

## ELD Reading Test Grades 6-8 Early Advanced/Advanced

**Directions:** Read each of the passages. Then, read each of the questions that follow and decide on the BEST answer. There are a lot of different kinds of questions, so read each question carefully before marking your answer.

### I



### My Quinceañera

Although I was not quite fourteen, my aunt Isabel was already talking about having a *quinceañera* for me. *Quinceañera* is a Spanish word that refers to someone who is fifteen years old. Some Hispanic families hold this special celebration to recognize the beginning of a girl's journey to adulthood.

"It takes a good year of planning," Aunt Isabel said excitedly, "and I want Marisa to have a perfect *quinceañera*."

My parents were not as enthusiastic. I couldn't tell from their expressions if they were sure they wanted me to have this traditional celebration. Many families no longer hold *quinceañeras* but instead find other ways to honor a daughter who is turning fifteen. A party such as this would certainly be a lot of trouble for a tradition that had only recently resurfaced as a popular event. Maybe they were thinking about the money everybody would have to spend to pay for the party.

"We have to wait and see what Marisa wants," my mother said, expertly concealing her feelings.

Secretly there was nothing I wanted more than to have a *quinceañera* for one unforgettable evening. Seeing the enraptured look on my aunt's face when she spoke of her own party made the idea even more exciting to me.

"It was like a dream," Aunt Isabel often said, "and for one beautiful day, I was a princess."

Since I hadn't heard my mother talk about her *quinceañera*, I began to wonder why she never mentioned it. Hadn't she had one? Finally I told my family that I wanted a little time to think about it. I went into my room and quietly closed the door. Then I reached under the bed for the book I had checked out of the library.

"How to Plan a *Quinceañera*," I read.

As I looked at the pictures, I could imagine myself in a beautiful gown floating around a gaily decorated ballroom. I could even hear a mariachi band playing my father's favorite song. I saw hundreds of relatives and friends wishing me well as I stepped from the comfortable cloud of adolescence into the responsible world of young adulthood.

When I turned the page, I quickly came back to Earth. There was a long list of things to do to prepare for a *quinceañera*. Aunt Isabel had already talked to several people she called *padrinos*. They were family members and friends who wanted to sponsor different parts of the celebration. I already knew that Aunt Rosa wanted to bake a huge cake for the event. Then I came to the most difficult task, which was titled "Select a Court of Honor."

I would need 28 friends or relatives about my age who would serve as the traditional 14 couples representing each year of my life. I was not sure I had that many friends and relatives who would want to participate. I called my friend Tanisha.

"Does your family have customs like this?" I asked after explaining my situation to her. "No, but I wish we did," she answered. "In fact, I hope you decide to have a *quinceañera* because I want to be one of the attendants," she added.

I was stupefied by her willingness. I had expected it to be hard to get people to participate. If Tanisha wanted to be in my court of honor, my other friends might, too. After hanging up the phone, I walked to the kitchen. As I reached the kitchen door, I overheard my mother talking to my father.

"I do hope Marisa wants to have a *quinceañera*," she said. "I've always regretted that I didn't have one. I don't want to force her to have one, though."

"Of course I want a *quinceañera*," I interrupted. "I didn't know that you didn't have one. My *quinceañera* will be for both of us. We'll keep its true meaning. I just read that the important thing about it is to bring unity among family and friends. I would like my *quinceañera* to do just that."

My parents hugged me with tears in their eyes. It was more than a year away, but I could already feel the joy of turning fifteen and becoming closer to my mother through sharing my *quinceañera*.

1. The reader can conclude that Marisa's mother\_\_\_\_
  - a) allowed Marisa to voice her opinion and make decisions
  - b) had given Marisa the book about the perfect *quinceañera*
  - c) had spoken to Tanisha's mother about the *quinceañera*
  - d) planned to make Marisa a beautiful gown

2. Marisa began to wonder about her mother's *quinceañera* because her mother\_\_\_\_
  - a) wanted Marisa to decide whether to have a *quinceañera*
  - b) considered a *quinceañera* an old-fashioned custom
  - c) was jealous of Aunt Isabel's memories
  - d) had not mentioned her own *quinceañera*

3. Which of these is a FACT in the passage?
  - a) A mariachi band is a Mexican musical group.
  - b) A *quinceañera* is easy to plan.
  - c) The most difficult task is selecting a court of honor.
  - d) A court of honor is made up of 14 couples.

