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Grade 7 English Language Arts

Sample Test Items

Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

The Road Not Taken

by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
5 To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
10 Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
15 I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
20 And that has made all the difference.



“The Road Not Taken” by Robert Frost. First published in 1915.

- 1.** In the first line of the poem, what does the word diverged mean?
- Ⓐ concluded
 - Ⓑ continued
 - Ⓒ overlapped
 - Ⓓ separated
- 2.** The speaker suggests that the two roads may essentially be the same. Which two lines support this?
- Ⓐ "Then took the other, as just as fair," (line 6)
 - Ⓑ "Though as for that the passing there" (line 9)
 - Ⓒ "And both that morning equally lay" (line 11)
 - Ⓓ "Oh, I kept the first for another day!" (line 13)
 - Ⓔ "Yet knowing how way leads on to way," (line 14)

3. Some readers think the speaker is satisfied with the decision. Which line from the poem **best** supports this interpretation?

Ⓐ "And sorry I could not travel both" (line 2)

Ⓑ "I doubted if I should ever come back." (line 15)

Ⓒ "I took the one less traveled by," (line 19)

Ⓓ "And that has made all the difference." (line 20)

4. Which line from the poem **best** shows that the speaker selected the path that initially appeared overgrown from lack of use?

Ⓐ "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood," (line 1)

Ⓑ "And looked down one as far as I could" (line 4)

Ⓒ "Because it was grassy and wanted wear;" (line 8)

Ⓓ "Though as for that the passing there" (line 9)

5. Select the two sentences that **best** summarize central ideas of the poem.

- Ⓐ A single decision can have great influence on one's life.
- Ⓑ In later life, people may reflect on earlier decisions with deep regret.
- Ⓒ At the beginning of one's travels, it is difficult to determine which road is best.
- Ⓓ After traveling one road, a different road usually seems more appealing than it did at first.
- Ⓔ It is impossible to know how life might have turned out if different decisions had been made.

6. The paths through the woods emphasize the choice that the speaker must make. Which two lines from the poem **best** support this statement?

- Ⓐ "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood," (line 1)
- Ⓑ "And looked down one as far as I could" (line 4)
- Ⓒ "I doubted if I should ever come back." (line 15)
- Ⓓ "Somewhere ages and ages hence:" (line 17)
- Ⓔ "And that has made all the difference." (line 20)

7. Which line from the poem **best** supports the idea that the speaker made the decision that initially appeared to be less common?
- Ⓐ "And sorry I could not travel both" (line 2)
 - Ⓑ "And looked down one as far as I could" (line 4)
 - Ⓒ "Then took the other, as just as fair," (line 6)
 - Ⓓ "Because it was grassy and wanted wear;" (line 8)
8. As the speaker reflects back on the decision, it is unclear whether the speaker is contented or regretful. Which two lines from the poem could be interpreted either way?
- Ⓐ "And having perhaps the better claim," (line 7)
 - Ⓑ "In leaves no step had trodden black." (line 12)
 - Ⓒ "I shall be telling this with a sigh" (line 16)
 - Ⓓ "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—" (line 18)
 - Ⓔ "And that has made all the difference." (line 20)

9. Read lines 14–15 from the poem.

**Yet knowing how way leads on to way, / I doubted if I
should ever come back.**

What could **best** be concluded from the lines?

- Ⓐ The speaker is unlikely to choose a road.
- Ⓑ The speaker is unlikely to travel the second road.
- Ⓒ The speaker will probably get lost on the first road.
- Ⓓ The speaker will probably take the same road twice.

10. Read lines 16–17.

**I shall be telling this with a sigh / Somewhere ages and
ages hence:**

What does the repetition of “ages” accomplish?

- Ⓐ It creates a sound like a sigh.
- Ⓑ It creates a sense of uncertainty.
- Ⓒ It emphasizes the passage of time.
- Ⓓ It emphasizes that the speaker is old.

Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

The Man Who Invented Roller Skates

by Laura F. Nielsen

Teresa Corneily was an Italian opera singer who liked to entertain.

- 1 At one of [Teresa Corneily’s] masquerades, a Belgian musician and inventor, John Joseph Merlin, made a grand entrance. He was wearing his new invention, ice skates fitted with rows of metal wheels instead of blades. Playing his violin, he glided gracefully into the assembly room. His entrance caused a great sensation. Unfortunately, Merlin hadn’t tested his new invention thoroughly, and he hadn’t invented brakes. On the polished floor he could neither steer nor stop. He careened across the room and smashed into Corneily’s plate glass mirror. The crash demolished the mirror and the violin, and seriously injured Merlin.

- 2 Roller skating did not catch on as a hobby for sensible people for another hundred years.

