

Introduction - Grade 7 English-Language Arts

The following released test questions are taken from the Grade 7 English-Language Arts Standards Test. This test is one of the California Standards Tests administered as part of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program under policies set by the State Board of Education.

All questions on the California Standards Tests are evaluated by committees of content experts, including teachers and administrators, to ensure their appropriateness for measuring the California academic content standards in Grade 7 English-Language Arts. In addition to content, all items are reviewed and approved to ensure their adherence to the principles of fairness and to ensure no bias exists with respect to characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, and language.

This document contains released test questions from the California Standards Test forms in 2003. First on the pages that follow are lists of the standards assessed on the Grade 7 English-Language Arts Test. Next are released passages and test questions. Following the questions is a table that gives the correct answer for each question, the content standard that each question is measuring, and the year each question last appeared on the test.

The following table lists each strand/reporting cluster, the number of items that appear on the exam, and the number of released test questions that appear in this document.

STRAND/REPORTING CLUSTER	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ON EXAM	NUMBER OF RELEASED TEST QUESTIONS
• Word Analysis	11	4
• Reading Comprehension	18	2
• Literary Response and Analysis	13	5
• Writing Strategies	17	4
• Written Conventions	16	4
TOTAL	75	19

In selecting test questions for release, three criteria are used: (1) the questions adequately cover a selection of the academic content standards assessed on the Grade 7 English-Language Arts Test; (2) the questions demonstrate a range of difficulty; and (3) the questions present a variety of ways standards can be assessed. These released test questions do not reflect all of the ways the standards may be assessed. Released test questions will not appear on future tests.

For more information about the California Standards Tests, visit the California Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/star/> or <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.



READING

The Reading portion of the Grade 7 California English-Language Arts Standards Test has three strands/reporting clusters: Word Analysis, Reading Comprehension, and Literary Response and Analysis. Each of these strands/clusters is described below.

The Word Analysis Strand/Cluster

The following three California English-Language Arts content standards are included in the Word Analysis strand/cluster and are represented in this booklet by four test questions for grade 7. These questions represent only some ways in which these standards may be assessed on the Grade 7 California English-Language Arts Standards Test.

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- 7RW1.0 WORD ANALYSIS, FLUENCY, AND SYSTEMATIC VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT:** Students use their knowledge of word origins and word relationships, as well as historical and literary context clues, to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary and to understand the precise meaning of grade-level-appropriate words.
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- 7RW1.1 Vocabulary and Concept Development:** Identify idioms, analogies, metaphors, and similes in prose and poetry.
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- 7RW1.2 Vocabulary and Concept Development:** Use knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Anglo-Saxon roots and affixes to understand content-area vocabulary.
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- 7RW1.3 Vocabulary and Concept Development:** Clarify word meanings through the use of definition, example, restatement, or contrast.
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The Reading Comprehension Strand/Cluster

The following six California English-Language Arts content standards are included in the Reading Comprehension strand/cluster and are represented in this booklet by two test questions for grade 7. These questions represent only some ways in which these standards may be assessed on the Grade 7 California English-Language Arts Standards Test.

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- 7RC2.0 READING COMPREHENSION (FOCUS ON INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS):** Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose. The selections in *Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. In addition, by grade eight, students read one million words annually on their own, including a good representation of grade-level-appropriate narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, online information). In grade seven, students make substantial progress toward this goal.
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- 7RC2.1 Structural Features of Informational Materials:** Understand and analyze the differences in structure and purpose between various categories of informational materials (e.g., textbooks, newspapers, instructional manuals, signs).
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- 7RC2.2 Structural Features of Informational Materials:** Locate information by using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents.
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- 7RC2.3 Structural Features of Informational Materials:** Analyze text that uses cause-and-effect organizational pattern.
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- 7RC2.4 Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text:** Identify and trace the development of an author's argument, point of view, or perspective in text.
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- 7RC2.5 Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text:** Understand and explain the use of a simple mechanical device by following technical directions.
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- 7RC2.6 Expository Critique:** Assess the adequacy, accuracy, and appropriateness of the author's evidence to support claims and assertions, noting instances of bias and stereotyping.
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The Literary Response and Analysis Strand/Cluster

The following six California English-Language Arts content standards are included in the Literary Response and Analysis strand/cluster and are represented in this booklet by five test questions for grade 7. These questions represent only some ways in which these standards may be assessed on the Grade 7 California English-Language Arts Standards Test.

