

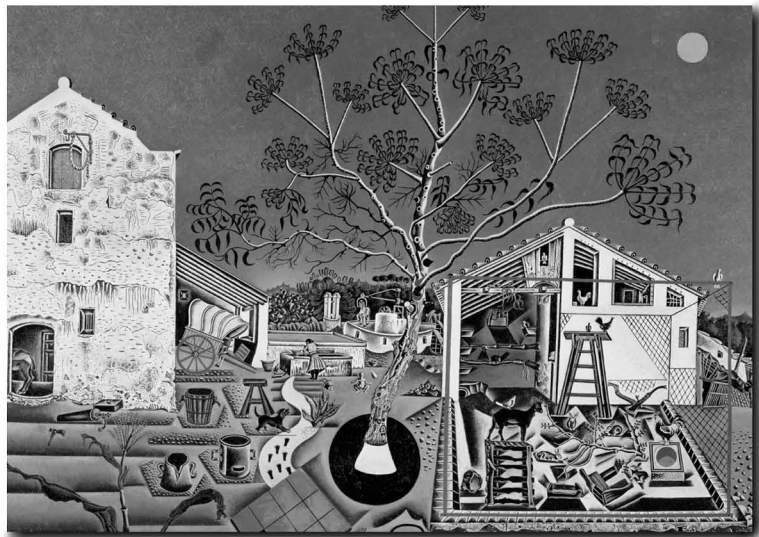
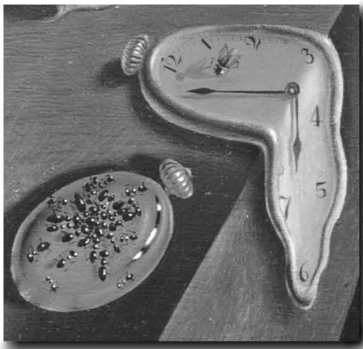
Literature

and the Language Arts

Understanding Literature



**MASSACHUSETTS
COMPREHENSIVE
ASSESSMENT SYSTEM
PRACTICE**



THE EMC MASTERPIECE SERIES

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Introduction

The EMC Masterpiece Series, Literature and the Language Arts textbook program has been designed to address the competencies assessed by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAS). Competencies are developed throughout the program, giving students the opportunity to internalize them through multiple practice opportunities. The **Test-Taking Skills Worksheets** and **MCAS Practice Tests** in this book are only a small part of this practice.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Carefully constructed practice opportunities for reading and writing are integrated throughout the *Literature and the Language Arts* textbook program. Development of these skills is outlined in the **Lesson Plans** book, located in the **Literacy Resource** binder. There you will find a comprehensive list of integrated reading, writing, and other English languages arts activities.

The **Reading Strategies Resource**, also located in the Literacy Resource binder, is specifically designed to help Massachusetts students internalize the reading strategies they need, not only to succeed on the MCAS and other standardized tests, but to become proficient, lifelong readers. The Reading Strategies Resource covers eight reading strategies that help students monitor their comprehension as they read the selections in the textbook and answer reading comprehension questions after reading.

Each **Reading Strategy Mini-Lesson** helps students work through a textbook selection by focusing on one specific reading strategy that they learn to use before, during, and after reading. A fix-up strategy is provided for students who need extra help. Work with the reading strategy culminates with a **Test Practice** page in which students are asked to demonstrate their successful use of the reading strategy by answering sample multiple-choice and open-response questions. Questions focus on:

- Making inferences
- Drawing conclusions
- Interpreting visual material
- Finding the main idea
- Analyzing a text's organizational features
- Understanding sequence
- Evaluating the author's purpose
- Understanding point of view
- Classifying and reorganizing information
- Distinguishing fact from opinion
- Comparing and contrasting
- Determining cause and effect
- Understanding literary devices

The **Teaching Notes** for each Reading Strategy Mini-Lesson include sample think-aloud discussions that model effective ways to approach each standardized test question.

Writing practice can be found in the **Guided Writing** lessons at the end of each unit, in the **Writer’s Journal** prompts following each selection, and on the **Selection Tests** and **Unit Tests**. Writing tasks stress the importance of prewriting prior to drafting, even in timed writing situations.

MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM PRACTICE BOOK

In addition to the assessment practice integrated throughout the core components of *Literature and the Language Arts*, test practice can be found in **Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System Practice** books, available for grades seven and ten in print and downloadable online (www.emcp.com) formats.

TEST-TAKING SKILLS WORKSHEETS. This book contains a set of test-taking skills worksheets that help students use the strategies and skills they develop as they work through the *Literature and the Language Arts* program to succeed on standardized tests. These worksheets cover such topics as making inferences, using context clues, and finding the main idea; they also give students tips on answering multiple-choice, open-response and composition-prompt questions. Each worksheet contains instruction followed by multiple practice opportunities.

SAMPLE MCAS TESTS. You will also find in this book twelve practice tests integrated with the twelve literature units in the textbook. Each language and literature practice test contains a reading passage related to the unit, followed by multiple-choice and open-response reading comprehension questions.

A composition test is also provided for each unit. This test follows the format of the actual MCAS Composition test.

MCAS PRACTICE SCORING GUIDE. Based on actual MCAS scoring procedures, the Scoring Guide at the back of this book includes answers to all objective questions, scoring rubrics for all open-response questions and composition tests, and correlations to the Massachusetts English Language Arts Curriculum Framework.

