The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

Reading
Item and Scoring Sampler

SUPPLEMENT

2009–2010
Grade 3

Pennsylvania Department of Education Bureau of Assessment and Accountability 2009–2010

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READING

INTRODUCTION

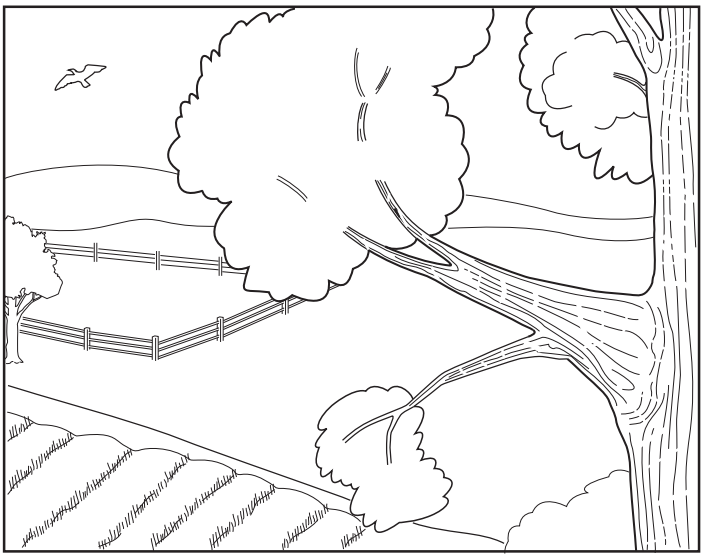
The 2009–2010 Reading Item and Scoring Sampler Supplement displays released items from the 2009 PSSA operational test. The sampler supplement is to be used in conjunction with the previous year's sampler. The 2008–2009 Reading Item and Scoring Sampler can be found on the PDE website at http://www.pde.state.pa.us/. Select the "Pre K–12 Schools" tab at the top of the page. Then select "Assessment" in the "Learn About" column to the left. Select "Resource Materials" in the "Learn About" column of the next page, and then scroll down to find the appropriate sampler. Alternately, you may type in or click this link to reach the location of the item samplers: http://www.pde.state.pa.us/a_and_t/cwp/view.asp?a=108&Q=73314&a_and_tNav=|680|&a_and_tNav=|

This item and scoring sampler supplement contains multiple-choice items and an open-ended item. Each item is preceded by the Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content coding. The multiple-choice answer options are followed by an annotation that explains why the correct answer is correct and the other answer options are incorrect. The correct answer is indicated by an asterisk. The table following each multiple-choice item displays the percentages of students who chose each answer option. In the tables, A represents the first answer choice, B represents the second answer choice, C represents the third answer choice, and D represents the fourth answer choice. The correct answer is also shaded in these tables. The table following the open-ended item indicates the students' performance at each score point. Sample student responses for each of the scoring levels are also included for the open-ended item.

Directions **Read the passage "My Best Friend Is a Juniper Tree." Then do Numbers 1 through 7.**

My Best Friend Is a Juniper Tree

by Judith Lee Nilsson



This summer I am old enough to visit Grandma and Grandpa. They live way out on the tribal lands. We ride in Grandpa's blue pickup truck. The road is very bumpy! There is a long trail of dust behind the truck.

Grandma and Grandpa have sheep, horses, and an old dog that limps. The old dog that limps does not want me to play with the sheep. The horses are too wild for me. So I tell Grandpa, "I don't have any friends to play with."

Grandpa says, "I will show you a fine friend." Grandpa always wears brown leather cowboy boots. I have boots, too. Mine are new and black. I walk behind Grandpa, stepping in his footprints. We walk past the corral and up a low hill. Grandpa stops by a tree and says, "This is a juniper tree. It can be your friend."

I say, "Watch me climb the tree, Grandpa! I'm a good climber."

First I step onto a branch that is as low as my knees. Then I put both hands on the next higher branch and pull myself up. Step, pull. Step, pull. When I look back at Grandpa, I am already way above his head.

"A good climber always goes slowly and carefully," Grandpa says.

Every day I climb the juniper tree. It has bark that comes off in long, loose strips. Some of the branches are smooth and some branches are shaggy. It's fun to wrap my knees around a branch and hang upside down. Things look better this way.

If I sit very still, sometimes a tree lizard will come out and sit on the tree trunk. I whisper, "Hi, Lizard." Once I almost touched it.

I find a special place high up in the juniper tree. The branches open up into a little window. Through it I can look way across the tan-colored hills. I can look up and see hawks circling in the blue sky. I can see Grandma working in the garden. I can see Grandpa fixing the corral. But they can't see me.

When the puffy white clouds float overhead, I pretend the juniper tree is a ship sailing along in the sky.

"Hey, Grandpa! This is my boat! I'm the captain!"

Grandpa takes off his cowboy hat and waves it at me. I take off my cowboy hat and wave it at Grandpa.