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- 7RL3.0 LITERARY RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS:** Students read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and social science. They clarify the ideas and connect them to other literary works. The selections in *Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight* illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.
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- 7RL3.1 Structural Features of Literature:** Articulate the expressed purposes and characteristics of different forms of prose (e.g., short story, novel, novella, essay).
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- 7RL3.2 Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text:** Identify events that advance the plot, and determine how each event explains past or present action(s) or foreshadows future action(s).
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- 7RL3.3 Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text:** Analyze characterization as delineated through a character's thoughts, words, speech patterns, and actions; the narrator's description; and the thoughts, words, and actions of other characters.
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- 7RL3.4 Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text:** Identify and analyze recurring themes across works (e.g., the value of bravery, loyalty, and friendship; the effects of loneliness).
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- 7RL3.5 Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text:** Contrast points of view (e.g., first and third person, limited and omniscient, subjective and objective) in narrative text and explain how they affect the overall theme of the work.
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- 7RL3.6 Literary Criticism:** Analyze a range of responses to a literary work and determine the extent to which the literary elements in the work shaped those responses.
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WRITING

The Writing portion of the Grade 7 California English-Language Arts Standards Test has two strands/reporting clusters: Writing Strategies and Written Conventions. Each of these strands/clusters is described below.

The Writing Strategies Strand/Cluster

The following six California English-Language Arts content standards are included in the Writing Strategies strand/cluster and are represented in this booklet by four test questions for grade 7. These questions represent only some ways in which these standards may be assessed on the Grade 7 California English-Language Arts Standards Test.

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- 7WS1.0 WRITING STRATEGIES:** Students write clear, coherent, and focused essays. The writing exhibits students' awareness of the audience and purpose. Essays contain formal introductions, supporting evidence, and conclusions. Students progress through the stages of the writing process as needed.
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- 7WS1.1 Organization and Focus:** Create an organizational structure that balances all aspects of the composition and uses effective transitions between sentences to unify important ideas.
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- 7WS1.2 Organization and Focus:** Support all statements and claims with anecdotes, descriptions, facts and statistics, and specific examples.
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- 7WS1.3 Organization and Focus:** Use strategies of note taking, outlining, and summarizing to impose structure on composition drafts.
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- 7WS1.4 Research and Technology:** Identify topics; ask and evaluate questions; and develop ideas leading to inquiry, investigation, and research.
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- 7WS1.5 Research and Technology:** Give credit for both quoted and paraphrased information in a bibliography by using a consistent and sanctioned format and methodology for citations.
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- 7WS1.7 Evaluation and Revision:** Revise writing to improve organization and word choice after checking the logic of the ideas and the precision of the vocabulary.
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The Written Conventions Strand/Cluster

The following seven California English-Language Arts content standards are included in the Written Conventions strand/cluster and are represented in this booklet by four test questions for grade 7. These questions represent only some ways in which these standards may be assessed on the Grade 7 California English-Language Arts Standards Test.

7WC1.0 WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS: Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions appropriate to the grade level.

7WC1.1 Sentence Structure: Place modifiers properly and use the active voice.

7WC1.2 Grammar: Identify and use infinitives and participles and make clear references between pronouns and antecedents.

7WC1.3 Grammar: Identify all parts of speech and types and structure of sentences.

7WC1.4 Grammar: Demonstrate the mechanics of writing (e.g., quotation marks, commas at end of dependent clauses) and appropriate English usage (e.g., pronoun reference).

