



New York State Testing Program

English

Language Arts Test

Book 1

Grade

7

January 16–19, 2007

Name _____

TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some suggestions to help you do your best:

- Be sure to read carefully all the directions in the test book.
- Plan your time.
- Read each question carefully and think about the answer before choosing or writing your response.

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Reading**D**irections

In this part of the test, you will do some reading and answer questions about what you have read. For the multiple-choice questions, you will mark your answers on the answer sheet. For questions 3 and 22, you will write your answers directly in the test book.

Go On

Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 1 through 7.

Running the Hills

by James M. Janik

“You’ll have to be quicker off the line to beat Kendall on Friday,” Coach Dugan said.

Kendall this, Kendall that. For weeks, I’d been hearing about how fast this kid was—Kerry Kendall from Wilson Middle School. I was tired of it.

“We still have time, Alex,” Coach continued, glancing at his watch. “Let’s keep after it.”

I groaned, but walked back to the blocks. We’d been working on starts all day. In the 100-meter dash, a good start gives you a huge advantage.

Eric sidled up next to me. “I heard that Kendall kid trains at a camp with Olympic coaches.”

“Yeah,” Gerry added. “Not only that—I heard he cheats.”

“What? No way,” I said.

“Well, I heard he’ll do whatever it takes to win,” Gerry said.

That doesn’t mean he cheats, does it? I wondered.

“Let’s go, guys,” Coach hollered.

I slipped my feet into the starting blocks and leaned forward on my fingers, waiting for Coach’s signal.

Tweet! His whistle sounded, and I exploded into my sprint. I pulled my knees high and drove hard toward the finish line. I crossed two full steps ahead of everyone else. *That should satisfy him.*



Coach Dugan clicked his stopwatch and nodded. “Better, Alex. But let’s do it again.”

And again and again. I couldn’t *get* any faster. Besides, Kendall trains with Olympic coaches! *And he cheats.* Why bother?

Practice was never easy, but lately Coach Dugan had been pushing us extra hard. “You have to work harder than everyone else,” he said. “The extra effort marks the difference between a winner and a runner-up.”

Easy for him to say. He wasn’t racing Kerry Kendall the Great.

A light breeze greeted me as I hopped from Dad’s car and headed toward the track. My warm-up suit swished with each step. My legs felt strong and ready. *Ready?* Coach had me more than ready.

The infield bustled with kids from every middle school in our district. I scanned the crowd, searching for Kendall. I wanted a good look at my competition.

With his height, he’d be easy to spot. And long legs made you quick. Kendall shouldn’t need to cheat—not with his size.

I couldn't see anyone extra tall, so I sat on the grass to stretch. I reached for my foot, grimacing at the tension in my calf.

"Are you Alex?" a voice asked.

I looked up over my shoulder. A tall kid's sweats flapped in the wind. Kerry Kendall. I nodded.

Kendall stared a little longer, then pulled off his sweats and plopped down next to me in a hurdler's stretch.

Was he trying to psych me out by warming up so close? I wouldn't let that happen. I kept quiet, working my muscles loose.

"Heard you're fast," he said, touching his nose to his kneecap.

I paused and checked him out. His leg muscles bulged like he worked out plenty. He didn't need mind games. *He'll do whatever it takes*, Gerry had said.

"Save it for the race," I said.

Kendall shrugged. I continued stretching.

After a minute, he asked, "Is it true you have a private trainer?"

A private trainer! "Me?" I said.

Kendall's eyes were wide, his lips taut.¹ Was he nervous about this race? About racing me?

"That's what I heard," he said. "You paid extra for a pro."

I laughed. Coach Dugan was good, but he was no private trainer. "Well, I heard *you* trained at an Olympic camp."

¹**taut:** tight

He straightened. "You're kidding, right?" He laughed and shook his head. "I train by running the hills at the park."

"That's it?" I said. "That's all you do?"

"That's it. After track practice I run those hills until my legs ache, then I sprint home for dinner. Every day. That sound like an Olympic camp to you?"