One afternoon while I am playing in the tree, I hear soft thunder rumbling far away. Way off in the distance I can see lightning flashing in the clouds over the mountains. I watch the thunderstorm roll in. The wind blows my hair straight back, and I can smell the wet dirt. A raven on a fence post ruffles its feathers and calls out, "HA! HA!" I see Grandpa's black horses running very fast along the ridge. Then I hear the first big BANG! of thunder.

"Climb down!" Grandma is calling out to me. "Climb down and run to the house!" I climb carefully to the ground. Grandma watches how fast I run to the house—as fast as Grandpa's black horses!

One evening after supper I walk out to the juniper tree. The sun is going down. My shadow looks like I'm a giant. The shadow of the juniper tree stretches to the edge of the canyon.

I climb slowly and carefully, the way Grandpa likes me to. The sunset is so red, it almost looks like the sky is on fire! I hear the evening birds calling and looking for their supper. The tree lizard is not there. Out in the hills, I hear a coyote howl, "Hooo, hooooo!"

From another hill, a coyote answers, "Ah-wooo, ah-woooo!"

Best of all, I hear some coyote pups. They do not know how to howl, so they just say, "Yip! Yip! Yip-yip-yip!" I wish I could see them.

Some big branches make a cozy seat. I lean back my head and see the first stars looking down at me.

All at once I hear Grandpa say, "You must wake up and come to bed in the house. You fell asleep between the strong branches!"

I say, "Grandpa, I didn't know you climbed trees, too!"

He says, "I always climbed up this tree when I was a boy." He helps me down from the tree and carries me to the house. The old dog that limps follows us. The lights are on in the house. There is Grandma in the doorway. I can hear the crickets singing.

I yawn and look back at the tree. It looks sleepy, too.

I say, "Grandpa, my best friend is a juniper tree."

MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

Note: All percentages listed in the tables below the items have been rounded.

A.1.3.1

1 **The road to Grandpa and Grandma's place is most likely**

- ○ a narrow street
- ○ a busy highway
- ○ a winding path
- ○ a dirt road *

The student is asked to infer the type of road to Grandma and Grandpa's. The passage states that "there is a long trail of dust behind the truck." Option D is the best answer. Options A, B, and C are statements not supported by information in the passage.

A	B	C	D
10%	5%	6%	79%

A.1.4.1

2 **What is the <u>most</u> important thing the narrator learns in the passage?**

- ○ to escape the thunderstorm
- ○ to climb up the tree
- ○ to understand the calls of a coyote
- ○ to enjoy being in the tree *

The student is asked to determine the most important thing the narrator learns in the passage. The passage states, "I pretend the juniper tree is a ship," "fun to wrap my knees around a branch," and "I find a special place," which support option D as the correct answer. Options A, B, and C are other ideas not related to the lesson that the narrator learns.

A	B	C	D
21%	18%	6%	55%

A.1.3.1

3 **Read the sentences from the passage.**

> It's fun to wrap my knees around a branch and hang upside down. Things look better this way.

These sentences most likely mean that the narrator

- ○ sees objects more closely
- ○ has a better view of the sky
- ○ sees things differently *
- ○ is able to watch the lizard

The student is asked to make an inference given sentences from the passage. The phrases "hang upside down" and "look better this way" imply that the narrator "sees things differently." Therefore, option C is the best answer. Options A, B, and D are specific to the passage but do not relate to the given sentences.

A	B	C	D
10%	19%	65%	6%

A.1.4.1

4 **In the passage, the narrator pretends the tree is a**

- ○ cloud
- ○ boat *
- ○ mountain
- ○ bird

The student is asked to identify a relevant detail found in the passage. The passage states, "I pretend the juniper tree is a ship," which makes option B the correct answer. Options A, C, and D provide other information found in the passage.

A	B	C	D
7%	73%	15%	4%

A.1.4.1

5 **What is this passage mainly about?**

- ○ the animals on a ranch
- ○ a child playing in a tree *
- ○ the storm in the mountains
- ○ a family working on a farm

The student is asked to identify the main idea of the passage. The main idea is about a child playing in a tree, which makes option B the correct answer. Options A, C, and D are specific details in the passage.

A	B	C	D
2%	88%	4%	5%

B.1.1.1

6 **These sentences tell about one event in the passage.**

1. A thunderstorm starts far away.
2. The narrator watches the thunder and lightning move closer.
3. Grandma tells the narrator to run to the house.
4. _____

Which sentence completes the retelling of this event?

- ○ The black horses run very fast.
- ○ The wind blows the narrator's hair.
- ○ The raven ruffles its feathers.
- ○ The narrator climbs down and runs fast. *

The student is asked to complete the sequence of the event from the passage. Option D is the only sentence that completes the event in correct sequence. Options A, B, and C are other events that occur in different places earlier in the passage.

A	B	C	D
15%	11%	5%	68%

Note: The format of this item is not currently represented in the PSSA.