7WC1.5 Punctuation: Identify hyphens, dashes, brackets, and semicolons and use them correctly.

7WC1.6 Capitalization: Use correct capitalization.

7WC1.7 Spelling: Spell derivatives correctly by applying the spellings of bases and affixes.

Phaëthon Gets His Wish

1 Phaëthon stood impatiently at the heavy gilded doors. He ordered the guards, Month and Year, to let him approach his father's throne. As the doors creaked open, the sun's rays almost blinded him. Phaëthon shielded his eyes and groped his way toward Apollo's throne. "Come here, my son. Follow my voice," Apollo's voice echoed. "What is so urgent that you have my guards scrambling to do your bidding?"

2 "Father, I have a problem. All of my friends have been teasing me. They don't believe that you're my father or that you make the sun rise and set," complained Phaëthon.

3 Apollo replied, "Oh—that problem again? Well, just to prove it to your friends once and for all, I will grant you any wish you desire."

4 "Really? Then I have only one wish," answered Phaëthon. "I'd like to drive your chariot and make the sun rise tomorrow morning!"

5 Apollo was horrified. "No—not that! No one but me can drive the chariot. The horses are too powerful!"

6 "You said I could have anything," whined Phaëthon.

7 Bound by his promise, Apollo had to grant Phaëthon his wish. His heart was sick with worry as he ordered Dawn to hitch the horses, Hour and Day, to the Golden Chariot. Phaëthon could hardly wait to jump in the driver's seat and grab the reins. He hoped all his friends were watching the sky and anticipating his sojourn through the stars.

8 "Wait, my son! There are things you need to know!" cried Apollo.

9 "Oh, Father! You worry too much. I've often seen you drive. I know what to do," Phaëthon answered.

10 Apollo hurried to give directions. "You have never driven my chariot before. You must make the horses stay on the path. If you are too low, you will scorch the earth."

11 "I know, Father. Now watch me take off!" shouted Phaëthon.

12 Dawn stepped back and released her grip on the horses' bridles. The horses pawed the ground and snorted with excitement. The sky begged for Dawn's light, so she ran toward the horizon in her glowing gown to make the darkness fade. As Phaëthon was about to ascend, Apollo grabbed his arm and said, "Please listen to me! If you go too high you will warm the cold depths of the heavens, and the Bear or Snake or Scorpion will come alive!"

13 Phaëthon just laughed. "My friends are waiting. I've got to go!" he shouted.



- 14 With that, the chariot was off. It was a wild ride. Hour and Day were unruly and difficult to control. Phaëthon did not have his father's strong arms or years of experience. The horses wove from side to side and bobbed up and down through the heavens, hitting everything in their way. The sun bounced along behind the chariot like a basketball. It grazed the stars and skidded along mountaintops, leaving charred remains behind. Phaëthon's friends ran for cover as they watched the spectacle. Just as his father had warned him, the figures in the sky began to move. Suddenly the Scorpion lunged toward him, but Phaëthon ducked out of the way in time. The Snake lashed out and bit a wheel off the chariot.
- 15 Apollo, witnessing the destruction, dashed up toward the heavens, but he was too late! The Bear had stirred from his icy hibernation and grabbed Phaëthon before his father could reach him. Apollo grabbed the reins and finally regained control of Hour and Day, but it was years before the earth's mountaintops were white with snow again. The scorched areas became deserts where very little would grow. Phaëthon became a part of the constellations alongside the Bear, where his father could regretfully keep an eye on him.

Released Test Questions

English-Language Arts

7

- 1** Read these sentences from the passage.

The sun bounced along behind the chariot like a basketball. It grazed the stars and skidded along mountaintops, leaving charred remains behind.

