



New York State Testing Program

English Language Arts Listening Selection

Grade **5**

Sample Test 2005

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

Laddie Boy Comes to the White House

by Robin Spevacek

“Here, Laddie Boy,” the President called. Warren Harding bent down, and the wiry Airedale trotted straight to his master.

There have been many stories written about Presidents and their pets, but the story of President Warren G. Harding and his faithful dog Laddie Boy is perhaps one of the best.

Given to Mr. Harding by an old friend, the shaggy puppy moved into the White House and soon became a household favorite. He was gentle and fun loving and always willing to please. The President took many long walks with his dog and proudly presented him with a Washington dog tag printed with the words “Number One.”

Every morning Laddie Boy delivered President Harding’s newspaper to him. Since his days as a newspaper editor in Ohio, Mr. Harding took a keen interest in reading the paper. He also liked the game of golf and often took his dog with him. When the President hit a bad shot, Laddie Boy would rush into the trees to find the lost ball. Once he found it, he would return with the ball in his mouth, tail wagging. Laddie Boy loved the game as much as the President.

Because he was so special, Laddie Boy was given his own hand-carved chair, which he sat in at important White House meetings. Even though the dog could not speak, he was often questioned by the *Washington Star* newspaper that printed his “ideas” on everything from government to hours for working dogs. In May of 1921, Laddie Boy was asked to lead the “Be Kind to Animals” parade held by the Humane Education Society. The Society had a float built just for Laddie Boy, and he rode on top of it. Sitting very still with his head tilted to one side, the dog watched the people in the crowd cheer and smile as he passed by.

As Laddie Boy’s fame spread, his admirers sent him many gifts. They mailed him sweaters, blankets, and toys. The gift that was talked about most, however, was a huge four-layer cake made up of dog biscuits and covered with white frosting. Such a grand cake called for a party, and one was planned. Laddie Boy, the other White House dogs, and many dogs of Washington-area friends were invited. The dogs ate their cake while news reporters snapped pictures.

With all this attention, Laddie Boy was named the official presidential pet. He was treated like a king and even had his own caregiver who gave the dog daily baths and fed him large bowls of a special broth and dog biscuits.

The President's pet was so beloved nationwide that the Newsboys' Association asked every newspaper delivery boy in the country to donate one penny to a special fund. The money they raised would be used to build a statue of Laddie Boy. The statue, when finished, was to be presented to Mrs. Harding as a gift.

In all, nineteen thousand one hundred thirty-four pennies were collected and melted down. Laddie Boy's likeness, made from the copper in the pennies, still stands in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

STOP



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