Test-Taking Skills Practice Worksheets

PREPARING FOR TESTS

Standardized tests like the MCAS and others are a common part of school life. These guidelines will help you prepare for and take a variety of tests.

TEST-TAKING TIPS

<p>Preparing for a Test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pay attention in class. Exercises and activities throughout the year help you practice skills that will benefit you on standardized tests.• Know what to expect. Your teacher can provide you with information about the tests you will be taking.• Get plenty of sleep the night before the test and eat a healthy breakfast in the morning.• Arrive on time. Running late can raise your stress level and hurt your performance.	<p>Taking a Test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read directions and questions carefully.• Consider every choice. Don't be fooled by distractors, or answers that are <i>almost</i> correct.• Spend test time wisely. Within each section, answer the easiest questions first and come back to the more difficult questions later.• Make sure to record your answer on the correct line of the answer sheet. As you mark each answer, ask yourself "Am I on the right question number in the right section of the test?" and "Is this the answer I mean to mark?"• Use any extra time to check your work.
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EXERCISE

Test-Taking Strategies

Write a brief response to each set of suggestions above. Do you use these strategies now? Which would help you most on your next test?

1. Preparing for a test

2. Taking a test

ANSWERING MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

On many standardized tests, including the MCAS, some of the questions are multiple-choice and have a single correct answer. The guidelines below will help you answer these kinds of questions effectively.

TIPS FOR ANSWERING MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Read each question carefully. Pay special attention to any words that are bolded, italicized, written in all capital letters, or otherwise emphasized.

Read all choices before deciding on the answer.

Eliminate any answers that do not make sense, that disagree with what you remember from the passage, or that seem too extreme. Also, if two answers have the same meaning, you can eliminate both.

Beware of distractors. These are incorrect answers that look attractive because they are partially correct, they contain a common misconception, or they apply the right information in the wrong way. Distractors are based on common mistakes students make.

Rule out incorrect answers; then choose the answer that is most accurate or complete. Pay special attention to choices such as *none of the above* or *all of the above*.

If a question seems too difficult, skip it and come back to it later. Keep in mind, though, that most tests allow you to go back only to questions within a section.

To make sure your answers are scanned accurately, be sure to fill in all circles solidly.

EXERCISE

Turn to page 611 of your textbook, and read the Reader's Resource feature on the allusion to *Madame Butterfly* and the About the Author feature on Sandra Cisneros. Then answer the following questions.

- _____ 1. *Madame Butterfly* is a(n)
- A. novel by Sandra Cisneros
 - B. opera by Wagner
 - C. opera by Puccini
 - D. sonnet by Shakespeare

- _____ 2. The main conflict in *Madame Butterfly* is
- A. between two lovers, a Japanese woman and an American man
 - B. internal, within an American naval lieutenant
 - C. between Sandra Cisneros and Giacomo Puccini
 - D. between two lovers, a Japanese man and an American woman
- _____ 3. The purpose of these two sections is MOST LIKELY to
- A. persuade the reader to learn more about *Madame Butterfly*
 - B. entertain the reader with interesting stories about opera and writing
 - C. inform the reader about background useful in understanding a story by Sandra Cisneros
 - D. inspire the reader to go to the opera
- _____ 4. A figure of speech that makes reference to a person, event, object, or work from history or literature is called a(n)
- A. character
 - B. simile
 - C. allusion
 - D. opera
- _____ 5. Cisneros's accomplishments include all of the following EXCEPT
- A. writing a novel, short stories, and poetry
 - B. infusing feminism with the perspective of Chicana women
 - C. following in a long tradition of celebrated Hispanic women writers
 - D. writing about issues she herself has experienced

ANSWERING READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Reading comprehension questions ask you to read a short piece of writing and answer several questions about it. To answer reading comprehension questions, follow these steps:

1. Read through all the questions quickly.
2. Read the passage with the questions in mind.
3. Reread the first question carefully. If you know the answer, mark it and proceed to step 6. If not, go to step 4.
4. Scan the passage to look for key words related to the question. When you find a key word, slow down and read carefully.
5. Answer the question.
6. Repeat steps 3–5 to answer the rest of the questions.

EXERCISE

Read the poem “New Dog” by Mark Doty on pages 730–731 of your textbook. Then, for each question below, select the letter that corresponds to the best answer.

- _____ 1. The speaker of this poem is
- A. Beau
 - B. an unnamed person
 - C. Jimi
 - D. Tony

Read the lines in the box below.

...and there
is Beau: bounding and
practically boundless,
one brass concatenation
of tongue and tail,
unmediated energy,
too big, wild,
perfect.