Charred means

- A burnt.
B dangerous.
C filthy.
D colorful.
- 2** Which word from the passage comes from the Latin root meaning look or watch?
- A ascend
B spectacle
C urgent
D figures
- 3** What caused Apollo to allow Phaëthon to drive the chariot?
- A Apollo wanted to protect Phaëthon from teasing.
B Phaëthon dared to approach Apollo's throne.
C Apollo was bound by his promise to Phaëthon.
D Apollo asked Phaëthon to do it as a favor.

- 4** A thematic topic of this passage is the conflict between

- A goodness and evil.
B man and nature.
C wisdom and inexperience.
D strength and weakness.

- 5** From what point of view is the passage narrated?

- A first person, Apollo
B third person, limited
C third person, omniscient
D third person, Dawn

Yours Truly

- When my mother writes a letter,
she uses her fountain pen and fancy paper
that she keeps in her desk
in a special drawer.
- 5 She slips in a photo and
chuckles as she writes about
me, about the weather, about
what she's doing and hopes to do.
She licks a stamp, writes
- 10 carefully on the envelope,
and carries the letter to
the mailbox out by the road,
wondering how many days will pass
before it's read.
- 15 When I write a letter,
I use my computer and fancy modem
that I keep in my room
on my special desk.
I enclose an attachment and
- 20 chuckle as I write about
my mom, about the weather, about
what I'm doing and hope to do.
I key in the address and a subject
and press SEND. My computer
- 25 buzzes and then—delivery!
It's there, waiting for someone to
call it up on her screen
and read it *now*.

Released Test Questions

English-Language Arts

7

6 A theme of this poem is the comparison of

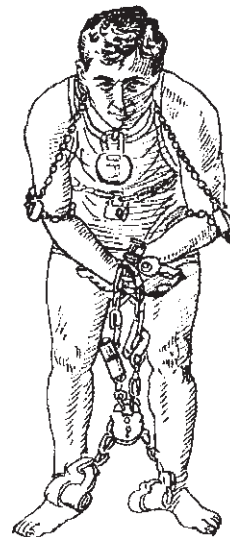
- A computers and fountain pens.
- B humorous and serious writings.
- C mothers and children.
- D traditional and modern ways.

7 Based on the poem, the narrator *most likely* feels that the main advantage of computer-aided letter writing is that the

- A letter can be written more quickly.
- B letter can include additional material.
- C letter can be received more quickly.
- D letter's content can be more creative.

The Magic of Harry

- 1 Harry Houdini was a man who astonished and enthralled many people during his life. Whether he was escaping from a padlocked box or making things disappear and reappear, he definitely was entertaining. People thought that he must truly have some supernatural powers, but in fact, what Harry really had was drive.
- 2 Harry was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1874. His real name was Ehrich Weiss and he was the third of five children. His family moved to Wisconsin not long after he was born and by the time he was nine, he was tying ropes all over his backyard and learning amazing trapeze tricks to show his friends and neighbors. He visited the local locksmith, and when he had reached his teens he could pick almost any lock that was made. He also learned how to do card tricks. He and his brother, Theo, would often entertain at local parties and clubs for extra money.
- 3 When Ehrich was 16, he came across a book that would literally change his life: the biography of France's greatest magician, Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin. It showed Ehrich that his hobby of magic and tricks could also be a career. Immediately, he changed his name to Harry Houdini. He and Theo headed out to make a living as magicians.
- 4 In 1893, they were at the Chicago World's Fair, and after that they traveled around giving magic shows for anyone willing to listen and pay. Theo grew restless, however, as the jobs became scarce, so he left. His timing was perfect since Harry had just fallen in love with a lovely woman named Bess who was just the right size for slipping in and out of the trunk they used in their magic tricks. They married immediately and then off they went, traveling with circuses and other road shows. Harry learned more and more tricks and spent much of his time reading and studying all kinds of locks, especially handcuffs. However, no matter what tricks they did or how hard they tried, Bess and Harry were not doing well. They tried to sell their shows for seven years and finally, in desperation, they went to Europe.
- 5 It was the right move. Harry's persistence and constant practice were about to pay off. To get people's attention, he walked into police stations and offered to be handcuffed by all the policemen. They were shocked when he was loose only seconds later. Soon, everyone in Europe was talking about Houdini's astounding feats. He was in high demand and found himself doing more and more dangerous acts. He escaped from a straitjacket hanging upside down over the street; he escaped from locked boxes of all kinds; and, of course, he got out of any kind of handcuffs put on him.
- 6 After several years in Europe, Bess and Harry returned to the United States in triumph. Harry was doing such amazing tricks that people felt he must have special powers. However, few realized how much time he spent practicing and studying. He would do special exercises to keep his body strong, and he would do tricks with his fingers to keep them nimble and flexible. He would spend large amounts of time tying and untying knots—with his toes! For his underwater tricks, he would get in the bathtub and practice holding his breath for longer and longer times. Since many of his tricks involved being plunged into icy water, he would pour buckets of ice in the tub to get accustomed to working in the cold.



