

# **Session 1A — Reading Practice Test**

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: READING — SESSION 1A

This practice session has two reading selections, eight multiple-choice questions, and two constructed-response questions. Read each selection and answer the questions about it in the spaces provided in your practice test answer booklet.

Read this article about why onions make you cry and how you can prevent it and then answer the questions that follow.

## *Why Do Onions Make You Cry?*

*Tina L. Seelig*

Have you ever cut an onion? How long does it take until your eyes start to burn and tears begin running down your face? If you never want onions to make you cry again, you can find out how it happens and how to prevent it.

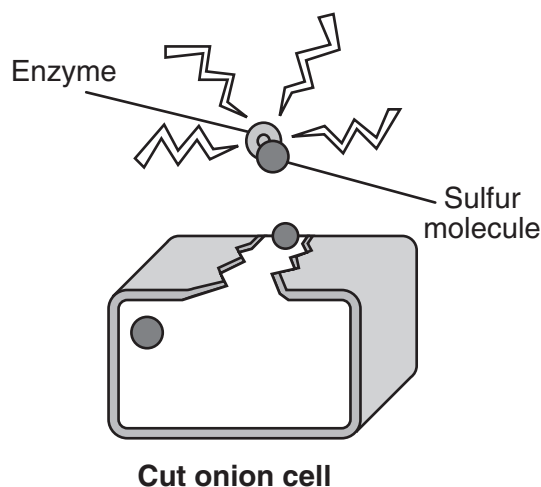
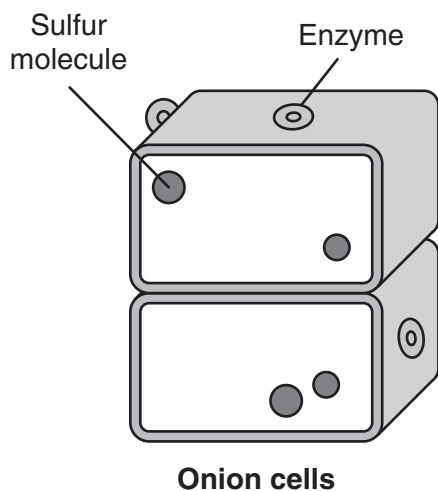
Like other plants, onions are made up of cells. Onion cells have a special molecule that contains the chemical element sulfur. Between the cells is another molecule, called an enzyme, that speeds up chemical reactions. The sulfur-containing molecules and the enzymes sit quietly on opposite sides of the cell wall—until the cells are cut open.

Then the sulfur-containing molecules and the enzymes come into contact and start a chain of chemical reactions. You cannot see these reactions, but you can feel the results. New molecules are released, float up into the air, and sting your eyes. Since the new molecules contain sulfur, when they react with the tears in your eyes, they form sulfuric acid. No wonder they burn!

The strong-smelling molecules in onions and garlic protect the plants from being eaten by small animals and bugs. People have learned to enjoy the flavor of these molecules in small amounts.

When you cook an onion, the molecules inside the onion cells are changed. They smell and taste much sweeter than raw onions too, and will not make you cry when they are cut.

Now that you know what causes onions to make you cry, there are things you can do to prevent it. As you cut an onion, you can put it under cold water. The burning molecules will react with the water before they get to your eyes. Or you can put the onion in the freezer 10 to 15 minutes before you cut it open. The reaction that takes place in the onion is slowed down by low temperatures, and fewer of the burning molecules will be formed.



PLEASE GO ON ➔

Choose the best answer for each multiple-choice question and mark your answer choices for questions 1 through 4 in the spaces provided on page 2 of your practice test answer booklet. Multiple-choice questions are worth 1 point each.

- 1 What is the **most likely** reason the author asks questions in the first paragraph?
- A. to make readers think about the topic
  - B. to encourage readers to do more research
  - C. to persuade readers to try an experiment
  - D. to remind readers of what molecules are
- 2 Two ways the molecules in an onion can be changed are by cutting the onion and by adding
- A. heat to it.
  - B. sulfur to it.
  - C. oxygen to it.
  - D. sunlight to it.
- 3 What do the diagrams illustrate about the importance of the onion cell wall?
- A. It is made up of sulfur.
  - B. It has to break for a reaction to occur.
  - C. Molecules are heated by the cell wall.
  - D. Enzymes are located inside the cell wall.
- 4 Which of the following **best** describes how the information in the article is organized?
- A. as causes and effects
  - B. as a series of directions
  - C. from least to most important
  - D. by comparing and contrasting

Write your answer to constructed-response question 5 in the box provided on page 2 of your practice test answer booklet. Constructed-response questions are worth up to 4 points each.

