



# READING **Grade 6**

**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.

Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to each question.

## A Bird's-Eye View of Teamwork

1 Have you ever looked toward the sky on a crisp fall day and witnessed a migrating flock of geese? If so, you probably noted the V-shaped formation of the birds. It's also possible that you've seen a cluster of birds flying in a ball-like formation. Or maybe you've spied a swooping flock that seems to float like a ribbon on the breeze. Why do birds fly this way? Scientists have wondered about these behaviors for years. Many theories have been developed to explain the formation patterns of different types of birds, but these theories have yet to be confirmed.

2 One theory is that birds fly in certain formations to take advantage of the laws of nature. The birds know instinctively that flying in a V-shaped pattern will save energy. Like the lead cyclist in a race who decreases wind resistance for the cyclists who follow, the lead bird cuts wind resistance for the birds that follow. This decrease in wind force means that the birds use up to 70 percent less energy during their flight. When the lead bird becomes fatigued, a more rested bird takes over that position.

3 But saving energy is important for more than one reason. Sometimes food is scarce during migration flights. Conserving energy enables the birds to fly longer distances between meals.

4 When food is sighted, the birds guide one another in a different way. When a bird identifies a familiar feeding area or landmark, it might veer off course in order to signal the group to change direction. As the navigator, this bird becomes the new leader. An alert leader in front helps guarantee that the flock will know exactly where it is going. An observer on the ground may not notice when a small group of birds makes a change in direction. But with larger flocks, there's no ignoring a wave of birds gently streaming from the sky down to the ground. This formation is like an arrow pointing to the location of food.



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- 5 Scientists have also studied flocks of birds that sometimes fly in a ball-like formation. Researchers believe that the birds bunch together if a predator is spotted. The predator may then become impatient waiting for a single bird to fly away from the flock. The birds will often dip, dive, and dodge as a group, frustrating even the most persistent foe. Scientists report that this is a very effective method of defense against an attack.



A predator would be less likely to attack this large group of starlings.

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- 6 The birds care for their fellow fliers through teamwork. As transportation expert Henry Ford once said, "If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself." When it comes to teamwork, these feathered fliers are a soaring success!

# Tale of the Bundle

*Based on a Chinese folktale*

- 1 Zhen listened to his three sons bicker and quarrel throughout the day. And they continued arguing at dinner. Their constant squabbling incensed Zhen. "Enough!" he roared, slapping his palms down on the table. "You must work together to make the flower arrangements for the contest. If Princess Mayleen selects them for her wedding, you are the winners. Then the whole village will learn what I already know: that you are the most talented and creative florists in the land! And the 100 gold pieces the princess has promised as a prize will be a nice bonus!"
- 2 Zhen's oldest son Li, who tended the garden, was not satisfied. "But who will keep the gold if we win?" he asked. "I plant the tiny seeds and attend to their every need, so the gold should be awarded to me!"
- 3 Then Ye chimed in. "But I choose the finest blossoms and weave them into fantastic bouquets," he said. "My color schemes are brilliant, each flower complementing the others. As an artist, I deserve the gold!"
- 4 Wen, who painted lovely pictures on vases, spoke up. "I am the true artist. I create detailed illustrations. With a few strokes of my paintbrush, our vases look unlike any others. The gold belongs to me!"
- 5 Zhen sighed. "I deserve the gold just for listening to the three of you argue! I am going to stay with my brother while you figure out how to create the winning flower arrangements for the contest—together." Then he tromped out the front door.
- 6 When Zhen returned after two days, his sons had not completed a single flower arrangement. Disappointed, he called them together. He carried a fat bundle of tightly bound bamboo sticks as well as three individual sticks.