4. Which of these is the best summary of this passage?
  - a) Marisa cannot tell from the expressions on her parents' face whether they want her to have a *quinceañera*.
  - b) Marisa imagines herself in a beautiful gown floating around a gaily decorated ballroom.
  - c) Marisa gets help from her aunt, a friend, a book and her parents in deciding whether to have a *quinceañera*.
  - d) Marisa tells her family that she wants a little time to think about whether to have a *quinceañera*



### **Lydia's Sister Comes Home for the Summer**

The day was a special one for twelve-year-old Lydia. Her older sister Marcie was coming home from college for the summer. Lydia could hardly wait for them to go to the movies and to the swimming pool — the things they used to do together.

When Marcie walked in the door, the sisters greeted each other with a warm hug. Lydia hoped to hear all about Marcie's college experiences while they made pizza that night. Unfortunately Marcie had made other plans. Though disappointed, Lydia was sure that they would do something together the next day.

At breakfast the next morning, Lydia asked Marcie to go shopping. Lydia wanted her sister to help her pick out some summer outfits and even offered to treat Marcie to lunch. Once again Marcie already had plans. "We'll spend some time together tonight," Marcie promised.

Lydia rented a movie for the two of them to watch that night. However, when Marcie came home that afternoon, she informed Lydia that she had invited some friends over. Lydia pretended to be reading to hide the tears welling in her eyes. She did not want to begrudge Marcie a good time with her friends, but she missed her sister's company.

When Marcie's friends arrived, Lydia was not her usual self. She intruded into their conversation by making comments or asking questions that had nothing to do with their discussion. She sang loudly while Marcie was on the phone and even changed the channel while everyone was watching television. By the time Lydia's bedtime arrived, she was feeling very ashamed. Marcie had not said anything about Lydia's behavior, but she looked hurt.

Over the next few days, Lydia was not able to find a good opportunity to apologize to her sister. When Marcie's friends visited again, Lydia considered joining them in the backyard but decided not to. She was afraid she would aggravate the problem.

Desperate to be close to Marcie again, Lydia went into Marcie's room and sat on her bed. She studied the photograph of the two smiling girls that was on the nightstand. Next to the picture, she noticed some letters and cards that she had sent to Marcie at school. The letters reminded Lydia of how much she had enjoyed writing to her big sister. She decided to write Marcie a letter apologizing for her behavior and leave it on Marcie's pillow.

Later that night Lydia heard Marcie tell her friends good-bye and go into her room. Minutes later Marcie knocked on Lydia's door. "I'm the one who should be apologizing," Marcie said as she peeked in. "I'm sorry that I've been so selfish. I didn't realize how much I had hurt your feelings." Lydia invited Marcie to sit beside her on the bed. One of Marcie's old letters to Lydia that Lydia had been rereading fell to the floor. Marcie picked it up and smiled. "At school I read your letters over and over, too. They helped me bear being away from home."

Marcie and Lydia hugged each other. "Let's make some popcorn and then watch a movie," Marcie suggested. Lydia hurried toward the kitchen, knocking the rest of the letters off the bed. Marcie smiled and followed Lydia, remembering how much she had missed her best friend — her little sister.

5. The author probably wrote this passage in order to \_\_\_
- a) encourage people to go to college
  - b) contrast the different hobbies that two sisters have
  - c) persuade people to write letters
  - d) Tell a story about two sisters who are good friends

6. Which of these will most likely happen in the future?
- a) Marcie and Lydia will throw away the letters they sent to each other.
  - b) Marcie will decide not to go back to college after the summer.
  - c) Marcie and Lydia will spend a lot of time together during the summer.
  - d) Marcie will sing loudly when Lydia is talking on the telephone.