- 5 Based on the information in the article, explain
- a. the chemical reactions that happen as an onion is cut,
  - b. why those changes cause people's eyes to burn, and
  - c. why the measures to prevent eyes from burning work.

PLEASE GO ON ➡

Read this article about George Washington Carver and his recipe for peanut butter fudge and then answer the questions that follow.

## George's Fudge

Heather M. Hopkins

Do peanut sausage, peanut soup, and peanut-prune ice cream sound tasty to you? George Washington Carver thought so. These were just a few of the 105 peanut recipes that Carver, an agricultural chemist, created in his lab. Known as “the Peanut Man,” Carver also developed new ways to use soybeans, sweet potatoes, pecans, and black-eyed peas. His experiments helped farmers in the South survive by giving them additional crops to bring to market. In addition, Carver’s method of crop rotation (planting different crops on the same land over time) kept the farmers’ soil healthy and able to produce superior harvests year after year.

2 Carver created many of his concoctions (peanut shampoo and sweet potato rubber, for example) for industrial use. While most of these products won’t tickle your taste buds, his peanut butter fudge is guaranteed to make you go nuts.

### You need:

- waxed paper
- 8" × 8" baking dish
- bowl of ice water
- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- measuring cups
- large saucepan
- mixing spoon
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- wooden spoon
- butter knife

### Directions:

1. Place a 13-inch length of waxed paper inside the baking dish. Set the dish aside.
2. Fill a bowl with ice water and place it near the stovetop.
3. Pour the powdered sugar and milk into a saucepan. Stir. Make sure the mixture does not fill more than one-half of the pan, as it will expand when it boils.
4. Heat the mixture over a high heat, stirring it constantly until the mixture comes to a boil.
5. Reduce the heat to medium-high. Continue to boil the mixture, stirring it constantly to avoid burning. (If you see brown swirls in your mixture, it is about to burn—reduce the heat.) Continue to boil the mixture until it is the consistency of pudding. This will take 15–20 minutes. It is ready when a drop of the mixture forms a soft ball in a bowl of cold water.
6. Turn off the burner. Remove the pan from the heat.
7. Add the peanut butter. Stir the mixture with the wooden spoon until it stiffens like taffy. (This is hard work! Be patient and take breaks if you need to rest.)
8. Transfer the fudge into the baking dish. Press the fudge into the corners of the dish with your hands. You may need to cover your hands with water to keep them from sticking.
9. Allow the fudge to cool completely. Cut the cooled fudge into 1-inch squares.

PLEASE GO ON ➔

Choose the best answer for each multiple-choice question and mark your answer choices for questions 6 through 9 in the spaces provided on page 3 of your practice test answer booklet. Multiple-choice questions are worth 1 point each.

- 6 In paragraph 2, which word could best replace the word concoctions?
- A. harvests
  - B. markets
  - C. mixtures
  - D. directions
- 7 What is the **main** purpose of the section entitled “You need”?
- A. to provide suggestions for the cook to follow the recipe
  - B. to persuade the reader to try the recipe
  - C. to help the cook prepare for the activity
  - D. to inform the reader about the purpose of the activity
- 8 In step 7, the author wrote “This is hard work!” **most likely** because the fudge is
- A. getting hotter.
  - B. becoming thicker.
  - C. breaking into pieces.
  - D. sticking to things.
- 9 Which question is **not** answered in this recipe?
- A. When should peanut butter be added?
  - B. How much time is needed to cool fudge?
  - C. What happens when the mixture is about to burn?
  - D. How much powdered sugar is needed?

Write your answer to constructed-response question 10 in the box provided on page 3 of your practice test answer booklet. Constructed-response questions are worth up to 4 points each.

- 10 a. Identify **three** ways the author helps the cook understand how to make George’s Fudge.  
b. Explain how **each** way is helpful to the cook.  
Use details from the article to support your explanation.



# **Session 1B — Reading Practice Test**

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: READING — SESSION 1B

This practice session has one reading selection, eight multiple-choice questions, and one constructed-response question. Read the selection and answer the questions about it in the spaces provided in your practice test answer booklet.