- 7        "Try to break this," Zhen said, handing a bamboo stick to each son.
- 8        Li, Ye, and Wen easily snapped their sticks in two. They exchanged puzzled looks.
- 9        "You like competing brother against brother," Zhen said. "Li, break this bundle of bamboo sticks in half and show your brothers that you are the strongest and most clever."
- 10       Li grasped the bamboo. He groaned as he tried to snap the bundle in two, but the bamboo didn't break. Ye laughed and snatched the bamboo from his brother. He laid the bundle on the ground and stomped on it with his foot. The bamboo didn't break. Lastly Wen took his turn, hitting the bamboo against his forehead. The bamboo didn't break.
- 11       Zhen stood with his arms crossed over his chest. In a steady voice he said, "A goal is more easily accomplished when all work together instead of alone."
- 12       Finally the sons understood their father's message. They wasted no time. With Zhen's wisdom, Li's gardening skills, Ye's beautiful bouquets, and Wen's unique vases, they were certainly much closer to sharing the prize.

- 1 From the information provided in the selection, the reader can conclude that birds —
- A prefer to fly in a V formation
  - B move faster than cyclists
  - C take on different roles within a formation
  - D are smarter than other animals
- 

- 2 Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

*Or maybe you've spied a swooping flock that seems to float like a ribbon on the breeze.*

The author uses this sentence to —

- A explain to the reader how birds can fly
  - B offer a reason for a particular flight pattern
  - C help the reader visualize one type of flying pattern
  - D argue that this flying pattern is the most beautiful
- 
- 3 The photographs are included to support which idea?
- A Birds instinctively fly in particular formations.
  - B Birds consume less food when traveling with a flock.
  - C Birds are affected by wind resistance in flight.
  - D Birds are unable to fly solo over great distances.

- 4 Why do the brothers argue?
- A Each one is trying to gain the attention of their father.
  - B They cannot agree on the type of arrangements to make for Princess Mayleen.
  - C They think that fighting is the best way to solve their problem.
  - D Each one thinks that his role is more important than that of the others.
- 

- 5 Read this sentence from paragraph 6.

*He carried a fat bundle of tightly bound bamboo sticks as well as three individual sticks.*

The bundle described in the sentence represents the —

- A strength of a unified group
  - B frustration that Zhen feels with his sons
  - C brothers' lack of independence
  - D number of bouquets Zhen wants his sons to make
- 
- 6 Which sentence from the folktale best shows that the brothers are stubborn?
- A *Zhen's oldest son Li, who tended the garden, was not satisfied.*
  - B *"You like competing brother against brother," Zhen said.*
  - C *When Zhen returned after two days, his sons had not completed a single flower arrangement.*
  - D *They exchanged puzzled looks.*

- 7 What is one way that the selection and the folktale differ?
- A The selection includes observations that the author recorded when gathering research, while the folktale presents actual events from a person's life.
  - B The selection persuades readers to learn more about a common event, while the folktale shows how different people react to a challenging situation.
  - C The selection provides factual details about a particular topic, while the folktale offers a lesson about how to solve a problem.
  - D The selection poses a question for readers to think about, while the folktale describes the steps necessary to complete a special task.
- 

- 8 Which sentence from the selection best represents the message of the folktale?
- A *As the navigator, this bird becomes the new leader.*
  - B *The birds care for their fellow fliers through teamwork.*
  - C *One theory is that birds fly in certain formations to take advantage of the laws of nature.*
  - D *But saving energy is important for more than one reason.*
- 

- 9 One difference between the selection and the folktale is that in the selection, working together is —
- A necessary in order to make a profit
  - B done because it is demanded
  - C a way to gain the respect of others
  - D accomplished by instinct



Read the selection. Then choose the best answer to each question.

## Eraser and School Clock

by Gary Soto

My eraser  
Is pink  
And car-shaped.  
It skids across  
5 My math test,  
Which is a mess of numbers,  
All wrong, like  
When I unscrewed  
The back of my watch  
10 And the workings  
Fell out.  
The teacher frowned  
When she saw  
The watch,  
15 Its poor heart  
Torn out. Now  
I'm working  
On my math,  
And I think,  
20 I think, I think  
I know. I look  
Up at the school clock  
With its hammerlike tick.  
I could tear



- 25 Open its back,  
And perhaps  
The springs and gears  
Would jump  
And time stop.
- 30 This test could stop,  
And my friends  
Freeze, pencils  
In their hands,  
Erasers, too.
- 35 All would freeze,  
Including my teacher,  
And I could blow  
On the skid marks  
Of my eraser.