He ran hills *after practice*?

I pointed at Coach Dugan. "There's my 'private trainer.'"

Kendall looked and chuckled. A flustered Coach Dugan was juggling questions from eight guys at the same time.

When Kendall turned back, I saw the truth in his eyes. Running hills was brutal. And he did it *after* his regular practices. He'd worked hard. He wouldn't cheat. How did those goofy rumors get started? *Why did I believe them?*

Kendall stood and jogged in place. "Well," he said. "Nice talking to you." He started over to join his team.

"Hey, Kerry," I shouted. He stopped and turned. "Good luck in the dash."

He grinned. "Same to you."

But the race wasn't about luck. It was about who was fastest—and who had worked the hardest.

As I followed Kendall across the finish line later that day, I wondered, *Why hadn't I thought to run some hills?*

Whatever it takes. I grinned as Kendall and I shook hands.

- 1** When Alex refers to his competitor as “Kerry Kendall the Great,” he indicates he
- A** thinks Kendall makes the extra effort to win
 - B** believes what he has heard about Kendall
 - C** considers it an honor to race against Kendall
 - D** respects Kendall as an outstanding athlete

- 2** Alex and Kendall meet each other while stretching for the race. Their first response to each other is **best** described as
- A** aggressive
 - B** friendly
 - C** relaxed
 - D** tense

- 3** Complete the chart below. In the first box, give one reason Alex thinks Kendall will be difficult to compete against **before** they meet. In the second box, give one reason Alex thinks Kendall will be difficult to compete against **after** they meet.

Before They Meet	After They Meet

4 In the story, the author includes Alex's thoughts. This information helps the reader better understand Alex's

- A** opinions about training
- B** reactions to other people
- C** attitude about track meets
- D** desire to make new friends

5 The cause of the conflict between Alex and Kendall is due to

- A** the rumors they have heard
- B** the schools they attend
- C** the conversation they have
- D** the mind games they play

6 This story is told from the point of view of

- A** Alex
- B** Eric
- C** Kendall
- D** Coach Dugan

7 This story would be of **most** interest to a student who

- A** likes to read biographies of famous runners
- B** enjoys fictional stories about young athletes
- C** needs information about coaching techniques
- D** wants to learn how to compete in track events

Go On

Directions

Read this passage about Laurence Yep and an excerpt from an interview. Then answer questions 8 through 13.

Laurence Yep

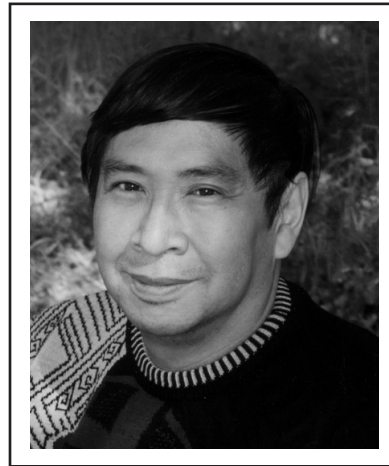
by Leonard S. Marcus

Born June 14, 1948

San Francisco, California

“Your first home,” Laurence Yep wrote in his autobiography, *The Lost Garden* (1991), “will always be the one that you remember best. I have been away from it for over twenty years; and yet I still go back in my dreams.” For Yep, whose father and maternal grandparents emigrated from China, that home was an apartment, and the family grocery store it came with, in an African-American neighborhood of San Francisco. As young people, both he and his older brother, Thomas, helped out at the store. It was there that young Laurence taught himself to juggle while unpacking endless cartons of soup cans. And it was there that he learned about patience, hard work, and getting along with neighbors.

A high school English teacher who set high goals for his students was the first person to encourage Yep to write. The experience of that class changed the direction of his life. Yep was eighteen when he published his first short story, a sci-fi fantasy. He has since written many books and many kinds of books, including picture books, mysteries, historical novels, science fiction, fantasy, and realistic stories set in the present day. He has retold Chinese folk stories and written for the theater. In nearly all these varied works, Yep, who is married to the children’s book author Joanne Ryder, has returned to questions he has been asking himself since childhood: What does it mean to be Chinese *and* American? What is it like to live the life of an outsider in an alien world or culture? Can one who belongs to two cultures ever feel at home anywhere?



