

Keys for English Language Arts (ELA) M-STEP Online Sample Item Sets – Grades 3–7

Item #	Grade 3 ELA Answer Key
1	Jessie and Mrs. Baxter talked about the birds for a while. "Keep an eye on them for me, will you?"
2	Part A: a Part B: d
3	Mrs. Baxter moved from her house into an apartment. Jessie saw four speckled blue eggs in the nest. Jessie calls Mrs. Baxter to tell her about the nest. The movers arrive to remove Mrs. Baxter's belongings. Jessie unlocked the side door to Mrs. Baxter's house.
4	d
5	It helps the reader understand Jessie's actions. It helps the reader know how the movers feel about the birds. It helps the reader understand Mrs. Baxter and Jessie's interest in the birds.
6	d
7	Passage-based Writing
8	Cedar trees are used to make pencils. Syrup from trees is used to make candy and other treats. Trees that are cut down may be made into paper for books.
9	b
10	stacked
11	Part A: B Part B: People who make maple syrup must read the signs of the season to know when to get to work. In the early spring, when daytime and nighttime temperatures are just right, the trees can be tapped.
12	c
13	c
14	"Look Dad, there it is!" I yelled. I had just spotted the red-tailed hawk. It had been flying over the field before landing in our tall pine tree. "It's so cool! Take a picture of it!" Dad responded. I grabbed our camera. My plan was to sneak up on the hawk. However, a storm had left leaves all over the yard and it was hard to be quiet. I started snapping pictures. Suddenly the hawk made a screeching sound and flew over to a tree in the neighbor's yard. I exclaimed, "C'mon Dad, let's go look at the pictures!"

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Item #	Grade 3 ELA Answer Key
15	d
16	muddy soggy
17	c
18	c
19	There are 70,000 sea otters living in the waters of Alaska. Black bears, brown bears, moose, musk ox, and whales are just a few animals that call Alaska home.
20	d
21	d
22	a
23	Lights around the South Pole: Above one of the coldest places on Earth Light from Stars: Found all over the sky Northern Lights: Starts with a pale green light
24	c
25	Part A: b Part B: c
26	Note 1: Main Idea B What elephants eat. Note 2: Main Idea C What elephants look like. Note 3: Main Idea B What elephants eat. Note 4: Main Idea A Where elephants are found.
27	d
28	b

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Item #	Grade 4 ELA Answer Key
1	If he could just make a suit that looked like Bear's, he would be able to dip his paw into the base of the tree and out would come sweet golden honey.
2	d
3	The sound Coyote made was meant to calm the bees. The sound Coyote made blended in with the sound of the bees.
4	Part A: C Part B: He knew that Bear was able to simply take the honey from the base of the tree. If he could just make a suit that looked like Bear's, he would be able to dip his paw into the base of the tree and out would come sweet golden honey.
5	to let the reader know the season when the story takes place to let the reader know that the bees stored their honey in the hollow tree to let the reader know that Coyote watched Bear go to the lonely tree all summer long
6	b
7	Passage-based writing
8	d
9	Part A: d Part B: d
10	Part A: a Part B: c
11	d
12	c
13	c
14	d
15	If we had a longer recess, we would get more exercise and be healthier. Students who have more time to be active will be able to think better when they are back in class.
16	d
17	We was eating supper last night when we heard a huge crash from outside. For about ten seconds, we all sat there wondering, and looking at each other
18	d
19	b
20	Part A: b Part B: c

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Item #	Grade 4 ELA Answer Key
21	c
22	They use clues in their surroundings to find their way. They have trouble telling if light is from a natural source.
23	that the gravity of a black hole is very strong what makes black holes special in the universe
24	c
25	b
26	These teachers showed children how to recognize the letters of the alphabet, how to spell, and how to do simple math.
27	Later, gold was found at Sutter’s Mill in California. After that, more people began to journey west.
28	Hovercraft can help rescue teams get safely to areas where cars cannot travel. By floating above rocks and waves, hovercraft offer a smooth ride for passengers.
29	<i>Science Far Above</i> , a book that gives information about how light rays change the way the sky looks www.how_I_wonder.com , a website that explains kids' questions about how things happen in nature

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Item #	Grade 5 ELA Answer Key
1	The steam came out very fast. The steam appeared to be powerful.
2	It introduces the main character. It shows the boy is curious about things.
3	James kept thinking about uses for steam as he grew up James failed many times but kept learning from his mistakes.
4	Part A: a Part B: a
5	It would not only lift weights, but it would turn all kinds of machinery. It would draw our wagons, it would push our ships, it would plow and sow, it would spin and weave.
6	d
7	Passage based writing
8	Now there are fewer snails making shells.
9	d
10	artificial
11	Part A: d Part B: f
12	b
13	c
14	Cold-blooded animals cannot control their body temperature. Young amphibians have gills.
15	c
16	ache, poisonous throb, toxic
17	stated times
18	Yes bowling swimming
19	cathedral bells: Caused leaning steel: Fixed leaning marble: Caused leaning lead weights: Fixed leaning bell room: Caused leaning