- _____ 2. Which of the following literary devices can be found in these lines?
- A. simile
 - B. personification
 - C. paradox
 - D. onomatopoeia

- _____ 3. Why is Beau “perfect”?
- A. He is a calm, quiet dog appropriate for Wally.
 - B. He gives Wally a taste of liveliness in the midst of dying.
 - C. He is in need of a home at the time when the speaker is looking for a dog.
 - D. He is Wally’s favorite breed.
- _____ 4. What surprised the speaker?
- A. that Tony and Jimi won’t give up their dog
 - B. that Beau is so perfect
 - C. that Wally wants a new dog
 - D. that Wally is so ill
- _____ 5. Based on this poem, Wally could BEST be described as
- A. focused
 - B. bitter
 - C. restless
 - D. depressed

MAKING INFERENCES

Sometimes the answers to reading comprehension questions can be found in the text you have read. Other times, however, you will need to make an inference in order to answer the question. **Making an inference** means putting together the clues given in the text with your own prior knowledge to make an educated guess. For example, read the following passage:

“Coach is going to kill me,” Caragh thought, looking at the clock. She was late for practice again. That made three times this week. She shoved her feet into her high tops, pulled her hair back into a pony tail, and headed for the gym. Before she got there she could hear the sound of balls dribbling up and down the court. As she walked in, the team was doing a lay-up drill. Some of the balls rebounded hard off the backboard or rim, while others smoothly sailed through the net.

What sport does Caragh play? The passage itself does not say, but it does give you clues: the high tops, the bouncing balls in the gym, the lay-up drills, and the references to backboard, rim, and net. By putting these clues together with your prior knowledge, you can be pretty certain that Caragh plays basketball.

As you make inferences, remember that each inference needs to fit with all of the clues in the passage and with your prior knowledge. In multiple-choice questions, you can eliminate answers that contradict the text and those for which there is no evidence. Then, from the remaining answers, choose the one that seems most logical.

EXERCISE

Read the short story “The Open Window” on pages 185–187 of your textbook. Then use clues from the story and your prior knowledge to answer the inference questions that follow.

- _____ 1. How does Frampton Nuttel feel about socializing?
 - A. He enjoys it.
 - B. He disdains it.
 - C. He dislikes it.
 - D. He looks forward to it.

- _____ 2. Which of the following BEST characterizes Vera’s personality?
 - A. inventive and crafty
 - B. silly and spoiled
 - C. annoying and clever
 - D. introverted and rude

- _____ 3. Why does Vera ask Frampton whom he knows in the area?
 - A. She wonders if they know any of the same people.
 - B. She wants to introduce him to some people.
 - C. She is afraid of the stories he might have heard about her.
 - D. She wants to see what he knows before she begins telling stories.

4. Why does Nuttel leave so quickly? Use details and examples from the story to explain.

5. Why does Nuttel have a difficult time in this social situation? Use evidence from the story to explain why the social conventions don't work.

FINDING THE MAIN IDEA OR THEME

Many standardized test questions will ask you to **identify the main idea or theme** of a passage of text. In general, nonfiction texts have main ideas; literary texts (poems, stories, novels, plays, and personal essays) have themes. Sometimes, however, the term *main idea* is used to refer to the theme of a literary work, especially an essay or poem.

The **main idea** is a brief statement of what the author wants you to know, think, or feel after reading the text. In some cases, the main idea will actually be stated. Check the first and last paragraphs for a sentence that sums up the entire passage.

Usually, however, the author will not tell you what the main idea is, and you will have to infer it. To infer a main idea, ask yourself these questions about the text:

- Who or what is this passage about?
- What does the author want me to know, think, or feel about this “who” or “what”?
- If I had to tell someone in one sentence what this passage is about, what would I say?

After you have a main idea in mind, check to see whether all the details in the passage fit that main idea. If any detail contradicts your statement, you need to revise that statement.

TIPS FOR ANSWERING MULTIPLE-CHOICE MAIN IDEA QUESTIONS

- Eliminate any statement that contains incorrect information.
- Eliminate any statement that applies only to one paragraph or section of the passage.
- If two statements are similar, choose the one that contains more information, as long as all information is correct.

Following a literary passage, you might be asked to identify the **theme**, or central idea, of the passage. The theme is usually a general statement or insight about life. It is expressed through the plot, images, characters, and symbols in a text. To find the theme of a passage, ask yourself these questions:

- How and why has the main character or speaker changed by the end of the story?
- What has the main character learned by the end of the story?
- How is the reader supposed to feel about the events of the story?
- What is the author trying to say about life?

EXERCISE

- _____ 1. Read Claudia Kalb’s essay “Beware the Unruly Sun” on pages 476–479 of your textbook. Which of the following statements BEST expresses the main idea of this essay?
- A. Exposure to the sun increases your risk of melanoma, but there are ways to reduce this risk.
 - B. The sun is warm and wonderful, but it can also be deadly.
 - C. People who spend time in the sun should wear sunscreen and check their body for moles on a regular basis.
 - D. The rate of melanoma is rising.
- _____ 2. Turn to page 219 in your textbook and read the short story “Like the Sun” by R. K. Narayan. Which of the following statements BEST expresses the theme of the story?
- A. It is important to tell the truth always, no matter how difficult it is.
 - B. Telling the truth has consequences for one’s self and others.
 - C. The truth will set you free.
 - D. Some people can’t handle the truth.

USING CONTEXT CLUES

Some standardized test questions will ask you to choose the best definition for a word that might be unfamiliar to you. You can often figure out the meaning of this word by using context clues. **Context clues** frequently can be found in nearby words and phrases that provide hints about the word.

EXAMPLES

comparison clue Jake brings to his skateboarding the prowess of an Olympic athlete.

If Jake is similar to a great athlete in prowess, *prowess* must mean “strong ability” or “talent.”

contrast clue While my grandparents’ house is bright, cheerful, and not at all mysterious, the old, abandoned mansion next to them is eerie.

