



# English II Reading

**2011 Released Selections and Test Questions**

These released questions represent selected TEKS student expectations for each reporting category. These questions are samples only and do not represent all the student expectations eligible for assessment.

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Read the next two selections and answer the questions that follow.

# Those Winter Sundays

by Robert Hayden



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Sundays too my father got up early  
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,  
then with cracked hands that ached  
from labor in the weekday weather made  
5 banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.  
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,  
and slowly I would rise and dress,  
fearing the chronic angers of that house.

10 Speaking indifferently to him,  
who had driven out the cold  
and polished my good shoes as well.  
What did I know, what did I know  
of love's austere and lonely offices?

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# All My Babies Are Gone Now

from *Loud and Clear*  
by Anna Quindlen

- 1 All my babies are gone now. I say this not in sorrow but in disbelief. I take great satisfaction in what I have today: three almost-adults, two taller than me, one closing in fast. Three people who read the same books I do and have learned not to be afraid of disagreeing with me in their opinion of them, who sometimes tell vulgar jokes that make me laugh until I choke and cry, who need razor blades and shower gel and privacy, who want to keep their doors closed more than I like. Who, miraculously, go to the bathroom, zip up their jackets, and move food from plate to mouth all by themselves. Like the trick soap I bought for the bathroom with a rubber ducky at its center, the baby is buried deep within each, barely discernible except through the unreliable haze of the past.
- 2 Everything in all the books I once pored over is finished for me now. Penelope Leach, T. Berry Brazelton, Dr. Spock. The ones on sibling rivalry and sleeping through the night and early childhood education, all grown obsolete. Along with *Goodnight Moon* and *Where the Wild Things Are*, they are battered, spotted, well used. But I suspect that if you flipped the pages, dust would rise like memories.
- 3 What those books taught me, finally, and what the women on the playground taught me, and the well-meaning relations and the older parents at cocktail parties—what they taught me was that they couldn't really teach me very much at all. Raising children is presented at first as a true-false test, then becomes multiple choice, until finally, far along, you realize that it is an endless essay. No one knows anything. One child responds well to positive reinforcement, another can only be managed with a stern voice and a time-out. One boy is toilet trained at three, his brother at two. When my first child was born, parents were told to put baby to bed on his belly so that he would not choke on his own spit-up. By the time my last arrived, babies were put down on their backs because of research on sudden infant death syndrome.
- 4 As a new parent this ever-shifting certainty is terrifying, and then soothing. Eventually you must learn to trust yourself. Eventually the research will follow. . . .
- 5 I remember fifteen years ago poring over one of Dr. Brazelton's wonderful books on child development, in which he describes three different sorts of infants: average, quiet, and active. I was looking for a sub-quiet codicil (see: slug) for an eighteen-month-old who did not walk. Was there something

wrong with his fat little legs? Was there something wrong with his tiny little mind? Was he developmentally delayed, physically challenged? Was I insane? Last year he went to China. Next year he goes to college. He can walk just fine. He can walk too well. Every part of raising children at some point comes down to this: Be careful what you wish for.

- 6 Every part of raising children is humbling, too. Believe me, mistakes were made. They have all been enshrined in the "Remember When Mom Did" Hall of Fame. The outbursts, the temper tantrums, the bad language—mine, not theirs. The times the baby fell off the bed. The times I arrived late for preschool pickup. The nightmare sleepover. The horrible summer camp. The day when the youngest came barreling out of the classroom with a 98 on her geography test, and I responded, "What did you get wrong?" (She insisted I include that.) The time I ordered food at the McDonald's drive-through speaker and then drove away without picking it up from the window. (They all insisted I include that.) I did not allow them to watch *The Simpsons* for the first two seasons. What was I thinking?
- 7 But the biggest mistake I made is the one that most of us make while doing this. I did not live in the moment enough. This is particularly clear now that the moment is gone, captured only in photographs. There is one picture of the three of them sitting in the grass on a quilt in the shadow of the swing set on a summer day, ages six, four, and one. And I wish I could remember what we ate, and what we talked about, and how they sounded, and how they looked when they slept that night. I wish I had not been in such a hurry to get on to the next thing: dinner, bath, book, bed. I wish I had treasured the doing a little more and the getting it done a little less.
- 8 Even today I'm not sure what worked and what didn't, what was me and what was simply life. How much influence did I really have over the personality of the former baby who cried only when we gave parties and who today, as a teenager, still dislikes socializing and crowds? When they were very small, I suppose I thought someday they would become who they were because of what I'd done. Now I suspect they simply grew into their true selves because they demanded in a thousand ways that I back off and let them be. . . .
- 9 The books said to be relaxed and I was often tense, matter-of-fact, and I was sometimes over-the-top. And look how it all turned out. I wound up with the three people I like best in the world, who have done more than anyone to excavate my essential humanity. That's what the books never told me. I was bound and determined to learn from the experts. It just took me a while to figure out who the experts were.