7. In this passage, the word aggravate means to \_\_\_
- a) plan
  - b) agree with
  - c) believe
  - d) make worse

8. What is the conflict between the two sisters in this passage?
- a) Lydia wanted to move into Marcie's bedroom now that Marcie was in college.
  - b) While Marcie was away at college, she did not write letters to Lydia.
  - c) Lydia wished she were old enough to go away to college with Marcie.
  - d) When Marcie first came home from college, she did not spend time with Lydia.



### **The Golden Gate Bridge**

The Golden Gate Bridge is one of the symbols of the United States of America. It is located in San Francisco, California, and spans the Golden Gate Strait - a mile wide strait that connects the Pacific Ocean to the San Francisco Bay. It is surely one of the most beautiful bridges in the world, and also one of the tallest (the height of a bridge is the height of the towers).

The bridge as it is today was designed by architects Irving and Gertrude Morrow. However their art deco project was not the first Golden Gate Bridge. The original plans for the bridge were drawn in 1916, but they were of a very complicated and ugly structure, certainly not something America could ever be proud of.

The bridge was a true experiment in its time; such a long suspension bridge had never been tried before. It had the highest towers, the thickest cables and the largest underwater foundations ever built. The foundations were a real problem, because they had to be cast in a depth of more than 100 feet. Extreme depth wasn't the sole problem. The real challenge lay in the sinking of the piers in the violent waves of the open sea, which was thought to be almost impossible.

The construction began in 1933, and was finished in 1937, when the bridge opened to pedestrians. (It was opened to cars one year later.) The bridge was finished ahead of schedule and cost much less than was estimated. Today, the Golden Gate Bridge has a main span of 4,200 feet (almost a mile) and a total length of 8,981 feet. The towers supporting the huge cables rise 746 feet above the water. Each steel cable is 7,650 feet long and has a diameter of 36 inches. 'International orange' is the color the bridge has always been painted. The architects chose it because it 'blends well with the span's natural setting'. However, if the Navy had had its way, the bridge would have been painted black with yellow stripes - in favor of greater visibility for passing ships. There are fog horns to let passing ships know where the bridge is, and aircraft beacons on the tops of the towers to prevent planes from crashing into them.

The Golden Gate Bridge is the first sight for many people approaching the United States by boat. It is almost the West Coast's "Statue of Liberty", and is something everyone should visit at least once.

9. The Golden Gate Bridge\_\_
- a) spans the San Francisco Bay
  - b) is the best-known symbol of the United States
  - c) spans the Golden Gate Strait
  - d) is painted gold and has a gold-plated gate at each end

10. The first plans of the bridge\_\_.
- a) were designed by Irving and Gertrude Morrow in 1916
  - b) were designed by Irving Morrow but were too complicated
  - c) were something America could be proud of
  - d) were not designed in art deco style

11. The construction of the foundation was very complicated because\_\_.
- a) It was thought to be almost impossible
  - b) Laying the piers in the violent waves of the open sea was difficult.
  - c) They had to be the largest ones ever built
  - d) They had to be cast by teams of divers, which was very expensive

12. Which one is true?
- a) The construction of the Golden Gate Bridge took four years.
  - b) The bridge was opened to car traffic in 1939.
  - c) People were allowed to cross the bridge in 1939.
  - d) The construction of the bridge began exactly seventeen years after the first plans were made.



**John Fitzgerald Kennedy  
(1917-1963)**

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was America's 35th President. He was born on May 29, 1917 in Brookline, Massachusetts to Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy and Joseph Patrick Kennedy. John was one of nine children born to Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy. John was called Jack by his family. As a child he suffered frequent illnesses, including whooping cough and measles. He had scarlet fever when he was only two years old. Jack attended boarding school at Choate in Connecticut. He graduated from high school in 1938 and entered Harvard University. He joined his brother Joe on the football team and injured his back while playing in a game. He never fully recovered from this injury.

