



New York State Testing Program

English

Language Arts Test

Listening Selection

Grade

6

January 16–19, 2007

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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The Unwelcome Neighbor

A tale from the Panchatantra [pahn-chuh-TAHN-truh]

Retold by Santhini Govindan

Once upon a time a pair of crows came across a huge old banyan tree. The tree had strong branches and a wonderful roof of green leaves that provided shade from the sun. It seemed like the perfect place to build a nest.

The crows immediately set to work. Soon a round nest was hidden high among the leaves of the tree, ready for the eggs that Mother Crow would lay.

One day, a huge black snake slithered past the banyan. He noticed a deep, dark hole at the bottom of the tree, and he decided to make it his home.

This alarmed the crows. Father Crow discussed the matter with the other animals who lived in the banyan tree. “Beware of the snake,” they said. “He is dangerous. He will wait for a chance to eat up all your babies!”

When Mother Crow heard this, she began to cry. “How can I lay my eggs, knowing that the snake will gobble up all my babies as soon as they are hatched?” she asked Father Crow.

“I want to leave! Let’s go far away and make a new nest.”

“No, we must not leave,” said Father Crow. “The banyan tree is the best place for us to live. I will find some way to drive away the snake.”

Mother Crow was reassured by Father Crow’s words. She laid seven eggs, and before long there were seven baby crows in the nest. They quickly grew big and fat under Mother Crow’s watchful eye. Their noisy chirping could be heard all over the banyan tree. The snake heard it, too, and slithered up and down the branches of the tree every day, searching for the crows’ nest.

“Please do something to drive away the snake,” Mother Crow begged. “Otherwise he will soon discover our precious babies and eat them up!”

Father Crow decided to ask a wise old fox for help. The fox listened to the crow’s tale of woe and then came up with a brilliant plan. He told the two crows to go to the river the next morning. The ladies of the royal household would be bathing there. Their clothes and jewels would be lying on the riverbank, watched over by servants.

“Pick up a necklace and fly home,” said the fox. “Be sure to make a loud noise so that the servants will follow you. When you reach the tree, drop the necklace into the snake’s hole.”

Go On

The crows did exactly as the fox had told them. Mother Crow snatched a ruby necklace in her beak and flew away. Father Crow cawed loudly to attract the servants' attention.

The servants chased Mother Crow, and as they reached the banyan tree, they saw her drop the necklace into the snake's hole.

When the servants tried to take the necklace out of the hole with a stick, the angry snake came out hissing. The servants drew back in alarm, and then tried to beat the snake. But the snake, afraid for his life, slithered away as fast as he could and never came back to the banyan tree. Mother and Father Crow lived there happily for many years and raised many babies, too.

STOP



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