Laurence Yep was asked this question: How has being of Chinese heritage been important to you?

Laurence Yep replied, “The answer to that question has changed dramatically more than once. As a child I hated Chinese school. I wanted to be as American as possible. Then, in my early twenties, I became very interested in my Chinese roots.”

“For years after that, I thought that my function as a Chinese American writer was to act as a bridge between two cultures. Now, though, I am not so sure that it is possible to blend two cultures together. Asian cultures are family- and cooperation-oriented. American culture on the other hand emphasizes the individual and competition. The two cultures pull in opposite directions. So I see myself now as someone who will always be on the border between two cultures. That works to my benefit as a writer because not quite fitting in helps me be a better observer.”

8 The partial outline below contains information from the passage.

I. Knowledge Laurence Yep gained at his family's store

- A. juggling
- B. working hard
- C. being patient
- D. _____

II. Influences of others on Laurence Yep's writing

Based on the information in the passage, choose the phrase that **best** belongs in the blank.

- A being competitive
- B setting high goals
- C living life as an outsider
- D getting along with neighbors

9 According to the passage, how did taking high school English influence Laurence Yep's life?

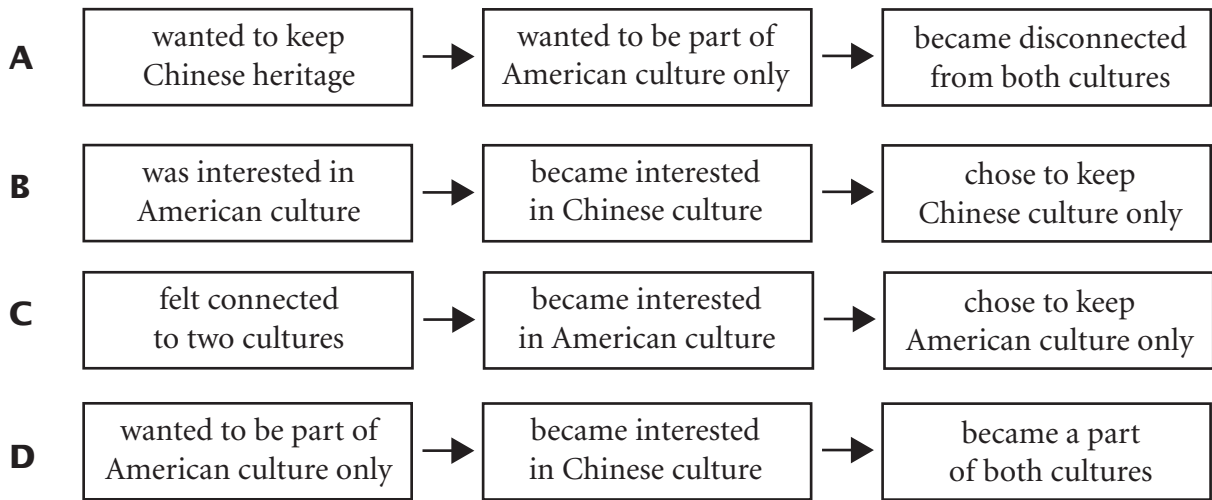
- A His English teacher encouraged him to write.
- B It was in this class that he wrote his first book.
- C The class helped him become a better observer.
- D His English teacher taught him the value of patience.

10 Based on information in the passage, choose the sentence that **best** describes Laurence Yep's writing.

- A He writes mainly about his childhood.
- B His books are aimed at young children.
- C He uses a wide variety of writing styles and topics.
- D His books mainly explore differences between cultures and people.

Go On

11 Which sequence **best** expresses the change in Laurence Yep's view of his own heritage?



12 How is the information in the interview **different** from the information in the passage?

- A** It describes the author's varied writing styles.
- B** It discusses the author's relationship with his family.
- C** It provides details about the author's childhood and family.
- D** It explains the link between the author's heritage and his writing.