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Item #	Grade 5 ELA Answer Key
20	a
21	The ground that the Tower of Pisa is built on contributed to it leaning. A solid foundation has helped the Tower of Pisa stop leaning any further.
22	to describe how and why crickets chirp to explain how crickets' chirping shows the temperature
23	b
24	Chirping can help crickets survive. Cricket behavior can provide useful information.
25	www.wildlifeofgrandcanyon.com www.grandcanyontrails2hike.com
26	For example, sometimes research provides details about new sources of energy or food. At other times, research reveals how particular regions are being affected by specific climate changes. The findings of the researchers and the resources they use can create interest in the science fields
27	It is very easy to play a song on the piano after just a few short lessons. Learning how to play the piano can help people learn how to play other instruments as well.
28	c
29	Some people like blankets better than quilts. Sometimes, they had to quit early because they ran out of candles.

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Item #	Grade 6 ELA Answer Key
1	B, C
2	c
3	b
4	a
5	b
6	b
7	Passage-based writing
8	<p>“Spacesuits also supply astronauts with oxygen to breathe while they are in the vacuum of space.”</p> <p>“The layers perform different functions, keeping oxygen within the spacesuit to protecting from space dust impacts.”</p>
9	d
10	<p>Part A: d</p> <p>Part B: a</p>
11	<p>Part A: b</p> <p>Part B: a</p>
12	d
13	d
14	a
15	b
16	c
17	<p>Growing up in Chicago, I always felt that one of the best things in life was going to grandmother's homestead.</p> <p>She always had a home-cooked meal—made from old family recipes featuring herbs and spices—waiting for us.</p>
18	b
19	d
20	<p>Part A: d</p> <p>Part B: The professor thought more mastodon bones and teeth would be found in the area.</p>

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Item #	Grade 6 ELA Answer Key
21	<p>Part A: b</p> <p>Part B: There is evidence of humans using the wheel in specific societies. Different groups of people developed different versions of early wheel. Humans continued to look for ways they could alter the invention of the wheel.</p>
22	<p>It shows that humans have been using wheels for a long time.</p> <p>It suggests that as the wheel evolved over time, the number of ways it could be used grew.</p> <p>It strengthened the significance of the wheel by providing a specific example of how it was used.</p>
23	<p>Our bodies and brains continue to work during sleep.</p> <p>During some stages of sleep, our bodies decrease in activity.</p>
24	c
25	<p>Claim 1: Source 1</p> <p>Claim 2: Neither Source</p> <p>Claim 3: Source 2</p> <p>Claim 4: Both Sources</p>
26	Another benefit of honey is that it can ease cold symptoms.
27	<p>People who laugh together get along better than those who do not.</p> <p>Laughter improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow.</p>

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Item #	Grade 7 ELA Answer Key
1	Wolves then raise lots of pups, and their numbers increase. More wolves mean more mouths to feed and more moose get eaten.
2	a
3	c
4	Part A: a Part B: a
5	b
6	The section "Living Links" defines a food chain before the other sections give an example of a specific food chain. The section "Living Links" gives examples of food chains that are recognizable before the other sections introduce a possibly unfamiliar food chain.
7	Passage-based writing
8	Jim was using his last choice. Jim was trying everything he knew.
9	b
10	It allows the reader to understand Jim has captured something that can speak, but doesn't reveal who at first. It allows the reader to understand that Father Time is quite upset with Jim and his lack of understanding of what he has done.
11	The dialogue indicates that Jim and Father Time have different opinions. The dialogue tells the reader that they do not understand each other's point of view. The dialogue helps the reader picture the scene between Father Time and Jim.
12	b
13	d
14	d
15	c
16	I am a member of the newspaper staff, and I helped conduct the survey. Your email inbox would fill up in a hurry.
17	dazzling radiant
18	loads of junk In sum

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Item #	Grade 7 ELA Answer Key
19	Rolling in the mud, I like to watch them play. They can remember where food is hidden, recognize as many as 30 other pigs, and learned their names within a week of birth.
20	Part A: b Part B: Sometimes studying written and oral history points them in the right direction.
21	Locating artifacts from ancient cultures sometimes involves luck. The exact place an artifact is found can reveal important information to archaeologists.
22	a
23	to describe the unique qualities of the lantern fish to show how the lantern fish is able to survive in its environment
24	Has big eye: Survival Stays deep in the ocean during the day: Survival Hunts at the ocean surface: Danger
25	c
26	Because it kept nearly perfect time, we plotted our position most accurately and thus kept from running aground or worse. Now our captain can draw updated maps that should be useful for sailors far into the future.
27	b
28	Claim 1: Source 1 Claim 2: Both Sources Claim 3: Neither source.