



# ***New York State Testing Program***

**English**

**Language Arts Test**

**Listening Selection**

Grade

**5**

**January 12–16, 2009**

This listening selection is to be used in administering Book 2 of the English Language Arts Test. The entire selection is to be read aloud twice to the students. For complete directions, please follow the instructions in the *Teacher's Directions*.

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**Listening Selection*****Snorkeling for Bass***

*by Shaun Morey*

When they were kids, Frank Rusch and his younger brother, Ryan, spent much of each summer vacation at Lake Shasta in Redding, California. They fished with their parents for smallmouth bass, bluegill, and any other fish that would bite.

One summer day in 1982, Frank and Ryan were fishing from the stern of the family's 15-foot boat. The boat had been beached earlier in the day and rested on the sandy shore of the large lake. The sky was clear and the air was filled with the smell of pine sap. Thousands of towering pine trees surrounded the cool mountain lake.

As their parents built a campfire for the afternoon cookout, the brothers baited their hooks with live crickets and began to fish. After a few early bites and not much action, they became bored. So they left their lines in the water, leaned their fishing rods against the side of the boat and relaxed in the summer sunshine.

The moment they stopped watching the fishing rods, one flipped forward, cartwheeled over the side of the boat and sank beneath the murky water. It happened so fast that neither one of the boys had time to react. They knew the lake wasn't deep, so they thought the rod was probably snagged on the bottom. Since it was a new rod and neither boy wanted to lose it, Ryan decided to put on a mask and snorkel and see if he could find it.

Ryan fitted the mask on his face and jumped into the water. He looked down and saw a steep drop-off 12 feet above the lake floor. He took a deep breath and kicked for the bottom.

He spotted the rod tangled in the weeds at the bottom of the lake and grabbed it. It wouldn't budge. He yanked again. Nothing. It was stuck on something really big. He began to run out of breath so he tugged one last

**Go On**

time, looked up and saw a huge bass at the end of the line looking right at him. It scared him so badly he came straight up out of the water like a missile. He almost flew into the boat and his eyes were bigger than his mask.

Ryan scrambled into the boat and ripped the mask from his face. “Big fish!” he sputtered. “On our rod. BIG FISH!”

His hand still gripped the wet fishing rod and a few gobs of lake weed. Frank took the rod from his frenzied brother and began to reel. As the slack line came tight, Frank jerked and felt the fish pull and wriggle through the weeds.

“When I got the fish to the boat, neither one of us could believe it,” remembers Frank. “It was one of the biggest smallmouth bass we had ever caught. It weighed 3 ½ pounds, and to Ryan it looked like a monster from the deep. We nearly lost our brand-new rod and reel over it, and I don’t think Ryan has ever been so scared. He didn’t go snorkeling for a long time after that. But I know he was proud of that catch.”

**STOP**









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