- 3 Regarded as a mechanical genius, Merlin mixed with the leading intellectuals and artists of his day. English artist Thomas Gainsborough painted his portrait, and his name appeared in the novels of friends. Merlin built harpsichords and pianofortes, as well as violins, cellos, harps, and “musical glasses”—in which sound was produced by spinning glass bowls. He even built a combination harpsichord-piano—the strings could either be struck with hammers, like a piano, or plucked, like a harpsichord—with an extra long keyboard to allow two women in hoop skirts to sit side by side and play duets.

- 4 Merlin’s inventiveness went far beyond musical instruments. He liked to ride through London’s Hyde Park on Sundays in his “mechanical chariot,” a carriage he’d equipped with a whip mechanism operated by a cord and spring, and an odometer called a “way-wise” that showed the distance traveled on a dial. He built a clock that used the change of air pressure—measured by a barometer attached to its mainspring—to wind itself automatically. He also designed a

self-pouring tea table. After filling its central samovar with tea, the elegant hostess used a foot pedal to rotate a dozen teacups in front of it, and a second pedal to fill each one.

- 5 Merlin devised many contraptions to make life easier for the sick or disabled. He designed the Morpheus chair, a wheelchair that reclined if the occupant needed to rest. His “gouty” chair—for those suffering from gout, a painful inflammation of the joints, often affecting the big toe—could be propelled and steered by turning winches on its arms. He also invented a rolling chair with a smaller wheel attached to the outside of each of the big wheels. By turning these outside wheels, the person in the chair could propel himself without the need for an attendant to push him. This is still a standard feature of wheelchairs today.
- 6 Merlin was particularly fascinated with automata—toys, curiosities, and musical instruments run by clockwork mechanisms. His automata moved by themselves (once they had been wound) and could imitate human or animal movements. Perhaps the most fascinating of all Merlin’s automata was a large, silver mechanical swan that swam in a mirrored brook, and even seemed to catch and swallow fish. American author Mark Twain wrote in *The Innocents Abroad* that Merlin’s swan “had a living grace about his movements, and a living intelligence in his eyes.”
- 7 Eventually Merlin opened a museum that he called Merlin’s Cave, linking his own name with that of King Arthur’s wizard. There he displayed more of his automata, including a well-known mechanical Turk, a turbaned figure that would repeatedly swallow a stone placed in its mouth. He had a gambling machine that could play Odds and Evens (a hand game like Paper, Scissors, Rock) for four hours before needing to be rewound. Merlin’s museum included many clockwork musical instruments—machines that produced music mechanically, often from several instruments at once. In Merlin’s Cave, visitors could also try out his inventions firsthand. The gentle rocking motion of the Hygaeian Chair, a kind of swing, was considered very healthful, or hygienic, especially to the lungs. More adventuresome visitors could ride on the Aerial Cavalcade—an elevated carousel.

8 Merlin’s mechanical magic fascinated all London. Charles Babbage, inventor of the calculating machine—a forerunner of the computer—visited Merlin’s Cave as a child, where he first became intrigued by the potential of automata.

9 Merlin died on May 4, 1803, at the age of 68. Many of his musical instruments and other inventions, including the silver swan, can still be seen in museums. Sadly, Merlin is most commonly remembered for that party at the Carlisle House. So learn this lesson from John Joseph Merlin: NEVER roller skate while playing the violin.



“The Man Who Invented Roller Skates” by Laura F. Nielsen, *Cricket*, March 1, 2015. Copyright © 2015 by Cricket Media. Used with permission of Cricket Media, Inc.

- 11.** What is the meaning of the word masquerades as it is used in paragraph 1?
- Ⓐ dances
 - Ⓑ parties
 - Ⓒ concerts
 - Ⓓ theaters
- 12.** Which two quotations provide sufficient evidence to support the author’s claim that Merlin was well-respected in his time?
- Ⓐ “His entrance caused a great sensation.” (paragraph 1)
 - Ⓑ “Roller skating did not catch on as a hobby for sensible people for another hundred years.” (paragraph 2)
 - Ⓒ “English artist Thomas Gainsborough painted his portrait, and his name appeared in the novels of friends.” (paragraph 3)
 - Ⓓ “Perhaps the most fascinating of all Merlin’s automata was a large, silver mechanical swan that swam in a mirrored brook, and even seemed to catch and swallow fish.” (paragraph 6)
 - Ⓔ “Many of his musical instruments and other inventions, including the silver swan, can still be seen in museums.” (paragraph 9)

13. What is the meaning of the word careened as it is used in paragraph 1?

Ⓐ crashed

Ⓑ flew

Ⓒ swayed

Ⓓ tripped

14. What is a central idea of the passage?

Ⓐ Inventors should try to create things that will make money for them.

