Sample Questions

Hiddenite

Hiddenite is a pale green gemstone that was first discovered in North Carolina in 1879. The community in which hiddenite was found, called White Plains at the time, is near Stony Point in Alexander County. White Plains has since been formed into a town named Hiddenite. The gemstone takes its name from William Earl Hidden, a mineralogist hired by Thomas Edison to search the area for platinum. He did not find platinum, but he did send a piece of the unknown mineral to a skilled chemist. The chemist eventually identified the gemstone as a type of crystal and named the new discovery after the man who sent him the sample.

S1 What was the original name of the community in which hiddenite was found?
   A White Plains
   B Stony Point
   C North Carolina
   D Alexander County

S2 What does sample mean in the sentence below from the text?

“The chemist eventually identified the gemstone as a type of crystal and named the new discovery after the man who sent him the sample.”
   A the whole item
   B a small part
   C the complete unit
   D a heavy thing
Excerpt from “Walking Through the World of Math”

by Francis Scheid

1. Why does the author put “hooked” and “getting it” in quotation marks?
   A. to show that the words are slang
   B. to quote someone
   C. to define the words
   D. to prove that the words apply to math

2. What argument is the author making in paragraph 3?
   A. Mathematics is mostly theoretical rather than practical.
   B. Mathematics has relationships to both art and music.
   C. Mathematics can be fun, but can be used for many purposes.
   D. Mathematics appeals mostly to people who do well in math.

3. What is the reason the author adds the phrase “(smile here)” to the sentence in paragraph 3?
   A. because many students think math is pointless
   B. because the author really likes math
   C. because several unlikely ideas are stressed
   D. because math can be a funny topic
4. What does the word parallel in paragraph 4 suggest about the concepts?
   A. They are opposite in nature.
   B. They are written on the same line of the page.
   C. They are both used in advanced mathematics.
   D. They are similar in what they mean.

5. What do the people quoted in the text have in common?
   A. They focus on practical uses of math.
   B. They became interested in math early in life.
   C. They get pleasure from math.
   D. They are all famous philosophers.

6. What effect do the quotes from other people have on the author’s purpose for the text?
   A. They help to prove the author’s point that the world of math can be fun and beautiful.
   B. They are included to provide background information about the history of some famous math scholars.
   C. They serve as a reminder of how important it is to study mathematics in school.
   D. They illustrate that all of the different areas of math study are crucial to becoming a mathematician.
7. What is the meaning of the word *infinite* in paragraph 6?
   A. the highest number that has ever been calculated
   B. greater than any measurable amount
   C. the largest number at the end of a number line
   D. smaller than can be seen by humans

8. What is the “spirit of math” in the text?
   A. solving only problems that are easy
   B. worrying about whether math is useful
   C. being willing to do things one step at a time
   D. trying hard and thinking problems through
No Hero

by Jesse Stuart

9 Which statement summarizes the plot of the selection?
   A Hester was a man who used his prior knowledge of bears to creatively earn money.
   B Hester lied about his background and unfairly cheated the fairground out of $225.
   C Hester was desperate, so he foolishly put his life at risk.
   D Hester’s crops failed because he did not properly care for them.

10 Why does the author include the introduction to the selection?
   A to introduce the setting of the selection
   B to provide background information about the main character
   C to give specific details about the bear in the wrestling cage
   D to provide knowledge of what happens to the bear

11 What do the “bright lights of Landsburg” represent for Hester King as he leaves his home?
   A They represent a dependable person who will lead the way.
   B They represent a chance to seek safe entertainment.
   C They represent a risky experience that awaits him.
   D They represent an opportunity to solve a problem.
12. What is the reason that Hester left without telling Mollie where he was going?

A. Mollie would want to come along, too.
B. Mollie would be afraid of the danger.
C. Mollie would want him to get a job.
D. Mollie would tell him to take the kids with him.

13. What does the phrase “clinched with Old Bruin” mean in paragraph 49?

A. Hester and the bear were helping each other.
B. Hester and the bear were hurting each other.
C. Hester and the bear were hitting each other.
D. Hester and the bear were hugging each other.