Released Test Questions

English-Language Arts

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- 7 The reason that Harry Houdini was such a success was that he practiced and prepared for whatever might happen. When a college student punched him in the abdomen in 1926, however, he wasn't prepared. The punch did internal damage that not even this magician could get out of. Harry died in 1926 at 52 years of age—a master of his trade and a true legend.

- 8 Read this sentence from the passage.

Harry Houdini was a man who astonished and enthralled many people during his life.

You can tell from the sentence that enthralled means

- A apart.
- B vanished.
- C convinced.
- D fascinated.

- 9 Read this sentence from the passage.

Harry's persistence and constant practice were about to pay off.

You can tell from the sentence that persistence means

- A desperation.
- B long journey.
- C refusal to quit.
- D education.

- 10 Houdini decided to become a magician after

- A he read a book about a famous magician.
- B he learned to pick a lock.
- C he started entertaining at local parties.
- D he learned to do card tricks.

- 11 The author supports the argument that Houdini was a hard worker by describing

- A how he prepared.
- B his famous tricks.
- C his childhood.
- D how he became popular.

The following is a rough draft of a student's report. It contains errors.

Composting: Another Form of Recycling

(1) Recycling can mean much more than aluminum cans, paper, and plastic. (2) Did you know that you can recycle much of your kitchen waste as well? (3) Not only that, but you can provide amazing help to your garden along the way! (4) It is called composting, and it is very easy to do.

(5) When you compost, you put all organic material, except for anything containing animal fat, into a pile where natural bacteria begin the process of decomposition. (6) Items to put into your compost include: vegetable and fruit scraps, grass clippings, leaves, and even coffee grounds.

(7) It is a good idea to "turn" your compost pile occasionally. (8) This process introduces oxygen into the pile, which is beneficial to the bacteria. (9) Also, keep your pile moist, about as moist as a damp sponge. (10) When it has become a dark brown color and has a composition like dirt, add the compost to your garden or lawn. (11) You will be thrilled by the results.

Released Test Questions

English-Language Arts

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12 How should sentence 1 be rewritten for precision of word choice?

- A Recycling is more than the aluminum cans, paper, and plastic that people might first think about.
- B Recycling possibilities are much more than the stuff we trash on a daily basis.
- C Recycling does not have to be limited to aluminum cans, paper, and plastic.
- D The possibilities related to recycling extend past what we normally think of.

13 The student's teacher has asked his students to choose five words from their reports and add suffixes correctly. The student selects the word amazing and changes the *-ing* ending to *-ment*. What is the correct spelling of the new word?

- A amazment
- B amazedment
- C amazement
- D amaizement

14 How should sentence 7 be written so that the ideas are *most* precisely stated?

- A Once items have been added and a substantial pile has developed, it is a good idea to turn, or rotate, the material using a pitchfork or shovel.
- B Turning the pile once in a while is an excellent idea because it really turns the substances around in there.
- C When many items are added and a large pile has amounted, turn it around a few times to mix it up.
- D If you keep adding various materials to the pile, it will then be necessary to turn it a little in order for the blending process to occur.

