes, family recipes written in careful handwriting, and transcribed songs passed down through generations. The building felt fundamentally different after reading those stories, as if its hallways and rooms contained not only physical space but also carefully stored time and accumulated human experience. By the end of the working day, the cardboard box of keys no longer seemed like a small, insignificant object at all. It seemed instead like a comprehensive index to everything the town's residents had collectively decided not to forget completely.

5 When June locked the cabinet again at the end of the day, she noticed immediately that she was being careful with the key in a new way, with newfound respect and understanding. She understood suddenly that archives and historical preservation depend fundamentally on countless ordinary acts of attention and care: labeling a key so it will not be lost, preserving a paper document from deterioration, writing down a person's name in a ledger before that name and story fades from memory completely. History, she realized with clarity, is often protected and preserved by the dedication of people doing quiet, meticulous work well, without expectation of recognition or dramatic reward.

Index Cards

The smallest records do not ask for praise.
They wait in drawers, in penciled margins,
in dates written carefully because someone knew
forgetting has a habit of widening over time.

A card, a label, a clipped article,
none of them grand enough for a monument,
yet each one keeps a hinge from rusting shut
between what happened and what can still be known.

Call it filing if you want.
I call it a form of guarding
the door through which memory returns.

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