14. How does Hester defeat Bruin in the cage?

A. He injures the animal so it cannot fight.
B. He uses information that he learned as a child.
C. He pretends to be asleep, and he is left alone.
D. He frightens the animal because he yells at it.
15 How does the setting of the selection shape the plot?

A The country fair provides the arena for the conflict and the resolution.
B The countryside provides the suspense for the characters and the action.
C The country fair sets up the details that foreshadow the main problem.
D The countryside represents the emotional reactions felt by the characters.
A Nation Divided

Crossing the Border

Although the U.S. Post Office Department officially ended mail traffic across the border on August 26, 1861, mail continued to be carried between North and South. Express companies carried much of the mail through “flag-of-truce” ships.

Because Union forces began blockading Southern ports in April 1861, mail was often carried on blockade runners or routed through foreign posts. Southern mail going overseas was carried through the Union blockade by ships sailing from Cuba, Bermuda, and other islands in the West Indies to Charleston, South Carolina; Wilmington, North Carolina; and several Southern ports on the Gulf of Mexico. Because the Confederacy did not have postal treaties with foreign governments, letters were carried as private “ship” mail. They were charged the inland rates plus two cents, which was paid to the ship’s master.

The handstamped “ship” marking indicated receipt of the letter from a private vessel. Letters carried through the Union blockade paid postage twice. The first was U.S. postage, which paid overland postage once the letter was deposited into the U.S. Mail. The second charge came from the ship’s master, who placed the letters into federal mailboxes.

The Confederate Postal System

The Confederate States of America (CSA) formed their own Post Office Department on February 21, 1861. John H. Reagan was named as the service’s postmaster general. In all, Reagan placed 8,535 of the nation’s 28,586 post offices under Confederate control and sought assistance from Southern sympathizers in the U.S. Post Office Department. Reagan tried to bring not just employees from the Federal system into his, but also all that they could bring in the way of maps, reports, forms, and plans that would build and strengthen the new service.

At first, all postal business was conducted with U.S. money and postage stamps. The first Confederate stamps were not available until October 1861. Most printers capable of doing the work were in the Northern states. Until Confederate stamps became available, some local postmasters created and sold their own provisional stamps or marked mail “paid” by hand.

The first Confederate stamps were printed by the Richmond, Virginia, lithography firm, Hoyer & Ludwig, which had no background in stamp printing. The first official issue was a 5-cent green stamp bearing the portrait of CSA President Jefferson Davis, making him the first living president to appear on a postage stamp. Because of the low quality of
their stamps, Hoyer & Ludwig lost the contract. The internationally known London, England, printing firm of Thomas De La Rue & Co. prepared plates and stamps for the CSA until a Southern firm was found to take over the work. That firm, Archer & Daly, began producing stamps in 1863.

Old stocks of U.S. stamped envelopes and ordinary envelopes were imprinted to indicate that the enclosed correspondence was official business of the Confederate Post Office Department. Such mail required no postage when properly endorsed. Other Confederate government departments, minor offices and bureaus, army headquarters, military divisions, and individual states used imprinted envelopes for official correspondence, but were required to pay postage.

As Union troops regained Southern territories, federal mail service began to be restored. By the end of 1865, almost 500 routes had been restored. By November 1, 1866, almost half of the post offices in the South had been returned to federal service.

John Reagan, traveling with Jefferson Davis, was arrested on May 8, 1865, and imprisoned at Ft. Warren in Boston Harbor. Reagan was pardoned and released from prison almost two years later. He returned to his home state of Texas. He eventually made it back to Congress, where he became chairman of the Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads.

**Adversity Covers**

As the war continued, the Union blockade proved critical in restricting goods from entering and leaving the Confederacy. Southerners faced increasing shortages of supplies, including paper and envelopes. Writers began to use whatever was handy as letter-writing paper and envelopes. These items are known by philatelists* as “adversity covers.”

Letters and envelopes were fashioned from the backs of ledger sheets, printed circulars, blank pages in books, maps, and even wallpaper. Some writers reused envelopes by turning them inside out. Any blank or partially blank piece of paper could be pressed into service as an envelope.