The word *while* signals a contrast between one house and the other. If the grandparents’ house is “not at all mysterious,” the house next door must possess some mystery. *Eerie* must mean “strange” or “mysterious.”

restatement clue Jeanine’s impudence gets her in trouble. Neither teachers nor other students appreciate her cocky, selfish attitude.

As the second sentence suggests, *impudence* means “cockiness and disregard for other people.”

apposition clue As he stepped up to bat for the first time, the boy was afraid his teammates would discover his inadequacy, his inability to perform up to their high standards.

By restating the word *inadequacy* in different terms, the apposition indicates that *inadequacy* means “state of not being good enough.”

examples clue The child suffered derision from her classmates in the form of teasing, jokes, taunts, threats, and pointing fingers.

From the actions listed here—teasing, jokes, taunts, threats, and pointing fingers—you can guess that *derision* means “ridicule.”

cause and effect clue When Samuel crept into the room looking furtive, his parents immediately became suspicious and asked him what he was up to.

If looking furtive made Samuel’s parents suspicious about his plans, *furtive* must mean “sneaky ” or “sly.”

The following table shows words that signal each type of context clue. Look for these words in the sentences around an unfamiliar word to see if they signal a context clue.

comparison	and, like, as, just as, as if, as though
contrast	but, nevertheless, on the other hand, however, although, though, in spite of
restatement	that is, in other words, or
examples	including, such as, for example, for instance, especially, particularly
cause and effect	if/then, when/then, thus, therefore, because, so, as a result of, consequently

EXERCISE

Read the following sentences. Then choose the best definitions for the underlined words.

- _____ 1. A local celebrity, Pedro enjoyed the anonymity he experienced away from home.
- A. continuous attention
 - B. special treatment
 - C. being unknown
 - D. freedom
- _____ 2. I admire the logical organization and progression of ideas in Lucia's coherent essay.
- A. clear and sensible
 - B. neat and professional
 - C. daring and unconventional
 - D. long and complex
- _____ 3. Some people say a black cat crossing your path is a portent of bad luck.
- A. omen
 - B. cause
 - C. danger
 - D. carrier
- _____ 4. Fred's bad mood was as ominous as a thundercloud ready to let loose.
- A. forgiving
 - B. threatening
 - C. powerful
 - D. annoying
- _____ 5. Gordy made a snide remark, but Rosie had a clever retort.
- A. brilliant excuse
 - B. urgent appointment
 - C. witty reply
 - D. angry comeback

ANSWERING OPEN-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

In addition to multiple-choice questions, many standardized tests, including the MCAS, include open-response questions that require you to write answers in the test booklet.

Open-response questions will ask you to write a paragraph in response to a question about the selection and to use specific details from the passage to support your answer.

EXAMPLE

Essay prompt: Read “One of Grandma Selma’s Stories” on page 792 of your textbook. Describe the setting of the story.

Short response: The story takes place in summer near the Arctic ocean. The opening line refers to the “long, bright arctic summer.” The reference to the tundra in the last line also indicates an arctic setting. It is clear the story takes place near the coast because Grandma Selma is on the beach at the beginning of the story. In addition, the speck in the sky follows the coastline. The setting is remote, and the sound of a plane overhead is unusual

The following tips will help you answer open-response questions effectively.

TIPS FOR ANSWERING OPEN-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

- Before reading the passage, skim the questions. When you **skim**, you glance through material quickly to get a general idea of what it is about.
- As you read, underline any information that relates to the questions. After you have finished reading, you can decide which of the underlined details to use in your answers.
- On extra paper or in the margin of your test booklet, list the most important points to include in each answer. Then number them to show the order in which they should be included. Finally, draft your answer.
- If you have extra time, use it to revise and proofread your answers.

EXERCISE

Turn to page 612 and read "A Smart Cookie" by Sandra Cisneros. Then answer the open-response questions below.

1. Characterization refers to the way a writer creates a character. Describe the character of Esperanza's mother. Use relevant and specific information from the passage to support your answer.

2. The theme of a literary work is the central idea it develops. What is the theme of this passage, and how is it developed? Be sure to use specific information from the passage in your answer.

RESPONDING TO COMPOSITION PROMPTS

Part of the MCAS involves a composition test that asks you to write a well-developed essay in response to a writing prompt.

The writing prompt will introduce and, often, define, a significant literary technique, motif, or theme such as *irony*, *hero*, *epiphany*, or *transformation*. Your task will be to select any one literary work you have read inside or outside of class and write a composition in which you describe how the given literary technique, motif, or theme is used in that work. Here is a sample prompt.

EXAMPLE

In many literary works, the main character goes through some experience that causes him or her to gain insight and change the way he or she is living. The moment of insight is called an epiphany.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select one main character who experiences an epiphany. In a well-developed composition, identify the main character, and explain the epiphany he or she experiences and how it changes his or her life.