15 Which sentence below should be added to the end of the second paragraph in order to *most* effectively transition to the third paragraph?

- A Overall, the process of composting can be a lot of fun to do with the whole family.
- B After that, the process of composting requires some additional maintenance.
- C Then you will need to put a lid on your compost bin, and you're done.
- D Nevertheless, the new mixture will need to blend together over time.

The following is a rough draft of a student's report. It contains errors.

Fame for Shame

(1) Sometimes I turn on the television and see people making fools of themselves. (2) I wonder why they're willing to do this. (3) Is being seen so precious to these people that they don't even care what others think of them? (4) Do they think having their face on TV for a few minutes makes them famous, as though they had actually accomplished something worthwhile?

(5) Are some people willing to look ridiculous merely for financeal gain? (6) Many talk shows don't pay people to appear; in those instances, money is not a motive. (7) Other shows put people through horrible competitions, and in the end, only one person ends up with a big amount of cash. (8) The other contestants go home with nothing but faces that, to some, will be recognizable. (9) Is this such a great prize?

(10) I just can't understand being eager to give one's privacy away. (11) If you have a talent and want to use it to reach others in a positive way, that's one thing being a great performer or creative artist can involve being seen and having people recognize your face. (12) Some people, though, will want to know about your private life, even if it has nothing to do with your work.

(13) I've heard this lack of privacy called "the price of fame." (14) As these words suggest, being famous has a cost—something you must give up in order to gain something you desire. (15) Isn't shame too high a price to pay, though—especially when you get hardly anything in return?

Released Test Questions

English-Language Arts

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- 16** Before writing his rough draft, the student organized the paper by writing an outline. Here is the beginning of the outline:

- | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|
| I. | Introduction of topic |
| II. | Reasons people go on television |
| | A. Money |
| | B. |

What subject belongs under II. B.?

- A Dare
B Fame
C Shame
D Talent
- 17** What is the correct way to spell the underlined word in sentence 5?
- A finansial
B financel
C financial
D Leave as is.

- 18** Which version of sentence 11 shows the correct place to put a dash?

- A If you have a talent and want to use it to reach others—in a positive way, that’s one thing being a great performer or creative artist can involve being seen and having people recognize your face.
- B If you have a talent and want to use it to reach others in a positive way, that’s one thing—being a great performer or creative artist can involve being seen and having people recognize your face.
- C If you have a talent and want to use it to reach others in a positive way, that’s one thing being a great performer or creative artist can involve being seen—and having people recognize your face.
- D If you have a talent and want to use it to reach others in a positive way—that’s one thing being a great performer or creative artist can involve being seen—and having people recognize your face.

The following question is not about a passage. Read and answer the question.

19 Read this sentence.

The biggest earthquake on record is one that happened in 1964 in the city of Anchorage, Alaska.

What is the correct way to write the underlined words?

- A in the City Of Anchorage, Alaska
- B in the City of Anchorage, Alaska
- C in The City of Anchorage, Alaska
- D Leave as is.

Question Number	Correct Answer	Standard	Year of Test
1	A	7RW1.3	2003
2	B	7RW1.2	2003
3	C	7RL3.2	2003
4	C	7RL3.4	2003
5	C	7RL3.5	2003
6	D	7RL3.4	2003
7	C	7RL3.3	2003
8	D	7RW1.3	2003
9	C	7RW1.3	2003
10	A	7RC2.3	2003
11	A	7RC2.6	2003
12	C	7WS1.7	2003
13	C	7WC1.7	2003
14	A	7WS1.7	2003
15	B	7WS1.1	2003
16	B	7WS1.3	2003
17	C	7WC1.7	2003
18	B	7WC1.5	2003
19	D	7WC1.6	2003