**Soldiers’ Mail**

For many soldiers, the Civil War was their first extended absence from home. Their letters often included references both to the loneliness of life and the horrors of the

*philatelists: people who collect stamps as a hobby*
conflict. Letters from home were always welcome relief in a soldier’s day. Families were not the only ones eager for word from their loved ones at war. For the first time, newspaper publishers could rely on soldiers’ letters for first-person depictions of battles.

Because they were often on the move, soldiers’ mail service was irregular at best. While letters might find them easily when they were camped for extended periods, when on the march, units could travel for weeks without receiving their mail.

The postal service acknowledged that many soldiers did not carry stamps with them and permitted them to send letters without stamps. A soldier’s envelope had to bear his name, rank, and unit. Such mail was marked “postage due,” and the amount indicated was collected from the addressee.

**Prisoner-of-War Mail**

Confederate and Union prisoners were allowed to exchange mail through flag-of-truce ships.

Confederate and Union prisoner-of-war letters were exchanged at designated points. These letters usually were enclosed within an inner, unsealed envelope that bore enemy stamps or was sent postage due. The outer cover was destroyed after the contents were censored, as indicated by proper markings and endorsements on the envelope carrying the letter to its destination.

**Patriotic Covers**

Illustrated stationery reveals the strong emotions generated by the Civil War. In the North, envelopes bearing patriotic illustrations appeared even before hostilities broke out. Soon after the war began, Southern stationers quickly marketed patriotic envelopes picturing flags, cannons, political leaders, slogans, soldiers, and caricatures, among other war-related themes.
16. What is the central idea of the text?
   A. how the postal service adapted to the Civil War
   B. how the Union control of the mail affected the Confederacy
   C. the role of the postal service during the Civil War
   D. the importance of mail for Confederate soldiers

17. Which is a summary of the section entitled “Crossing the Border”?
   A. It details how many ships were used as blockade runners during the Civil War.
   B. It explains why ship mail was so expensive during the Civil War.
   C. It describes how mail was transported from the North to the South during most of the Civil War.
   D. It defines the role of the ship’s master as the new postmaster of the Confederate Post Office Department.

18. How does the section entitled “The Confederate Postal System” contribute to the understanding of the title?
   A. The section explains why the United States Postal Service could not produce stamps during the Civil War.
   B. The section describes the characteristics of the first postmaster general, John H. Reagan.
   C. The section describes why ships were needed by the United States Postal Service.
   D. The section explains that the Confederate states started their own postal system during the Civil War.
19 Why was the printing of postal stamps delayed for the Confederate postal system?
   A  The stamp designs had to be imported from England.
   B  The typical stamp printers were all located in the North.
   C  All of the reliable stamp printers were housed in the South.
   D  No one could decide on a design for the stamp.

20 What does the phrase “first-person depictions of battles” mean in paragraph 12?
   A  direct participation in the battles themselves
   B  permission to send letters about battles
   C  battles seen through the eyes of the men fighting
   D  recorded sounds of the battles

21 How does the author support the claim that the U.S. Mail tried to assist the communications between the soldiers and their loved ones?
   A  The soldiers had to send their letters through certain cities.
   B  The soldiers needed to have special stamps for their letters.
   C  The soldiers did not have to pay for stamps to send their letters.
   D  The soldiers sent their letters on specially designed ships.
22 How did the Civil War influence the mail service?
   A  Mail service was difficult and slow, but it persevered.
   B  Mail service was carefully controlled and never faltered.
   C  Mail service was inept, expensive, and rarely successful.
   D  Mail service was interrupted for the duration of the war.

23 Which statement is supported by information in the text?
   A  The Union postal system played an important role in ending the Civil War.
   B  The Confederacy ran a successful mail program with Union support.
   C  The Union postal system lacked resources to support the Confederacy.
   D  The Union limited the Confederacy’s ability to send mail.
The fourteenth of August was the day fixed upon for the sailing of the brig *Pilgrim* on her voyage from Boston, round Cape Horn, to the Western coast of North America. As she was to get under way early in the afternoon, I made my appearance on board at twelve o’clock, in full sea-rig, with my chest containing an outfit for a two or three years’ voyage, which I had undertaken from a determination to cure, if possible, by an entire change of life, and by a long absence from books, with a plenty of hard work, plain food, and open air, a weakness of the eyes, which had obliged me to give up my studies, and which no medical aid seemed likely to remedy.