The composition you write will be scored according to how you develop the topic and how well you use the conventions of standard English. Specifically, the essays that score the highest will have

- rich topic/idea development
- careful and/or subtle organization
- strong details
- effective/rich use of language
- control of sentence structure, grammar and usage, and mechanics (spelling, capitalization, and punctuation)

You can use a modified version of the writing process to write your composition. Even though you have a limited amount of time to write, you should still allow time for each of the following stages:

1. Analyze the writing prompt. Read the prompt and make sure you understand the topic. Then brainstorm a list of literary works (usually novels, memoirs, autobiographies, and short stories work best) about which you could write.
2. Plan your response. From the list of works you brainstormed, pick the one that best fits the topic. If you are having trouble deciding between two or more works, jot down a quick list of details from each that you could include in an essay. Choose the work about which you list the most details. If you have trouble generating a list of details, you might try freewriting for five minutes about how the topic applies to the work. Once you've gathered ideas, put them in the order that makes the most sense. As you begin writing, you might change this order, but it will help you if you have a tentative order in mind as you start drafting. Finally, write a thesis statement. Your thesis is a statement of the main idea of your essay. All of the details you have listed should support your thesis.
3. Write your composition. Include your thesis in your introduction. Then follow your organizational plan to write each body paragraph. Devote one paragraph to each major point of support for your thesis. Write quickly and keep moving. Don't spend too much time on any one paragraph, but try to make your essay as complete as possible. End your essay with a conclusion that sums up your major points.

4. Revise your composition. In a second session of the MCAS, you will have time to revise your composition. Think about how your essay will be scored, and make sure your essay measures up well to the scoring criteria listed above. Mark changes directly on your first draft. Revise the ideas first, and then proofread your essay for sentence structure, grammar, usage, and mechanics. Finally, copy your essay onto the pages marked Final Composition. Proofread your essay one final time.

EXERCISE

Below is a writing prompt that mirrors those you will find on the MCAS. Read the prompt. Then use the list of steps above to prepare your response. Below and on the next page, space has been provided for your prewriting notes as well as for your essay.

WRITING PROMPT

In many literary works, the main character goes through some experience that causes him or her to gain insight and change the way he or she is living. The moment of insight is called an epiphany.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select one main character who experiences an epiphany. In a well-developed composition, identify the main character and explain his or her epiphany and how it changes his or her life.

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

PLANNING

MCAS Practice, Grade 10

UNIT 1 TEST

COMPOSITION

WRITING PROMPT

Foreshadowing is the act of presenting material that hints at events to occur later in a story. Foreshadowing may take the form of actual plot elements or be embodied in the mood a writer creates.

Select a work of literature you have read in or out of school that contains foreshadowing. In a well-developed composition, describe the work and explain how foreshadowing is used in the work and how the foreshadowing affects the reader's experience.

Write your first draft on the pages marked for that purpose. After you have revised your first draft, you should write your final composition on the pages marked Final Composition.

UNIT 1 TEST**LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE****Directions**

This MCAS practice test involves a reading selection with eight multiple-choice questions and one open-response question.

Many cultures have folktales, myths, or legends that have been passed by word of mouth from generation to generation. The following passage introduces and retells part of an Aztec myth from Mexico. Read the passage and use information from it to answer the questions that follow.

“Aztec Myth: ‘Popocatépetl and Ixtacihuatl’”

“Popocatépetl and Ixtacihuatl” is an Aztec myth. A myth is a story that explains objects or events in the natural world as resulting from the action of some supernatural force or entity, most often a god.

“Popocatépetl and Ixtacihuatl” takes place in and around the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan. In this myth, an aging emperor is preparing his only daughter, Ixtacihuatl, to rule after his death. Trusting only his heir to succeed him on the throne, the Emperor forbids her to marry her lover Popocatépetl, displaying a shortsightedness that causes many of his subjects to doubt his wisdom. The Emperor focuses so much of his attention on educating his daughter that he neglects matters of state, and people begin to consider the empire to be weak. Soon, enemy tribes mount an attack on the Emperor’s domain. Finally, the Emperor issues the following challenge: The warrior who can lead the Emperor’s forces to a victory over their enemies will be allowed to marry Ixtacihuatl and rule alongside her. The warriors go forth, and, after a long and bloody battle, vanquish their enemies. All recognize that Popocatépetl was responsible for the victory and predict a happy future for Popocatépetl and Ixtacihuatl. Read the following retelling of the rest of the myth to see how these plans go awry:

“Popocatépetl and Ixtacihuatl”**Retold by Julie Piggott**

But a few of those warriors were jealous of Popo. Since they knew none of them could rightly claim the victory for himself (the decision among the Emperor’s fighting men that Popo was responsible for the victory had been unanimous), they wanted to spoil for him and for Ixta the delights which the Emperor had promised. These few men slipped away from the rest at night and made their way to Tenochtitlan ahead of all the others. They reached the capital two days later, having traveled without sleep all the way, and quickly let it be known that, although the Emperor’s warriors had been successful against his enemies, the warrior Popo had been killed in battle.

It was a foolish and cruel lie which those warriors told their Emperor, and they told it for no reason other than that they were jealous of Popo.

When the Emperor heard this, he demanded that Popo’s body be brought to him so that he might arrange a fitting burial. He knew the man his daughter had loved would have died

courageously. The jealous warriors looked at one another and said nothing. Then one of them told the Emperor that Popo had been killed on the edge of Lake Texcoco and that his body had fallen into the water and no man had been able to retrieve it. The Emperor was saddened to hear this.

After a little while, he demanded to be told which of his warriors had been responsible for the victory; but none of the fighting men before him dared claim the successful outcome of the war for himself, for each knew the others would refute him. So they were silent. This puzzled the Emperor, and he decided to wait for the main body of his warriors to return and not to press the few who had brought the news of the victory and of Popo's death.