Jack Kennedy joined the Navy upon graduation from college and was assigned as commander of the PT-109. He was hailed as a hero in an attack by a Japanese warship rammed into the PT-109 and was able to help his men to safety during this attack. Jack was elected to the United States House of Representatives and served three terms before being elected to the United States Senate. Jack married Jacqueline Bouvier soon after he was elected to the Senate. They became the parents of two children, Caroline and John, Jr.

Jack Kennedy ran for President of the United States in 1960 and became President at the young age of forty-three. He was the youngest person to ever be elected President of the United States and the first Catholic president. President Kennedy created the Peace Corps, which is a program where Americans can volunteer where help is needed. This program still exists in America today. President Kennedy is remembered for his work in space exploration and in the Civil Rights Movement in America.

President Kennedy and his wife were in Dallas, Texas on November 22, 1963 when President Kennedy was shot and killed in a parade. His death caused much sadness in America and around the world. President Kennedy is buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. He is remembered for his excellent speeches, aid to the poor and his love for the American people.

13. Which of the following would be the BEST title for this writing?

- a) John Kennedy, A War Hero
- b) John Kennedy, Our 35th President
- c) The Kennedy Family
- d) Our Friends in Washington

14. The Peace Corp was created \_\_\_\_.

- a) after Kennedy's death
- b) while he was in the Senate
- c) during Kennedy's presidency
- d) by Kennedy's mother

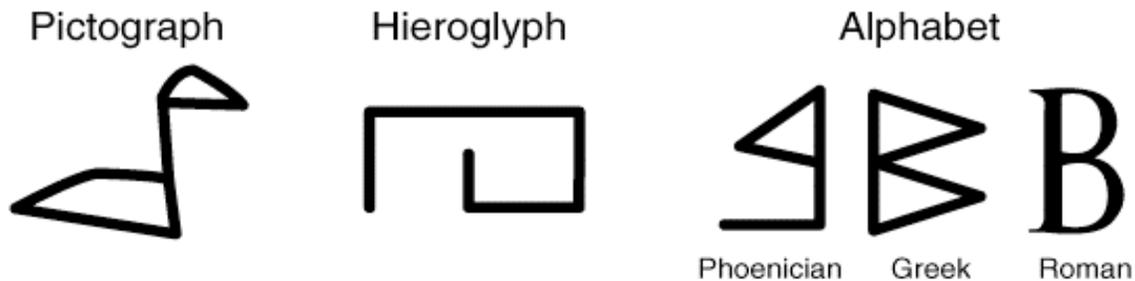
15. Which of the following is NOT true?

- a) Kennedy was the only child of his parents.
- b) Kennedy attended Harvard University.
- c) Kennedy married Jacqueline Bouvier.
- d) Kennedy had two children.

16. Kennedy is remembered for \_\_\_\_.

- a) his love of the American people.
- b) his aid to the poor
- c) his excellent speeches
- d) all of these

# Getting It in Writing



- 1 Writing is a system of visual communication that is made up of symbols recorded on a surface. The symbols used in writing stand for words, sounds, or ideas. Writing is a relatively new concept in human history. It is only about 5,500 years old. The earliest writing systems were developed by the Sumerians, Egyptians, and Phoenicians.

## Sumerian Pictographs

- 2 The earliest known writing system appeared sometime between 3500 and 3000 B.C. in Sumer, a kingdom in what is now known as the Middle East. Sumerian writing used pictographs, or pictures, that stood for words or ideas. The Sumerians wrote with a pointed stick on wet clay tablets that later dried and hardened.

## Egyptian Hieroglyphs

- 3 Around 3000 B.C. the Egyptians, who were very creative, devised a kind of writing known as hieroglyphics. Most hieroglyphs depicted whole words, but some of them stood for sounds in words. The Egyptians carved their hieroglyphs in stone, painted them on pottery, and wrote them on papyrus, a type of paper made from a plant fiber.

## Phoenician Alphabet

- 4 The Phoenicians were seafaring traders who lived along the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea. They were the first to develop a different kind of writing system, around 1000 B.C. Instead of pictographs, Phoenician writing was made up entirely of letters. Their 22 letters stood for consonant sounds in words, but vowel sounds were not represented. Later the Greeks and Romans used the Phoenician system as the basis for their alphabets, adding letters for vowel sounds.