The change from the tight frock coat, silk cap, and kid gloves of an undergraduate at Harvard, to the loose duck trousers, checked shirt, and tarpaulin hat of a sailor, though somewhat of a transformation, was soon made; and I supposed that I should pass very well for a jack tar. But it is impossible to deceive the practiced eye in these matters; and while I thought myself to be looking as salt as Neptune himself, I was, no doubt, known for a landsman by everyone on board as soon as I hove in sight. A sailor has a peculiar cut to his clothes, and a way of wearing them which a green hand can never get. The trousers, tight round the hips, and thence hanging long and loose round the feet, a superabundance of checked shirt, a low-crowned, well-varnished black hat, worn on the back of the head, with half a fathom of black ribbon hanging over the left eye, and a slip-tie to the black silk neckerchief, with sundry other minutiae, are signs, the want of which betray the beginner at once. Besides the points in my dress which were out of the way, doubtless my complexion and hands were quite enough to distinguish me from the regular salt who, with a sunburnt cheek, wide step, and rolling gait, swings his bronzed and toughened hands athwart-ships, half-opened, as though just ready to grasp a rope.

“With all my imperfections on my head,” I joined the crew, and we hauled out into the stream and came to anchor for the night. The next day, we were employed in preparations for sea, reeving studding-sail gear, crossing royal yards, putting on chafing gear, and taking on board our powder. On the following night, I stood my first watch. I remained awake nearly all the first part of the night from fear that I might not hear

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1 *jack tar*: a sailor
2 *chafing gear*: material made from canvas or rope used to protect sails
when I was called; and when I went on deck, so great were my ideas of the importance of my trust, that I walked regularly fore and aft the whole length of the vessel, looking out over the bows and taffrail\(^3\) at each turn, and was not a little surprised at the coolness of the old salt whom I called to take my place in stowing himself snugly away under the longboat for a nap. That was a sufficient lookout, he thought, for a fine night at anchor in a safe harbor.

4

The next morning was Saturday, and, a breeze having sprung up from the southward, we took a pilot on board, hove up our anchor, and began beating down the bay. I took leave of those of my friends who came to see me off, and had barely opportunity to take a last look at the city and well-known objects, as no time is allowed on board ship for sentiment. As we drew down into the lower harbor, we found the wind ahead in the bay and were obliged to come to anchor in the roads. We remained there through the day and a part of the night. My watch began at eleven o’clock at night, and I received orders to call the captain if the wind came out from the westward. About midnight the wind became fair, and having summoned the captain, I was ordered to call all hands. How I accomplished this, I do not know, but I am quite sure that I did not give the true hoarse boatswain call of “A-a-ll ha-a-a-nds! up anchor, a-ho-oy!” In a short time, everyone was in motion, the sails loosed, the yards braced, and we began to heave up the anchor, which was our last hold upon Yankee land. I could take but small part in these preparations. My little knowledge of a vessel was all at fault. Unintelligible orders were so rapidly given and so immediately executed, there was such a hurrying about, and such an intermingling of strange cries and stranger actions, that I was completely bewildered. There is not so helpless and pitiable an object in the world as a landsman beginning a sailor’s life. At length, those peculiar, long-drawn sounds which denote that the crew are heaving the windlass began, and in a few minutes we were under way. The noise of the water thrown from the bows began to be heard, the vessel leaned over from the damp night breeze and rolled with the heavy groundswell, and we had actually begun our long, long journey. This was literally bidding good night to my native land.

\(^3\)taffrail: the rail above the stern of a ship
24 Which quote summarizes the author’s frustrations about his first journey at sea?
A “I was, no doubt, known for a landsman by everyone on board as soon as I hove in sight.”
B “‘With all my imperfections on my head,’ I joined the crew.”
C “There is not so helpless and pitiable an object in the world as a landsman beginning a sailor’s life.”
D “This was literally bidding good night to my native land.”