Then the Emperor sent for his wife and his daughter and told them their enemies had been overcome. The Empress was thoroughly excited and relieved at the news. Ixta was only apprehensive. The Emperor, seeing her anxious face, told her quickly that Popo was dead. He went on to say that the warrior's body had been lost in the waters of Lake Texcoco; and again it was as though his wisdom had left him, for he spoke at some length of his not yet being able to tell Ixta who her husband would be and who would become Emperor when the main body of warriors returned to Tenochtitlan.

But Ixta heard nothing of what he told her, only that her beloved Popo was dead. She went to her room and lay down. Her mother followed her and saw at once she was very ill. Witch doctors were sent for, but they could not help the princess, and neither could her parents. Her illness had no name, unless it was the illness of a broken heart. Princess Ixtacihuatl did not wish to live if Popocatépetl was dead, and so she died herself.

The day after her death, Popo returned to Tenochtitlan with all the other surviving warriors. They went straight to the palace and, with much cheering, told the Emperor that his enemies had been routed and that Popo was the undoubted victor of the conflict.

The Emperor praised his warriors and pronounced Popo to be the new Emperor in his place. When the young man asked first to see Ixta, begging that they should be married at once before being jointly proclaimed Emperor and Empress, the Emperor had to tell Popo of Ixta's death and how it had happened.

Popo spoke not a word.

He gestured the assembled warriors to follow him, and together they sought out the few jealous men who had given the false news of his death to the Emperor. With the army of warriors watching, Popo killed each one of them in single combat with his obsidian studded club. No one tried to stop him.

That task accomplished, Popo returned to the palace and, still without speaking and still wearing his stiff cotton armor, went to Ixta's room. He gently lifted her body and carried it out of the palace and out of the city, and no one tried to stop him doing that either. All the warriors followed him in silence.

When he had walked some miles, he gestured to them again, and they built a huge pile of stones in the shape of a pyramid. They all worked together and they worked fast, while Popo stood and watched, holding the body of the princess in his arms. By sunset the mighty edifice was finished. Popo climbed it alone, carrying Ixta's corpse with him. There, at the very top, under the heap of stones, he buried the young woman he had loved so well and for so long and who had died for the love of him.

That night Popo slept alone at the top of the pyramid by Ixta's grave. In the morning he came down and spoke for the first time since the Emperor had told him the princess was

dead. He told the warriors to build another pyramid, a little to the southeast of the one which held Ixta's body, and to build it higher than the other.

He told them, too, to tell the Emperor on his behalf that he, Popocatépetl, would never reign and rule in Tenochtitlan. He would keep watch over the grave of the Princess Ixtacihuatl for the rest of his life.

The messages to the Emperor were the last words Popo ever spoke. Well before the evening, the second mighty pile of stones was built. Popo climbed it and stood at the top, taking a torch of resinous pine wood with him.

And when he reached the top, he lit the torch, and the warriors below saw the white smoke rise against the blue sky; and they watched as the sun began to set, and the smoke turned pink and then a deep red, the color of blood.

So Popocatépetl stood there, holding the torch of memory of Ixtacihuatl, for the rest of his days.

The snows came, and, as the years went by, the pyramids of stone became high, white-capped mountains. Even now the one called Popocatépetl emits smoke in memory of the princess whose body lies in the mountain which bears her name.

Read the sentence from the introduction in the box below.

Trusting only his heir to succeed him on the throne, the Emperor forbids her to marry her lover Popocatépetl, displaying a shortsightedness that causes many of his subjects to doubt his wisdom.

1. Which literary term would best describe the sentence?
 - A. foreshadowing
 - B. tone
 - C. metaphor
 - D. hyperbole

2. What motivates a group of warriors to return to Tenochtitlan ahead of the others and tell the Emperor that Popocatépetl is dead?
 - A. greed
 - B. grief
 - C. hate
 - D. shame

3. Who is the hero of this myth?
 - A. the Emperor
 - B. Ixtacihuatl
 - C. Popocatépetl
 - D. the Empress

4. Why couldn't the witch doctors help Ixtacihuatl?
 - A. She was too ill.
 - B. They came too late.
 - C. Her illness was actually a broken heart.
 - D. They were not heart specialists.

5. Which group of characters from the myth experience a transformation?
 - A. the Emperor and Empress
 - B. the jealous warriors
 - C. the enemy tribes
 - D. Popocatépetl and Ixtacihuatl

6. Which event from the natural world is explained by this myth?
 - A. how Lake Texcoco was formed
 - B. how volcanoes were first formed
 - C. how sunsets became colorful
 - D. how the white-capped mountains near Tenochtitlan formed

Read the sentence from the selection in the box below.

And when he reached the top, he lit the torch, and the warriors below saw the white smoke rise against the blue sky, and they watched as the sun began to set, and the smoke turned pink and then deep red, the color of blood.

7. This sentence would be best described as which element of writing?
- A. description
 - B. dialogue
 - C. characterization
 - D. inference

8. What does this myth say about the Aztec people?
- A. The Aztecs recognized romantic love as a significant force.
 - B. Women were considered unreliable rulers in Aztec culture.
 - C. The Aztecs worshipped the rivers.
 - D. The Aztecs did not respect their elders.

How to answer open-response questions

Be sure to

- read all parts of each question carefully
- make each response as clear, complete, and accurate as you can
- check your answers

Write your answer to the open-response question in the space provided.