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**Use "Those Winter Sundays" (p. 2) to answer the following questions.**

- 1** Why is the multiple meaning of the word *offices* in line 14 important to the poem?
- A** It refers to both a duty and a service done for others.
  - B** It conveys the father's mixed emotions.
  - C** It refers to both a place and an executive position.
  - D** It indicates the size of the speaker's house.
- 
- 2** The photograph reinforces the poem's tone of —
- A** indifference
  - B** desperation
  - C** melancholy
  - D** whimsy
- 
- 3** In line 5, the sentence "No one ever thanked him" suggests the poem explores the theme of —
- A** uninformed judgment
  - B** domestic strife
  - C** suppressed excitement
  - D** belated gratitude

- 4 The poem's setting is significant because it helps contrast —
- A the family's physical closeness and emotional distance
  - B the opinions of the hardworking father and the lazy child
  - C the presence of the father and the absence of the mother
  - D the different values of the siblings within the family
- 
- 5 The tone of this poem can best be described as —
- A carefree
  - B optimistic
  - C self-righteous
  - D regretful
- 
- 6 The author begins a new stanza in line 6 most likely to indicate a shift from —
- A the distant past to the immediate future
  - B literal language to figurative language
  - C a focus on the father to a focus on the speaker
  - D an uncritical attitude to a self-critical attitude

**Use “All My Babies Are Gone Now” (pp. 3–4) to answer the following questions.**

- 7 Beginning with paragraph 7, the author’s tone shifts from —
- A complimentary to condescending
  - B optimistic to cynical
  - C lighthearted to reflective
  - D academic to conversational
- 
- 8 By saying that one of her sons “can walk too well” in paragraph 5, the author implies that —
- A her son has become overconfident
  - B she is very proud of her son’s accomplishment
  - C she is not ready for her son to leave her
  - D her son is unusually graceful and agile
- 
- 9 In which line does the author use passive voice to generalize her experience?
- A *The nightmare sleepover.*
  - B *That’s what the books never told me.*
  - C *I wish I had treasured the doing a little more and the getting it done a little less.*
  - D *Believe me, mistakes were made.*

- 10** In the last sentence of paragraph 9, the reader can infer that “the experts” the author refers to are —
- A** her own children
  - B** the authors of parenting books
  - C** the women on the playground
  - D** her own parents
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- 11** In which line does the author use an analogy to convey her changing philosophy of parenting?
- A** *How much influence did I really have over the personality of the former baby who cried only when we gave parties and who today, as a teenager, still dislikes socializing and crowds?*
  - B** *Raising children is presented at first as a true-false test, then becomes multiple choice, until finally, far along, you realize that it is an endless essay.*
  - C** *One child responds well to positive reinforcement, another can only be managed with a stern voice and a time-out.*
  - D** *I remember fifteen years ago poring over one of Dr. Brazelton’s wonderful books on child development, in which he describes three different sorts of infants: average, quiet, and active.*
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- 12** The author’s purpose for writing the selection was most likely to —
- A** imply that new parents should trust their instincts and enjoy raising their children
  - B** defend herself against the suggestion that she made mistakes when raising her children
  - C** poke fun at so-called experts who claim to be authorities on child development
  - D** blame herself for the choices she made as a parent



**Use “Those Winter Sundays” and “All My Babies Are Gone Now”  
(pp. 2–4) to answer the following questions.**

- 13** What is a primary difference between the poem and the essay?
- A** The events described in the essay took place many years ago, while those in the poem are current.
  - B** The essay focuses on fewer people than the poem does.
  - C** The poem is told from the perspective of a child, while the essay is from that of a parent.
  - D** The issues explored in the essay are more important than those in the poem.

- 14** Read these quotations.

**Those Winter Sundays**

*I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.  
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,  
and slowly I would rise and dress,  
fearing the chronic angers of that house.*

**All My Babies Are Gone Now**

*There is one picture of the three of  
them sitting in the grass on a quilt in  
the shadow of the swing set on a  
summer day, ages six, four, and one.*

Which of these best describes the difference in tone between the two quotations?

- A** The tone of the first quotation is bright and hopeful, while the tone of the second quotation is gloomy and depressed.
- B** The tone of the first quotation is stark and apprehensive, while the tone of the second quotation is warm and nostalgic.
- C** The tone of the first quotation is angry and resentful, while the tone of the second quotation is bored and uninspired.
- D** The tone of the first quotation is sweet and dreamy, while the tone of the second quotation is matter-of-fact and deliberate.

- 15** What emotion is expressed in the last two lines of "Those Winter Sundays" and paragraph 7 of "All My Babies Are Gone Now"?
- A** Regret
  - B** Fear
  - C** Confusion
  - D** Joy
- 
- 16** How are the themes of "Those Winter Sundays" and "All My Babies Are Gone Now" similar? Support your answer with evidence from **both** selections.

Item Number	Reporting Category	Readiness or Supporting	Content Student Expectation	Correct Answer
<b>Reading Selections 1 and 2</b>				
1	1	Readiness	E.1(B)	A
2	2	Supporting	E.12(D)	C
3	2	Supporting	E.2 Fig. 19(B)	D
4	2	Supporting	E.3 Fig. 19(B)	A
5	2	Supporting	E.3 Fig. 19(B)	D
6	2	Supporting	E.3(A)	C
7	2	Supporting	E.6(A)	C
8	2	Supporting	E.6(A)	C
9	2	Supporting	E.6(A)	D
10	2	Supporting	E.6 Fig. 19(B)	A
11	2	Supporting	E.6 Fig. 19(B)	B
12	2	Supporting	E.6 Fig. 19(B)	A
13	1	Readiness	Fig. 19(B)	C
14	1	Readiness	Fig. 19(B)	B
15	1	Readiness	Fig. 19(B)	A
16	1	Readiness	Fig. 19(B)	Short Answer

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