

Practice Test

English Language Arts Reading Comprehension

GRADE 6

Student Name

School Name

District Name



Massachusetts Department of
**ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION**

This is a practice test. Your responses to practice test questions must be recorded on your Practice Test Answer Document.

Mark only one answer for each multiple-choice question. If you are not sure of the answer, choose the answer you think is best.

HOW TO ANSWER OPEN-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

- **READ** the question carefully.
- **PLAN** your answer.
- **FIND** details from the selection to support your answer.

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DIRECTIONS

This practice test contains one reading selection with two multiple-choice questions and one open-response question. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided on page 7 of your Practice Test Answer Document.

This article describes the challenges and rewards of growing up with brothers or sisters. Read the article and then answer the questions that follow.

Brothers and Sisters

The Friends You Can't Choose

How to build better relationships with your siblings
and understand what makes them tick

1 *Chester poked his head into his older sister's room.*

2 *"Hi, Denise," he said.*

3 *"Chester, get out!" Denise screamed. "I told you never to come into my room again. What part of your pea-sized brain finds that hard to understand?"*

4 *"Gee," Chester sighed. "What's your problem?"*

5 What sane person would scream at her brother just for saying "hello"? Every time Denise gets a minute to herself, Chester shows up. Even though she's told him to leave her alone, he listens to her phone conversations and tells her secrets at the dinner table. To Denise, Chester's more of a bother than a brother.

6 What you get in a sibling (brother or sister) is pretty much the luck of the draw. You have no control over who your brothers and sisters are; you're simply stuck with what you've got. You may be one of the lucky ones who has "sibs" who are your best friends. Then again, you may not be so lucky.

7 Why are relationships with siblings such a big deal? Because you live with these people day in and day out. Learning to get along with them can help you learn about yourself. You also learn how to get along in the other relationships you'll have in life. Here are some common roles siblings play. Chances are you'll recognize your sibs in these descriptions.

Roles Siblings Play

8 • **Pests**—Chester illustrates this role perfectly. What Denise can't see because of her anger is that Chester really admires his older sister. He's always around because the dull, everyday details of her life are interesting to him. He likes being near her.

9 • **Protectors**—It's common for sibs to protect each other. If Denise saw some kids calling Chester names, you can bet she'd forget what a pest he is and run to his rescue. This is normal, says Celia Anita Decker, author of *Children: The Early Years*. She says that sibs protect each other most often in four situations. They

do it when “there is an age gap of three or more years, when siblings come from large families, when children are unsupervised outside, and when peers attack a younger sibling in a physical or verbal way.” Have you ever noticed that, while it seems OK for you to call your brother or sister a name, you sure don’t want anyone else doing it?

- 10 • **Rivals**—Some siblings compete with each other for Mom’s or Dad’s attention and praise, often without even knowing it. Helen Gum Westlake and Donald G. Westlake, authors of *Relationships and Family Living*, explain that rivalry is greatest when the children are between 18 and 36 months apart in age. If you start to feel jealous of a sibling who gets better grades than you or is a better athlete, that’s because rivalry and envy feed off each other. One leads to the other. But there is good news. “Children normally lose their obvious symptoms of jealousy as they grow older and become absorbed in interests outside their family,” write the Westlakes.
- 11 • **Fighters**—Sibs don’t have to be rivals to fight. Some sibs fight intensely about everything—from sharing space to borrowing clothes or using the bathroom. If your home is a battleground, your entire family would appreciate it if you and your sib could declare a truce. Setting up fair rules and respecting each other’s needs can help end wars on the home front.
- 12 • **Friends**—Sibling friendships make the fighting, rivalry, and annoyances worthwhile. Even siblings who claim to despise each other can grow to be best friends. Sibs are natural playmates, and each time you set goals (for work or fun) and make them happen, you build family ties. No other friends know you better or care more for your welfare.

How to Win the Sibling Game

- 13 A sibling can be friend, foe, or a little of both. If you play the game right, though, you’ll learn how to get along with your sibs before it’s time to move out of the house.
- 14 **Rule 1: Respect your opponent.** Earn points by showing your sibs a little respect. Remember, to earn it for yourself you must also give it. So, respect each other’s property, privacy, space, and needs. Be sure to talk to, instead of yell at, each other at least once each day.
- 15 **Rule 2: Set the rules.** Decide what bugs you, then set ground rules. If it’s privacy you crave, create a “Knock before entering” or “Keep out of my closet” rule. Once you set the rules, follow them and play fair. You may want to ask your parents to act as mediators and help you set up these rules.
- 16 **Rule 3: Give a little, get a little.** Do your sibs think your stuff is theirs simply because you share the same last name? You can protect your possessions by letting sibs use some of them—and declaring the important ones “off-limits.”
- 17 **Rule 4: Know what to hold on to.** When something is important to you, find a way to save it. For example, how can you get the privacy you need? Maybe you can take an unused attic or basement and make it your own. Another idea: Talk to your sibs about dividing your room into “privacy zones.” Feeling satisfied about what matters most to you can make you more patient in other areas.
- 18 **Rule 5: Know when to give in.** Sometimes giving in to small arguments can help you settle the big ones more peacefully. If you and a sib are arguing over something small, give in and move on.
- 19 **Rule 6: When you win, don’t brag.** Keep your attitude fair and friendly. This

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will show sibs you respect them and value your family ties.

20 Sibling relationships aren't always easy. But, in the end, there is usually a big payoff. A bond between sibs can last a lifetime, often getting stronger as years

go by. When you think about it, it's the longest relationship you will ever have—from the very beginning of your life to the end. Wouldn't it be nice to make it a great one?

“Brothers and Sisters: The Friends You Can't Choose” from *Current Health 1*, November 1998. Copyright © 1998 by Weekly Reader Corporation. Published by Weekly Reader Corporation. Reprinted by permission of Weekly Reader.

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- 1 Which of the following is the **main** purpose of the article?
- A. to challenge the idea that sibling rivalry rarely occurs
 - B. to explain ways siblings can improve their relationship
 - C. to detail steps parents must take to prevent sibling rivalry
 - D. to highlight the challenges parents face when raising siblings

- 2 Read the sentence from paragraph 8 in the box below.

• **Pests**—Chester illustrates this role perfectly.

Which of the following **best** replaces the word *illustrates* in the sentence?

- A. defends
- B. calculates
- C. understands
- D. demonstrates

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Question 3 is an open-response question.

- Read the question carefully.
- Explain your answer.
- Add supporting details.
- Double-check your work.

Write your answer to question 3 in the space provided on page 7 of your Practice Test Answer Document.

- 3 Based on the article, explain how siblings can work together to get along. Support your answer with important information from the article.

MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Grade 6 English Language Arts

Practice Test Answer Document

<p>School Name: _____</p> <p>District Name: _____</p> <p>Last Name of Student: _____</p> <p>First Name of Student: _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Marking Instructions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a No. 2 pencil only.• Do not use ink, ballpoint, or felt tip pens.• Make solid marks that fill the circles completely.• Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.• Make no stray marks on this form.• Do not fold, tear, or mutilate this form.
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