17. According to the article, how was the Phoenician alphabet different from the Greek and Roman alphabets?

- a) The Phoenician alphabet had no letters for consonant sounds.
- b) The Phoenician alphabet had more letters.
- c) The Phoenician alphabet was made up of pictographs.
- d) The Phoenician alphabet had no letters for vowel sounds.

18. What is the purpose of this article?

- a) To tell how the modern alphabet was invented
- b) To inform readers about how writing developed
- c) To encourage readers to study hieroglyphs
- d) To describe symbols from ancient writing systems

19. Which sentence in this article supports the idea that some ancient cultures didn't have any writing system?

- a) The Phoenicians were seafaring traders who lived along the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea.
- b) Instead of pictographs, Phoenician writing was made up entirely of letters.
- c) Writing is a relatively new concept in human history.
- d) The symbols used in writing stand for words, sounds, or ideas.

20. The Sumerians probably used wet clay tablets instead of dry ones for writing because\_\_\_\_\_.

- a) wet clay didn't break when dropped
- b) wet clay was soft
- c) wet clay was not as heavy as dry clay
- d) it rained a lot in Sumer

## Reading Test Answer Key

### Grades 6-8 Early Advanced/Advanced

Question	Answer		Function	Student Response (Correct or Incorrect)	
1.	A	Allowed Marisa to voice her opinion and make decisions.	Summarize, Draw Conclusions and Make Generalizations	C	I
2.	D	Had not mentioned her own <i>quinceañera</i> .	Make Predictions, Inferences, Cause and Effect	C	I
3.	D	A court of honor is made up of 14 couples	Define, Explain Actions and Sequence	C	I
4.	C	Marisa gets help from her aunt, a friend, a book and her parents in deciding whether to have a <i>quinceañera</i>	Summarize, Draw Conclusions and Make Generalizations	C	I
5.	D	Tell a story about two sisters who are good friends.	Make Predictions, Inferences, Cause and Effect	C	I
6.	C	Marcie and Lydia will spend a lot of time together during the summer.	Make Predictions, Inferences, Cause and Effect	C	I
7.	D	Make worse	Define, Explain Actions and Sequence	C	I
8.	D	When Marcie first came home from college, she did not spend time with Lydia.	Explain Needs, Feelings, Opinions, and Thoughts	C	I
9.	C	Spans the Golden Gate Strait.	Define, Explain Actions and Sequence	C	I
10.	B	The piers had to be sunk in the violent waves of the open sea.	Define, Explain Actions and Sequence	C	I
11.	A	The construction of the Golden Gate Bridge took four years.	Describe Spatial and Temporal Relations	C	I
12.	A	7,650 feet is the length of a cable.	Describe Spatial and Temporal Relations	C	I
13.	B	John Kennedy, Our 35 <sup>th</sup> President	Summarize, Draw Conclusions and Make Generalizations	C	I
14.	C	During Kennedy's presidency	Describe Spatial and Temporal Relations	C	I
15.	A	Kennedy was the only child of his parents.	Describe People, Places and Things in Detail	C	I
16.	D	All of these	Summarize, Draw Conclusions and Make Generalizations	C	I
17.	D	The Phoenician alphabet had no letters for vowel sounds.	Compare, Contrast, Classify	C	I
18.	B	To inform readers about how	Summarize, Draw	C	I

		writing developed.	Conclusions and Make Generalizations		
19.	C	Writing is a relatively new concept in human history.	Explain Needs, Feelings, Opinions, and Thoughts	C	I
20.	B	Wet clay was soft.	Summarize, Draw Conclusions and Make Generalizations	C	I

### **Functions Requiring Further Development**

- Summarize, Draw Conclusions and Make Generalizations
- Make Predictions, Inferences, Cause and Effect
- Define, Explain Actions and Sequence
- Explain Needs, Feelings, Opinions, and Thoughts
- Describe Spatial and Temporal Relations
- Describe People, Places and Things in Detail
- Compare, Contrast, Classify