13 Which saying best describes Laurence Yep's attitude as it is revealed in the **interview**?

- A** Learn to embrace your own differences.
- B** Put the needs of others ahead of your own.
- C** Work hard and you will receive many benefits.
- D** Challenge others as you would wish to be challenged.

Directions

Read this story about a boy babysitting his brother during a thunderstorm. Then answer questions 14 through 22.

STORM WATCH

by Gayle Rosengren



A loud crash of thunder was all it took to send me flying up the stairs and down the hall to my room. That's where I always wait out storms, buried under my quilt with my pillow wrapped around my ears.

I'd only gotten as far as my doorway, though, when I heard something almost as awful as the thunder. Jimmy! For a few seconds there I had forgotten all about him, but Jimmy was awake now and crying for Mom.

I skidded to a stop just as a flash of lightning lit up my room. My bed had never looked so good! I took a step toward it as the room plunged back into darkness, then stopped and covered my ears as thunder rocked the house. But when the thunder died away, I could hear Jimmy wailing, even through my hands. Jimmy, who had never been bothered by storms before, had to choose today of all days to start! I groaned and turned around before I could give in to the part of me that was saying, "Forget it. He'll go back to sleep."

I backtracked down the hall to Jimmy's room. His crying got louder with every step I took.

"It's okay, Jimmy," I called. "I'm coming."

He must have been surprised to hear my voice instead of Mom's. He actually quieted down.

I got to Jimmy's room just as two bolts of lightning blazed paths across the sky, one right after the other. For a few moments the room was as bright as day, and I saw Jimmy as clear as anything. He was standing in his crib, his face flushed and his cheeks shiny with tears. His nose was dripping. And his eyes were wide with fear.

I forgot to cover my ears, in my hurry to get to Jimmy before the thunder sounded. I almost made it. The crashes boomed right over us so loud they left my ears ringing.

"Mommy! Mommy!" Jimmy screamed in terror.

Go On

I hugged him tight to my thudding chest. In a shaky voice I said what I thought Mom would say. “Shh, Jimbo, don’t cry. It’s just a noise. It won’t hurt you.” That’s what Mom always told me when I was little, anyway. I never really believed it. But, surprisingly, Jimmy seemed to. His sobs quieted to whimpers.

I felt his forehead hot against my cheek. Then I remembered his nose and I reached over to grab a tissue from the box on his dresser.

“Mommy,” he said pitifully. “Want Mommy.”

I wanted to say, “Me, too!” But I didn’t think that would help things. Instead I said, “I know. But Mommy went to get medicine to make you feel better. She’ll be home any minute.” I patted his back with one hand and mopped his face with the other.

Another deafening crash of thunder set him off again. My own fear was bad enough, but seeing Jimmy’s fear was somehow even worse. Maybe because he was so little and sick. Or maybe because I knew he was counting on me to make everything all right.

Desperate, I remembered something my father had tried with me when I was little. It hadn’t worked because I was too scared to really give it a try. But maybe it would work for Jimmy.

“Look, Jimmy,” I said. “Look out the window. It’s just like fireworks. See that flash over there? Here comes the crash! Cover your ears!”

Jimmy actually giggled. He took his hands from his ears after the thunder stopped and said, “Again!”

“Help me watch, then,” I said. “Let’s see who sees the next flash first. Watch close now.”

“There!” we both said at once, slapping our hands over our ears. This time I even managed a shaky laugh of my own.

“Again,” Jimmy squealed.

So we played the game over and over.

I’m not sure when Mom arrived. We were so busy playing our game, we didn’t notice. But the storm was ending when I turned and spotted her in the doorway. She was soaking wet, but she had this huge smile on her face. I gave her a little wave and smiled over Jimmy’s head.

“Want more fireworks,” Jimmy was demanding.

“Sorry, Jimbo,” I said. “It looks like the storm’s over.”

“Not over. More!” he insisted.