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OPEN-ENDED ITEM

A.1.4.1

7 **How does the juniper tree become the narrator's friend? Use at least three examples from the passage to explain your response.**

Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
10%	42%	38%	10%

ITEM-SPECIFIC SCORING GUIDELINE

Item #7

This item is reported under Category A, Comprehension and Reading Skills.

Assessment Anchor:

A.1– Understand components within and between texts.

Specific Eligible Content addressed by this item:

A.1.4.1– Identify and/or explain stated or implied main ideas and relevant supporting details from text.

Scoring Guide:

Score	In response to this item, the student—
3	demonstrates *complete* knowledge of understanding main ideas and relevant supporting details by explaining how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend, using at least three examples from the passage in the explanation.
2	demonstrates *partial* knowledge of understanding main ideas and relevant supporting details by explaining how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend. (Example: Student explains how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend, using two examples from the passage in the explanation.)
1	demonstrates *incomplete* knowledge of understanding main ideas and relevant supporting details by explaining how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend. (Example: Student explains how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend, using one example from the passage in the explanation.)
0	has given a response that provides *insufficient* material for scoring or is inaccurate in all respects.
Non-scorable	BLK (blank)...No response or written refusal to respond or too brief to determine response OT.....Off task/topic LOE.....Response in a language other than English IL.....Illegible

Example—Top Scoring Response (3 Points):

Explanation of Main Ideas and Relevant Supporting Details with Examples
The narrator is visiting Grandma and Grandpa and does not have anyone to play with but the tree Grandpa says can be a friend. The tree becomes a friend because it is somewhere the narrator likes to rest and falls asleep in its limbs. The tree becomes a play place as the narrator pretends the tree is a ship and the narrator is its captain. The tree is also a fun place for the narrator to climb and hang upside down from its branches.

OPEN-ENDED ITEM RESPONSES

A.1.4.1 Response Score: 3

7 **How does the juniper tree become the narrator's friend? Use at least three examples from the passage to explain your response.**

The juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend by being there for the narrator. For example the narrator likes to wrap their legs around a branch and hang upside down The juniper tree let's them do that. Also, the tree was there For the narrator to play in. She or he pretended that the tree was a boat. Lastly the narrator said that the tree had cozy seats So he or she could sit comfortably. That is how the juniper tree became the narrator's friend

The student has given a complete answer to the task by explaining how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend using at least three examples from the passage ("... the narrator likes to wrap their legs around a branch and hang upside down," "she or he pretended that the tree was a boat," and "... the tree had cozy seats. ...") to explain the response.

A.1.4.1 Response Score: 2

7 **How does the juniper tree become the narrator's friend? Use at least three examples from the passage to explain your response.**

She does not have any budy to by With So the grand dad says you can be this trees best friend. One day She clambs the tree and it is Starting to thumder so She clibes dawn from the tree carefaly and runs as fast as a houres. She likes to clibe the tree every day.

The student has given a partial answer to the task by explaining how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend using two examples from the passage ("... the grand dad says you can be this trees best friend" and "She likes to clibe the tree every day") to explain the response.

A.1.4.1 Response Score: 2

7 **How does the juniper tree become the narrator's friend? Use at least three examples from the passage to explain your response.**

The tree is his freind because he likes playing with it and he pretends the tree is a ship and he likes to climb thie tree so he can hang upside down

The student has given a partial answer to the task by explaining how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend using two examples from the passage ("... he pretends the tree is a ship ..." and "... he likes to climb the tree so he can hang upside down") to explain the response.

A.1.4.1 Response Score: 1

7 **How does the juniper tree become the narrator's friend? Use at least three examples from the passage to explain your response.**

The tree became the narrators friend because the tree saved his life. And it also became his friend because he'd hang upside down on the tree that he could see things differently. And it was his friend because he could reach the branches.

The student has given an incomplete answer to the task by explaining how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend using one example from the passage ("... he'd hang upside down on the tree that he could see things differently") to explain the response.

A.1.4.1 Response Score: 1

7 **How does the juniper tree become the narrator's friend? Use at least three examples from the passage to explain your response.**

The narator climbs the tree and the narator becomes the tree's friend. The nardtor likes the tree alot. The narator likes to climb the tree.

The student has given an incomplete answer to the task by explaining how the juniper tree becomes the narrator's friend using one example from the passage ("The narator likes to climb the tree") to explain the response.

A.1.4.1 Response Score: 0

7 **How does the juniper tree become the narrator's friend? Use at least three examples from the passage to explain your response.**

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Be Meen to eother.

The student has given an insufficient answer to the task.

SUMMATIVE DATA TABLE

Multiple-Choice Items

Sampler Sequence	A	B	C	D
1	10%	5%	6%	79%
2	21%	18%	6%	55%
3	10%	19%	65%	6%
4	7%	73%	15%	4%
5	2%	88%	4%	5%
6	15%	11%	5%	68%

Open-Ended Item

Sampler Sequence	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
7	10%	42%	38%	10%

Acknowledgements

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