9. Who is the most to blame for the tragic fate of the two lovers? Use relevant and specific information from the poem to support your answer.

MCAS Practice, Grade 10

UNIT 2 TEST

COMPOSITION

WRITING PROMPT

Mood, or atmosphere, is the emotion created in the reader by part or all of a literary work.

Select a work of literature you have read in or out of school that evokes a particular mood. In a well-developed composition, describe the work and its dominant mood, explaining how the mood is created.

Write your first draft on the pages marked for that purpose. After you have revised your first draft, you should write your final composition on the pages marked Final Composition.

UNIT 2 TEST

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Directions

This MCAS practice test involves a reading selection with eight multiple-choice questions and one open-response question.

The poet Emily Dickinson was a reclusive, private person who published only seven poems during her lifetime. After her death, it was discovered that she had written over a thousand poems. Her language is still fresh and her topics—usually love, death, and spirituality—continue to be relevant.

“Success Is Counted Sweetest . . .” by Emily Dickinson

Success is counted sweetest
By those who ne’er succeed.
To comprehend a nectar¹
Requires sorest need.

5 Not one of all the purple Host
Who took the Flag today²
Can tell the definition
So clear of Victory

As he defeated—dying—
10 On whose forbidden ear
The distant strains of triumph
Burst agonized and clear! ■

1. **nectar.** Sweet liquid; here the speaker means “reward”
2. **purple Host/who took the Flag today.** The speaker means “honored, victorious soldiers.”

1. Which of the following does NOT describe the structure of the poem?
- A. three stanzas
 - B. free verse
 - C. regular rhyme scheme
 - D. iambic rhythm

Read lines 3 and 4 of the poem in the box below.

To comprehend a nectar
Requires sorest need.

2. Which poetic device is used in these lines?
- A. simile
 - B. metaphor
 - C. internal rhyme
 - D. repetition

3. Which statement below BEST relates the theme or main idea of the first stanza?
- A. Success is always sweet.
 - B. To understand success, one must have desire.
 - C. Success is valued most by those who never succeed.
 - D. It is best to toast success with a sweet nectar.
4. According to the poem, who is best able to tell the definition of *victory*?
- A. the purple Host
 - B. those who took the flag
 - C. the victorious
 - D. the defeated and dying

Read line 9 of the poem in the box below.

As he defeated—dying—

5. The poet uses dashes as an alternative to which punctuation marks?
- A. periods
 - B. question marks
 - C. commas
 - D. semicolons
6. How do the “strains of triumph” sound to the defeated?
- A. They are hard to hear because they are distant.
 - B. They are agonizing and clear.
 - C. They sound melodious.
 - D. They have a poetic ring.

Read line 10 of the poem in the box below.

On whose forbidden ear

7. Why does the poet describe the ear of the defeated as forbidden?
- A. The defeated, who are dying, will never be able to hear again.
 - B. The defeated will never hear anything the same way again.
 - C. Poetic words such as *forbidden* give the poem an abstract quality.
 - D. The sounds of victory should not be heard by the defeated, yet they are.
8. To which party do you think the poet is likely to be most sympathetic?
- A. the successful
 - B. the victorious
 - C. soldiers
 - D. failures

How to answer open-response questions

Be sure to

- read all parts of each question carefully
- make each response as clear, complete, and accurate as you can
- check your answers

Write your answer to the open-response question in the space provided.

9. How do you think the author views success? Use relevant and specific information from the poem to support your answer.

Scoring Guide

TEST-TAKING SKILLS PRACTICE WORKSHEETS

PREPARING FOR TESTS

1. Responses will vary.
2. Responses will vary.

ANSWERING MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Answer C, Standard 8.15
2. Answer A, Standard 8.15
3. Answer C, Standard 13.23
4. Answer C, Standard 13.9
5. Answer C, Standard 13.12

ANSWERING READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Answer B, Standard 8.13
2. Answer C, Standard 14.6
3. Answer B, Standard 8.30
4. Answer C, Standard 8.30
5. Answer A, Standard 8.14

MAKING INFERENCES

1. Answer C, Standard 8.14
2. Answer A, Standard 8.14
3. Answer D, Standard 12.4
4. Use the scoring rubric below to evaluate responses. This task assesses students' proficiency with Standard 8.25.

4
The writer identifies a reasonable motivation for Nuttel's early departure and explains it clearly. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the story.

3
The writer identifies a reasonable motivation for Nuttel's early departure and explains it fairly clearly. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the story.

2
The writer partially identifies a motivation and attempts to explain it. Some supporting details and examples from the story are included.

1
The writer's identification of a motivation and attempt to explain it are weak and insubstantial.

Few to no useful supporting details and examples from the story are included.

0

The answer is incorrect and irrelevant.

5. Use the scoring rubric below to evaluate responses. This task assesses students' proficiency with Standard 8.25.

4

The writer clearly explains why social conventions don't work in this situation. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the story.

3

The writer explains fairly clearly why Nuttel has a hard time in this social situation. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the story.

2

The writer partially explains why Nuttel has a hard time in this social situation. Some supporting details and examples from the story are included.

1

The writer's attempt to explain why the social conventions fail in this situation is weak and insubstantial. Few to no useful supporting details and examples from the story are included.

0

The answer is incorrect and irrelevant.