25 How does paragraph 1 contribute to the development of the overall text?
A It vividly describes the setting.
B It explains the motivation of the narrator.
C It links the main characters to the plot.
D It provides background information about the ship.

26 What does the phrase “full sea-rig” mean in paragraph 1?
A the name of a sailing vessel
B the name of the ship’s captain
C a part of the ship’s deck
D a uniform worn by sailors
27. What is one way to identify a beginner sailor?
   A. The beginner has a lot of checked shirts.
   B. The beginner has sunburnt cheeks.
   C. The beginner has toughened hands.
   D. The beginner has untanned skin.

28. What was the difference between the author’s and the old salt’s first night on watch?
   A. The narrator was a green hand and too afraid to walk about the ship, but the old salt walked fore and aft.
   B. The narrator wore his clothes like a green hand, but the old salt’s clothes were peculiar.
   C. The narrator stayed awake the entire night, but the old salt went to sleep.
   D. The narrator was a sufficient lookout, but the old salt was much better.

29. What made the “old salt” so carefree upon his takeover of the watch post?
   A. the fact that he was an inexperienced sailor
   B. the fact that the ship was anchored in a safe harbor
   C. the fact that he knew others would assist him
   D. the fact that he felt everyone was afraid of him
30 What is conveyed when the narrator says they “began beating down the bay” in paragraph 4?

A The crew was fighting large waves.
B The ship started moving in the water.
C The crew was swimming vigorously.
D The ship was in danger of sinking.

31 What strategy does the author use to bring the new, young sailor to life?

A the use of first-person narrative
B the use of third-person narrative
C the use of quotes and dialogue
D the use of memories and diaries
The Coming of the Spring

by Nora Perry

There’s something in the air
That’s new and sweet and rare—
A scent of summer things,
A whirr as if of wings.

5 There’s something too that’s new
In the color of the blue
That’s in the morning sky,
Before the sun is high.

And though on plain and hill,
10 ‘Tis winter, winter still,
There’s something seems to say
That winter’s had its day.

And all this changing tint,
This whispering stir and hint
15 Of bud and bloom and wing,
Is the coming of the spring.

And tomorrow or today
The brooks will break away
From their icy, frozen sleep,
20 And run and laugh and leap.

And the next thing, in the woods,
The catkins in their hoods
Of fur and silk will stand,
A sturdy little band.

25 And the tassels soft and fine
Of the hazel will untwine,
And the elder branches show
Their buds against the snow.
So, silently but swift,  
**30** Above the wintry drift,  
The long days gain and gain,  
Until, on hill and plain,  

Once more, and yet once more  
Returning as before,  
**35** We see the bloom of birth  
Make young again the earth.

32 Which lines from the poem provide the strongest support for the theme of renewal?

A “There’s something seems to say / That winter’s had its day.”
B “And the elder branches show / Their buds against the snow.”
C “So, silently but swift, / Above the wintry drift,”
D “We see the bloom of birth / Make young again the earth.”

33 How does the first stanza contribute to the meaning of the poem?

A It introduces the idea that a difference can be felt all around.
B It emphasizes the fact that spring is coming later this year.
C It introduces the idea that the weather is constantly changing.
D It emphasizes the fact that this past winter has been harsh.
34 What can be inferred from lines 5–6?

A The speaker thinks the spring sky is filled with more white clouds than a winter sky.

B The speaker feels so tired of the winter cold that she hopes spring comes very quickly.

C The speaker thinks the shade of blue in the spring sky is different than that of a winter sky.

D The speaker feels so in tune with the weather that she can feel the change of seasons.

35 Which lines reveal the speaker’s contrasting perspectives regarding winter and spring?

A “There’s something too that’s new / In the color of the blue / That’s in the morning sky, / Before the sun is high.”

B “And though on plain and hill, / ’Tis winter, winter still, / There’s something seems to say / That winter’s had its day.”

C “And all this changing tint, / This whispering stir and hint / Of bud and bloom and wing, / Is the coming of the spring.”

D “And tomorrow or today / The brooks will break away / From their icy, frozen sleep / And run and laugh and leap.”