Ⓑ Inventors should try to improve devices that already have been invented.

Ⓒ Inventors should try to persevere when they fail or face difficulties in their efforts.

Ⓓ Inventors should try to hire people to test their inventions for them before showing them to the public.

15. The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Read the sentence from paragraph 5.

Merlin devised many contraptions to make life easier for the sick or disabled.

What is the meaning of contraptions as it is used in the sentence?

- Ⓐ applications
- Ⓑ furnishings
- Ⓒ gadgets
- Ⓓ rollers

Part B

Which phrase from paragraph 5 helps the reader determine the meaning of contraptions?

He ○ designed the Morpheus chair, a wheelchair that reclined if the occupant needed to rest. His “gouty” ○ chair—for those suffering from gout. ○ a painful inflammation of the joints, often affecting the big toe—could be propelled and ○ steered by turning winches on its arms.

- 16.** Select the word that helps the reader understand the meaning of the word automata as it is used in paragraph 6.

His automata moved by themselves (once they had been wound) and could imitate human or animal movements. Perhaps the most fascinating of all Merlin’s automata was a large, silver mechanical swan that swam in a mirrored brook, and even seemed to catch and swallow fish.

- 17.** Which two claims made by the author lack sufficient support in the passage?

- (A) “. . . John Joseph Merlin, made a grand entrance.” (paragraph 1)
- (B) “Roller skating did not catch on as a hobby for sensible people. . . .” (paragraph 2)
- (C) “Merlin’s inventiveness went far beyond musical instruments.” (paragraph 4)
- (D) “Merlin devised many contraptions to make life easier for the sick or disabled.” (paragraph 5)
- (E) “Merlin’s mechanical magic fascinated all London.” (paragraph 8)

18. How did automation influence John Joseph Merlin’s inventions?

- Ⓐ Merlin created a better wheelchair with automation.
- Ⓑ Merlin invented roller skates powered by automation.
- Ⓒ Merlin made clocks using automation that was mechanical.
- Ⓓ Merlin designed items using automation that moved like people.

19. The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Which statement describes a conclusion reached by the author of “The Man Who Invented Roller Skates”?

- Ⓐ Merlin was creative and often envied by his peers.
- Ⓑ Merlin was a genius who created marvelous inventions.
- Ⓒ The museum Merlin opened was the first amusement park.
- Ⓓ The accident on roller skates was what caused Merlin to stop inventing toys.

Part B

Select the quotation from the passage that supports the answer to Part A.

- Ⓐ “English artist Thomas Gainsborough painted his portrait, and his name appeared in the novels of friends.” (paragraph 3)
- Ⓑ “Perhaps the most fascinating of all Merlin’s automata was a large, silver mechanical swan that swam in a mirrored brook, . . .” (paragraph 6)
- Ⓒ “Eventually Merlin opened a museum that he called Merlin’s Cave, linking his own name with that of King Arthur’s wizard.” (paragraph 7)
- Ⓓ “Many of his musical instruments and other inventions, including the silver swan, can still be seen. . . .” (paragraph 9)

20. Which quotation from the passage reveals the author’s point of view about Merlin’s lasting reputation as an inventor?

- Ⓐ “His entrance caused a great sensation.” (paragraph 1)
- Ⓑ “Merlin devised many contraptions to make life easier for the sick or disabled.” (paragraph 5)
- Ⓒ “Merlin’s mechanical magic fascinated all London.” (paragraph 8)
- Ⓓ “Sadly, Merlin is most commonly remembered for that party at the Carlisle House.” (paragraph 9)

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**Grade 7 ELA Sample Test Items
Paper-Pencil Answer Key Document**

Passage	Sequence	Key	Standard	Possible Points
The Road Not Taken	1	D	RL.7.4	1
The Road Not Taken	2	A, C	RL.7.1	2
The Road Not Taken	3	D	RL.7.3	1
The Road Not Taken	4	C	RL.7.1	1
The Road Not Taken	5	A, E	RL.7.2	2
The Road Not Taken	6	A, C	RL.7.3	2
The Road Not Taken	7	D	RL.7.3	1
The Road Not Taken	8	C, E	L.7.5	2
The Road Not Taken	9	B	RL.7.1	1
The Road Not Taken	10	C	RL.7.5	1
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	11	B	L.7.4	1
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	12	C, E	RI.7.8	2
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	13	B	RI.7.4	1
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	14	C	RI.7.2	1
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	15	C A	RI.7.4	2
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	16	C	L.7.4	1
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	17	B, E	RI.7.8	2
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	18	D	RI.7.3	1
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	19	B B	RI.7.1	2
The Man Who Invented Roller Skates	20	D	RI.7.6	1