“Not today,” I said. “But, hey, there may be another storm tomorrow. Think so?”

He nodded happily, and I grinned back. Yep, there’s bound to be other storms. Maybe not tomorrow, but sometime. And from now on I plan to stick around to see them.

14 This story is told from the point of view of

- A** Mom
- B** Jimmy
- C** the older brother
- D** an outside observer

15 Read this sentence from the story.

A loud crash of thunder was all it took to send me flying up the stairs and down the hall to my room.

Using this sentence to begin the story, the author shows the older brother's

- A** sudden confusion
- B** overpowering panic
- C** eager expectation
- D** youthful enthusiasm

16 Read these sentences from the story.

I got to Jimmy's room just as two bolts of lightning blazed paths across the sky, one right after the other. For a few moments the room was as bright as day, and I saw Jimmy as clear as anything.

The author **most likely** includes this description to suggest that

- A** Jimmy is in danger
- B** the boys' rooms are close together
- C** the storm is strong
- D** Jimmy's brother has good eyesight

Go On

17 Mom **most likely** smiles when she returns home because she is

- A** pleased to see the boys are safe and calm
- B** relieved to arrive in time with the medicine
- C** glad to be away from the lightning and thunder
- D** happy the stormy weather appears to have ended

18 Read these sentences from the story.

“Want more fireworks,” Jimmy was demanding.
“Sorry, Jimbo,” I said. “It looks like the storm’s over.”
“Not over. More!” he insisted.

Jimmy’s conversation with his older brother **mainly** shows that Jimmy is

- A** trying to get attention
- B** entertained by the weather
- C** avoiding going to bed
- D** interested in going outside

19 How does playing the game with Jimmy **most** help the older brother?

- A** He is able to ignore the storm.
- B** He is able to recall the fun of his early childhood.
- C** He is able to overcome his fear.
- D** He is able to build a stronger bond with the toddler.

20 What is the **main** lesson that can be learned from the older brother’s actions?

- A** Put the needs of others before your own.
- B** Trust in the ability of others to support you.
- C** Appreciate the time you spend with your family.
- D** Learn all you can before taking on a difficult task.

21 Read this sentence from the story.

He was standing in his crib, his face flushed and his cheeks shiny with tears.

Now read the dictionary entry below.

flush *adj.* **1.** Direct, straightforward, or solid. **2.** In direct contact.

3. Marked by abundance. **4.** Ruddy or reddish in color.

Which definition is closest to the meaning of “flushed” as it is used in the sentence above?

- A** definition 1
- B** definition 2
- C** definition 3
- D** definition 4

22 Explain how Jimmy’s brother uses his own experiences to help comfort Jimmy during the storm. Use details from the story to support your answer.

Go On

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 23 through 28.

One Cool Job

by Danielle S. Hammelef



What do you want to be when you grow up? A teacher? A doctor? An astronaut? How about an ice-cream taster?

Yes, there really is a job where you can get paid to taste ice cream. Just ask John Harrison, an “Official Taste Tester” at Dreyer’s/Edy’s Ice Cream for the past 21 years. Testing helps manufacturers to be sure of a product’s quality. During his career Harrison has been responsible for approving over 200 million gallons of the sweet creamy dessert—as well as for developing over 75 flavors.

Harrison hadn’t always wanted to be in the ice-cream business. As a kid, he’d wanted to be a fire fighter or a police officer, among other careers.

But ice cream runs in his family. “It was like I fell into a batch of ice cream,” he says, chuckling. Four generations of Harrisons have been “in” ice cream, including his great-grandfather, who owned two ice-cream parlors in New York City in the 1880s, his father, who owned a dairy-ingredients factory in Georgia, and his uncle, who owned an ice-cream factory in Tennessee. At his uncle’s factory, he “tasted and ate” his way through high school and college as he learned how to make ice cream. He likes to joke that ice cream is so much a part of his life that his blood “runs sixteen percent butterfat.”