*This passage was written by the daughter of Charles Lindbergh, a man who achieved fame as one of the first airplane pilots. Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.*

## FLYING

*Reeve Lindbergh*

Unfortunately, we are unable to reproduce the reading selection for the following nine items, due to copyright restrictions. A summary of the reading selection is provided below. The selection can be found using the following reference information:

Excerpt from *Flying* by Reeve Lindbergh as it appeared in *When I Was Your Age* edited by Amy Ehrlich. Published by Candlewick Press. Copyright © 1996 by Reeve Lindbergh.

### Summary of the Passage

This passage is by Reeve Lindbergh, daughter of the famous pilot Charles Lindbergh. Writing from the first person perspective, Reeve describes a memory she has of flying with her father the day he was forced to land their plane in the middle of a cow pasture. The experience helped her understand why her father loved flying as much as he did.

The passage begins midflight, at the moment when Reeve first realized the plane's engine had stopped. She describes the sudden silence as "enormous," and recalls watching how calmly her father reacted to the challenge. Charles became alert and focused. Reeve remembers feeling excitement rather than fear at the turn of events. Later, her father claimed she asked "Are we going to crash?" so casually that he laughed every time he told the story.

Reeve remembers her father explaining that they would not make it back to the airport, and that he had to find a safe place to land. At

the time, the two were flying over a wooded hillside and the occasional cow pasture. Charles found a pasture that looked promising and circled the plane toward it.

Reeve knew the landing would be difficult, as the field was small and there was no room for error. Charles would have to bring the plane into the field sideways, and manage to right it and stop it before it hit the surrounding trees. Reeve did not witness the landing because she had her head between her knees for safety, but she remembers that it felt as though she were "bouncing on boulders."

After the safe landing, Reeve describes her father as tired and cheerful, and herself as thoughtful. She realized that her father had a connection to the airplane and was controlling it like a bobsled, as if it were an extension of his body. She describes her father as "being" the airplane, not just flying it. This insight helped her understand why flying was important to her father.

Choose the best answer for each multiple-choice question and mark your answer choices for questions 11 through 18 in the spaces provided on page 4 of your practice test answer booklet. Multiple-choice questions are worth 1 point each.

- 11 In the first paragraph, the narrator calls the silence “enormous” to show
- A. what causes it.
  - B. when it begins.
  - C. where it first occurs.
  - D. how noticeable it is.
- 12 In the first paragraph, which word could **best** replace the word profound?
- A. important
  - B. repetitive
  - C. pleasant
  - D. predictable
- 13 In paragraph 2, the phrase “a million eyes and ears in every direction” suggests
- A. the narrator is amazed by what she sees and hears.
  - B. the sights and sounds are unfamiliar to the father.
  - C. the narrator is paying close attention to the airplane.
  - D. the father is focused on the things he needs to do.
- 14 Why does the narrator’s father laugh when he tells his friends about the question his daughter asked?
- A. because the situation had not been very serious
  - B. because he had already answered her question
  - C. because she had seemed casual and unconcerned
  - D. because she had never been in such a small plane

PLEASE GO ON ➔

- 15 In paragraphs 4 and 5, what mood is created by the narrator?
- A. suspense
  - B. relief
  - C. confusion
  - D. regret

- 16 In the last paragraph, the phrase “but he was doing more than that” means that the narrator’s father
- A. was used to making difficult landings.
  - B. had a strong connection to his plane.
  - C. was prepared for unusual situations.
  - D. had a knowledge of the land below.

- 17 In the last paragraph, the narrator compares the plane to a bobsled to show
- A. how the plane felt to her.
  - B. how her father controlled the plane.
  - C. why the plane sounded different to her.
  - D. where her father was going to land the plane.

- 18 Which word **best** describes how the narrator feels toward her father at the end of the passage?
- A. curious
  - B. admiring
  - C. amused
  - D. impatient

**Write your answer to constructed-response question 19 in the box provided on page 4 of your practice test answer booklet. Constructed-response questions are worth up to 4 points each.**

- 19 Explain what the narrator learns about her father as she watches him land the plane. Support your explanation with specific details from the passage.



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**The Maine Department of Education wishes to acknowledge and credit the following authors and publishers for the use of their work in the Maine Educational Assessment.**

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