FINDING THE MAIN IDEA OR THEME

1. Answer A, Standard 13.12
2. Answer B, Standard 11.5

USING CONTEXT CLUES

1. Answer C, Standard 8.9
2. Answer A, Standard 8.9
3. Answer A, Standard 8.9
4. Answer B, Standard 8.9
5. Answer C, Standard 8.9

ANSWERING OPEN-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

1. Use the scoring rubric below to evaluate responses. This task assesses students' proficiency with Standard 8.14.

4

The writer accurately and thoroughly describes the character of Esperanza's mother. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the story.

3

The writer accurately and fairly thoroughly characterizes Esperanza’s mother. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the story.

2

The writer partially describes the character of Esperanza’s mother. Some supporting details and examples from the story are included.

1

The writer’s description of Esperanza’s mother is weak and insubstantial. Few to no useful supporting details and examples from the story are included.

0

The answer is incorrect and irrelevant.

2. Use the scoring rubric below to evaluate responses. This task assesses students’ proficiency with Standard 11.5.

4

The writer identifies a reasonable theme of the selection and clearly explains how it is developed. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the story.

3

The writer identifies a reasonable theme of the selection and explains fairly clearly how it is developed. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the story.

2

The writer partially identifies a theme and attempts to explain how it is developed. Some supporting details and examples from the story are included.

1

The writer’s identification of a theme and attempt to explain how it is developed are weak and insubstantial. Few to no useful supporting details and examples from the story are included.

0

The answer is incorrect and irrelevant.

RESPONDING TO COMPOSITION PROMPTS

Make sure students understand how to use the writing process in timed writing situations. Use the Scoring Guide for Topic/Idea Development and the Scoring Guide for Standard English Conventions (page 138) to evaluate compositions. This task assesses students’ proficiency in Massachusetts General Standards 19–23 in English Language Arts.

GRADE 10 MCAS PRACTICE TESTS

UNIT 1 TEST

COMPOSITION

Use the Scoring Guide for Topic/Idea Development and the Scoring Guide for Standard English Conventions (page 138) to evaluate responses. This task assesses students’ proficiency in Massachusetts General Standards 19–23 in English Language Arts.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

1. Answer A, Standard 13.27
2. Answer A, Standard 12.4
3. Answer C, Standard 16.9
4. Answer C, Standard 12.4
5. Answer D, Standard 16.8
6. Answer D, Standard 16.4
7. Answer A, Standard 8.20
8. Answer A, Standard 9.7
9. Use the scoring rubric below to evaluate responses. This task assesses students’ proficiency with Standard 8.14.

4

The writer identifies a reasonable character and clearly explains how that character is to blame for the tragedy. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the myth.

3

The writer identifies a reasonable character and explains fairly clearly how that character is to blame for the tragedy. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the myth.

2

The writer partially identifies a character and attempts to explain how the tragedy came about. Some supporting details and examples from the poem are included.

1

The writer’s identification of a character and attempt to explain how that character is to blame for the tragedy are weak and insubstantial. Few to no useful supporting details and examples from the poem are included.

0

The answer is incorrect and irrelevant.

UNIT 2 TEST

COMPOSITION

Use the Scoring Guide for Topic/Idea Development and the Scoring Guide for Standard English Conventions (page 138) to evaluate responses. This task assesses students' proficiency in Massachusetts General Standards 19–23 in English Language Arts.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

1. Answer B, Standard 14.5
2. Answer B, Standard 14.2
3. Answer C, Standard 11.3
4. Answer D, Standard 8.25
5. Answer C, Standard 15.3
6. Answer B, Standard 8.3
7. Answer D, Standard 15.7
8. Answer D, Standard 9.3
9. Use the scoring rubric below to evaluate responses. This task assesses students' proficiency with Standard 11.5. Open-Response Question

4
The writer completely explains the theme of the poem and clearly indicates how the author feels about success. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the poem.

3
The writer gives a fairly complete explanation of the theme of the poem and indicates how the author feels about success. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the poem.

2
The writer partially explains the theme of the poem and discusses the author's feelings. Some supporting details and examples from the poem are included.

1
The writer's explanation of theme and discussion of the author's feelings on success are weak and insubstantial. Few to no useful supporting details and examples from the poem are included.

0
The answer is incorrect and irrelevant.

UNIT 3 TEST

COMPOSITION

Use the Scoring Guide for Topic/Idea Development and the Scoring Guide for Standard English Conventions (page 138) to evaluate responses. This task assesses students' proficiency in Massachusetts General Standards 19–23 in English Language Arts.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

1. Answer C, Standard 8.30
2. Answer B, Standard 8.14
3. Answer D, Standard 12.3
4. Answer D, Standard 8.20
5. Answer D, Standard 8.5
6. Answer A, Standard 8.14
7. Answer C, Standard 12.3
8. Answer A, Standard 9.7
9. Use the scoring rubric below to evaluate responses. This task assesses students' proficiency with Standard 12.3.

4
The writer completely discusses the internal and external conflicts of the main character. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the excerpt.

3
The writer gives a fairly complete explanation of the internal and external conflicts of the main character. The answer includes supporting details and examples from the excerpt.

2
The writer partially discusses the internal and external conflicts of the main character. Some supporting details and examples from the excerpt are included.

1
The writer's discussion of the internal and external conflict of the main character are weak and insubstantial. Few to no useful supporting details and examples from the excerpt are included.

0
The answer is incorrect and irrelevant.