36 What does drift mean in line 30?

A a sudden movement

B a wild gust of wind

C a large pile of snow

D a sloping mountain
Atalanta

by Betty Miles

37 Which statement provides an objective summary of the selection?

A Atalanta wishes to marry and have an extravagant wedding, and asks princes to compete for her hand. A man named Young John wins the competition, and Atalanta deems him worthy to marry her.

B Atalanta wants to be married, but cannot find a desirable person to marry her. Young John wins the right to marry Atalanta, but in the end, they decide to wait until after they have traveled the world for a year.

C Atalanta’s father, the king, wants his daughter to marry a prince, but she refuses to consider anyone. The king decides that Young John will be a suitable husband for Atalanta instead, and Atalanta agrees after much negotiation.

D Atalanta’s father, the king, wants his daughter to marry, but she does not want to do so. The king decides to have people race to win the right to marry Atalanta, so she competes, wins, and chooses to remain unmarried.
38 How does the repetition of the word *powerful* in paragraphs 3 and 7 affect the tone of the selection?

A It creates a tone of hope.
B It creates a tone of authority.
C It creates a tone of frustration.
D It creates a tone of excitement.

39 How does the phrase “clever girl” affect the meaning of paragraph 8?

A It suggests that Atalanta is creative in opposing the king’s race.
B It suggests that Atalanta is excited about running in the king’s race.
C It suggests that Atalanta is suspicious of her competitors in the king’s race.
D It suggests that Atalanta is nervous about running in the king’s race.

40 Which quote shows the contrast between Young John’s perspective and that of the king?

A “Young John saw the princess only from a distance, but near enough to know how bright and clever she was. He wished very much to race with her, to win, and to earn the right to talk with her and become her friend.”
B “‘For surely,’ he said to himself, ‘it is not right for Atalanta’s father to give her away to the winner of the race. Atalanta herself must choose the person she wants to marry, or whether she wishes to marry at all.’”
C “‘Not one of them,’ she said to herself, ‘can win the race, for I will run fast as the wind and leave them all behind.’ And now a bugle sounded, a flag was dropped, and the runners were off!”
D “Atalanta raced even faster to pull ahead, but Young John was a strong match for her. Smiling with the pleasure of the race, Atalanta and Young John reached the finish line together, and together they broke through the golden ribbon.”
41 Which quote supports the inference that the king had little confidence in Atalanta’s skill as a runner?

A “Once upon a time, not long ago, there lived a princess named Atalanta, who could run as fast as the wind.”

B “‘You don’t have to choose, Father,’ Atalanta said. ‘I will choose. And I’m not sure that I will choose to marry anyone at all.’”

C “The king rose to address them all. ‘Good day,’ he said to the crowds. ‘Good luck,’ he said to the young men. To Atalanta he said, ‘Good-bye. I must tell you farewell, for tomorrow you will be married.’”

D “Soon another young man, tense with the effort, drew near to Atalanta. He reached out as though to touch her sleeve, stumbled for an instant, and lost speed.”

42 How does the simile “run fast as the wind” in paragraph 19 influence the theme?

A It suggests that the setting is cool and windy.

B It creates a lighthearted and fun tone.

C It shows that the runners are training with great effort.

D It supports the ideas of freedom and independence.

43 What can be inferred about Young John, based on paragraph 28?

A He is honorable and thoughtful.

B He is rude and selfish.

C He is arrogant and childish.

D He is brave and clever.
44 What do Atalanta and Young John have in common?

A They are curious about the world.
B They never want to get married.
C They hope to find love elsewhere.
D They are committed to their studies.
This is the end of the Reading test.

Directions:

1. Look back over your answers for the test questions.

2. Make sure all your answers are entered on the answer sheet. Only what is entered on the answer sheet will be scored.


4. Stay quietly in your seat until your teacher tells you that testing is finished.

5. Remember, teachers are not allowed to discuss questions from the test with you, and you are not allowed to discuss with others any of the test questions or information in the test.
### Grade 7 Reading
**RELEASED Items**
**2020**
**Answer Key**

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*DOK:
1 = Recall
2 = Skill/Concept
3 = Strategic Thinking*
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