- 40 *I walk out  
To the playground,  
My eight fingers  
And two thumbs  
Wrapped around*
- 45 *A baseball bat.  
The janitor  
Is frozen  
To his broom,  
The gardener*
- 50 *To his lasso of  
Hose and sprinkler,  
And the principal  
To his walkie-talkie.  
I hit homer*
- 55 *After homer,  
And they stand,  
Faces frozen  
And mouths open,  
Their eyes maybe moving,*
- 60 *Maybe following  
The flight  
Of each sweet homer.  
What a dream.  
I shrug*
- 65 *And look around  
The classroom  
Of erasers and pencils,  
The clock racing  
My answers to the finish.*

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- 1** The poet mentions the speaker's eraser at the beginning of the poem to convey —
- A** that the major events of the poem take place in a classroom
  - B** why the teacher is upset by the speaker's actions
  - C** the speaker's struggle to solve the problems on the math test
  - D** that the teacher expects all the speaker's answers to be correct
- 
- 2** The italicized section of the poem serves to —
- A** express how students in the class are feeling
  - B** distinguish the speaker's daydream from the rest of the poem
  - C** highlight how the daydream changes the speaker's feelings
  - D** emphasize the most important ideas in the poem
- 
- 3** What do lines 63 through 69 tell the reader?
- A** Although the speaker has had daydreams in class before, he is unable to recall a daydream similar to this one.
  - B** The speaker is confused by some of the events in the daydream.
  - C** The speaker wishes he could share his daydream with his classmates.
  - D** The speaker enjoyed his daydream even though it interfered with his ability to complete the test on time.

- 4 Which line indicates that the speaker does not think he is doing well on his test?
- A *Which is a mess of numbers,*
  - B *The teacher frowned*
  - C *This test could stop,*
  - D *All would freeze,*
- 
- 5 Which statement best describes the contrast between the speaker's experiences in the two settings of the poem?
- A The speaker feels enthusiastic in the classroom but indifferent on the playground.
  - B The speaker feels restless in the classroom but relaxed on the playground.
  - C The speaker feels unsuccessful in the classroom but confident on the playground.
  - D The speaker feels tired in the classroom but energetic on the playground.
- 
- 6 What does the dream reveal to the reader?
- A What the speaker would like to be doing rather than taking a math test
  - B How the speaker feels about some of the staff members at school
  - C How slowly time seems to pass while the speaker is at school
  - D What the speaker plans to do when he finishes his math test

| Item Number                | Reporting Category | Readiness or Supporting | Content Student Expectation | Correct Answer |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| <b>READING Selection 1</b> |                    |                         |                             |                |
| <b>READING Selection 2</b> |                    |                         |                             |                |
| 1                          | 3                  | Readiness               | 6.10 Fig. 19(D)             | C              |
| 2                          | 3                  | Readiness               | 6.10 Fig. 19(D)             | C              |
| 3                          | 3                  | Supporting              | 6.13 Fig. 19(D)             | A              |
| 4                          | 2                  | Readiness               | 6.6(A)                      | D              |
| 5                          | 2                  | Readiness               | 6.6 Fig. 19(D)              | A              |
| 6                          | 2                  | Readiness               | 6.6 Fig. 19(D)              | C              |
| 7                          | 1                  | Readiness               | 6.19(F)                     | C              |
| 8                          | 1                  | Readiness               | 6.19(F)                     | B              |
| 9                          | 1                  | Readiness               | 6.19(F)                     | D              |
| <b>READING Selection 3</b> |                    |                         |                             |                |
| 1                          | 2                  | Supporting              | 6.4(A)                      | C              |
| 2                          | 2                  | Supporting              | 6.4 Fig. 19(D)              | B              |
| 3                          | 2                  | Supporting              | 6.4 Fig. 19(D)              | D              |
| 4                          | 2                  | Supporting              | 6.4 Fig. 19(D)              | A              |
| 5                          | 2                  | Supporting              | 6.4 Fig. 19(D)              | C              |
| 6                          | 2                  | Supporting              | 6.4 Fig. 19(D)              | A              |

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