A Day in Dessert

Some people think that it would be easy to do this job; after all, you just have to like ice cream, right? Nope—there’s more to the job than that, says Harrison, who has a degree in chemistry. He points out that a dairy or food-science degree would be very useful to someone wanting a career in this “cool” field.

In a typical morning on the job, Harrison tastes and evaluates 60 ice-cream samples—3 each from the 20 flavor batches produced the previous day. Starting with vanilla and working up to stronger flavors like mint chocolate-chip, he slices open each container.

Then he lets the ice cream warm up to about 12 degrees Fahrenheit. The temperature in the storage freezer is -20 degrees. Most people eat ice cream at between 0 and 5 degrees. But cold ice cream can numb the taste buds, Harrison explains, so “You get more flavor from warmer ice cream, which is why some kids like to stir it, creating ice-cream soup.”

Tasting with Your Eyes

While the ice cream warms up, Harrison looks over the samples and grades each one on its appearance. “Tasting begins with the eyes,” he explains. He checks to see if the ice cream is attractive and asks himself, “Does the product have the color expected from that flavor?” If there are added goodies in the ice cream, such as fruit, chocolate chips, nuts, or fudge ribbons, he makes sure that they are evenly spread throughout and that the sample doesn’t have too much or too little of the added ingredients.

Next it’s time to taste! With his gold-plated spoon, which he uses to avoid the aftertaste plastic or wood can give, Harrison skims the top of the sample, where it’s warmest. Then he turns the spoon upside down and plops the spoonful onto his tongue.

Swirl, Smack, and . . .

“I’ve developed a way of tasting called the Three S’s,” he says. “First, I *swirl* the ice cream very quickly around in my mouth, completely coating my taste buds. Then I *smack* my mouth several times very fast to warm up the ice cream even more and to add air, to release the maximum flavor.” While swirling and smacking, he tastes for balance between the cream, the natural flavors, and the sweetening ingredients, and he checks to be sure that the ice-cream texture is smooth and creamy, not icy or gummy.

You might expect *swallow* to be the third S in his tasting method, but it’s not. “We eat for nutrition,” Harrison says. “Swallowing isn’t necessary to taste ice cream.” After about three to five seconds of swirling and smacking, he demonstrates the third S—he *spits* out the sample into a bucket. “That’s the worst part of my job,” he sighs, “spitting out the ice cream.”

- 23** According to the article, members of Mr. Harrison’s family have
- A** jobs considered fun
 - B** careers involving ice cream
 - C** degrees in dairy science
 - D** hopes of becoming fire fighters
- 24** When Mr. Harrison says, “Tasting begins with the eyes,” he **most likely** means
- A** the sight of ice cream makes him hungry
 - B** buyers want to see the ice cream before trying it
 - C** the way ice cream looks is as important as it tastes
 - D** good vision is a requirement to become a taste tester
- 25** According to the article, Mr. Harrison’s job **most likely** requires that he
- A** enjoy a variety of flavors
 - B** use proper manners
 - C** tolerate cold temperatures
 - D** pay attention to details
- 26** Which conclusion is **best** supported by information in the article?
- A** Taste testing the same flavors each day can numb the taste buds.
 - B** Taste testing products involves the use of specific evaluation skills.
 - C** Familiarity with dairy farming is beneficial to becoming a taste tester.
 - D** College graduates undecided about their careers often become taste testers.

- 27** Study this partial index from a book about the ice-cream industry.

Careers

Marketing, 63–67

Parlor Ownership, 68–70

Product Development, 71–74

Sales, 75–78

On which pages would you **most likely** find information about a job similar to Mr. Harrison’s?

- A** pages 63–67
- B** pages 68–70
- C** pages 71–74
- D** pages 75–78

- 28** Read this sentence from the article.

In a typical morning on the job, Harrison tastes and evaluates 60 ice-cream samples—3 each from the 20 flavor batches produced the previous day.

What does the word “evaluates” mean in this sentence?

- A** counts
- B** estimates
- C** judges
- D** names

STOP

Place Student Label Here



Grade 7
English Language Arts Test
Book 1
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The McGraw-Hill Companies
