

Alaska

COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT STANDARDS BASED ASSESSMENTS (SBA)

Reading Item Sampler

Grade 4



Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

INTRODUCTION

The Assessment Item Sampler is designed to help teachers assist students to do their best on the Alaska Comprehensive System of Student Assessment, Standards Based Assessments in grades 3 through 9. Data Recognition Corporation, the contractor designing the Standards Based Assessments, produced this item sampler from questions developed for Alaska.

The Standards Based Assessments are designed to estimate the degree to which students have mastered the Academic Performance Standards for reading, writing, and mathematics outlined in the Grade Level Expectations. These assessments are written specifically for Alaska and are the foundation of the Alaska school accountability system. Results are valuable for districts, schools, and students. Results are used to measure a school's Adequate Yearly Progress in accordance with No Child Left Behind. Additionally, these assessments, because they are consistent across grade levels, provide the ability to gauge students' academic progress. This test combined with other information from classroom and local assessments provides districts with valuable student performance data and degrees of mastery.

The Assessment Item Sampler was developed to give students and teachers a practical way to become familiar with the kinds of test questions that will appear on the Standards Based Assessments. The Assessment Item Sampler is in no way a predictor of the test taker's ability to perform on the actual Standards Based Assessments, nor are the questions the same as those on the actual test. The questions on the item sampler reflect the type of questions one might see on the actual assessment. The length of the item sampler does not reflect the amount of time it will take for a student to complete the actual Standards Based Assessments. The purpose of the sampler is to help teachers become familiar with the Standards Based Assessments and give them a tool to use with students as they prepare for the assessment.

Additional copies of the Assessment Item Sampler can be downloaded from the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development Web site by going to <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/assessment/sba.html>.

Read the passage about animals that must avoid a flood. Then, answer the questions that follow.

Mole-Rat Keeps His Feet Dry

a Kenyan Folk Tale

retold by Gail Jarrow and Paul Sherman

On the vast plains near Mount Kenya, it rained day after day for so many days that the animals became worried.

“My fur will never dry out,” said Lion, shaking his soggy mane.

“I don’t like waterfalls dripping down my neck,” said Giraffe. “It’s most uncomfortable.”

The ground trembled as Elephant approached. “A little water is fine with me,” he remarked, flapping his large ears. “But I can hear the river roaring. I fear that the floods will come, and we’ll all drown.”

“We must go to the High Place, where our feet will be dry,” said Lion.

They headed west to find dry ground high on Mount Kenya. They hadn’t gone far when they came upon a tiny mound of dirt. In the center, a pair of pink, hairless legs steadily kicked a fine spray of soil from a hole.

“Oh, Mole-Rat,” called Lion. “Come with us to the High Place, where it’s dry.”

Mole-Rat clicked his four buckteeth together. “Can’t stop to talk,” he replied. “My family and I are working on our tunnels.”

“This is no time for housekeeping,” said Giraffe. “The water’s rising.”

“I’ll let you and your family ride on my back to the High Place,” offered Elephant, lifting his trunk so that Mole-

Rat’s spray of soil would not make him sneeze.

“We’re safe and dry down in our burrow,” said Mole-Rat. “We won’t be needing your services, thank you.”

“But the floods are coming,” pleaded Lion. “Water will gush into your tunnels.”

Mole-Rat stopped kicking the soil. He called into the burrow, “Water in the tunnels!”

“Water in the tunnels!” shouted the next mole-rat in line.

“Water in the tunnels! Water in the tunnels!” The message passed through the burrow until it reached Queen Mole-Rat deep underground.

Soon Mole-Rat poked his head out again. “Queen says it’s time to close up.” And with that, he disappeared down the hole. In seconds, he’d sealed the burrow shut with a plug of dirt.

Giraffe bowed her head sadly. “Poor little Mole-Rat. I do wish he and his family would come to the High Place with us.”

“We must keep moving,” said Elephant. “I hear the river’s roar getting closer.”

For three days and three nights Lion, Giraffe, and Elephant traveled west to the High Place. It was a long and difficult journey. The rain soaked Lion’s mane until it was matted. The winds blew

Reading Item Sampler: Grade 4

against Giraffe’s long neck until it was sore. Even mighty Elephant grew tired of walking.

Finally, the three friends reached the High Place. Lion licked his wet paws. Giraffe tipped her neck so that the last drops trickled off. Elephant flapped his ears and said, “I no longer hear the roaring river. We’re safe at last.”

“But what is this?” said Lion, sniffing at a mound of fresh soil.

A pink head popped up from the center of the dirt pile.

“Mole-Rat!” said Lion. “We thought you’d been washed away.”

Mole-Rat’s whiskers twitched. “All dry and cozy down here.”

“How did you arrive before we did?” asked Elephant.

“A shortcut,” replied Mole-Rat.

“You mean you dug your way to the High Place?” asked Giraffe, blinking her long eyelashes in disbelief.

“I told you that the rains would cause us no problems,” said Mole-Rat.

“Though you and your family are small creatures, your strength is great,” said Elephant.

“Is there room for us in your tunnels?” asked Lion. “It sounds as if it would be a more pleasant route home than the one we took here.”

“Sorry. Got to go,” replied Mole-Rat. Kicking a spray of dirt into Lion’s face, he disappeared back into his tunnel.

Never again did the other animals worry about Mole-Rat getting his feet wet.

Reading Item Sampler: Grade 4

Reporting Category: Analysis of General Content and Structure
Grade Level Expectation: 2.9.1

1. Which gives a character's opinion?
 - A "Mole-Rat's whiskers twitched."
 - B "This is no time for housekeeping."
 - C "The ground trembled as Elephant approached."
 - D "They headed west to find dry ground high on Mount Kenya."

Reporting Category: Forming a General Understanding
Grade Level Expectation: 2.2.1

2. Which animal offers to carry Mole-Rat to the High Place?
 - A Lion
 - B Giraffe
 - C Elephant
 - D Queen Mole-Rat

Reading Item Sampler: Grade 4

Reporting Category: Word Identification Skills
Grade Level Expectation: 2.1.1

3. What does the suffix “less” mean in the phrase “hairless legs?”
- A full
 - B before
 - C within
 - D without

Reporting Category: Forming a General Understanding
Grade Level Expectation: 2.2.1

4. In the passage, why do the animals believe that the plains will flood?
- A Lion sees storm clouds coming.
 - B Elephant hears the river roaring.
 - C Mole-Rat warns about heavy rain.
 - D Giraffe sees Mole-Rat digging tunnels.

Reading Item Sampler: Grade 4

Reporting Category: Forming a General Understanding

Grade Level Expectation: 2.2.4

Short Constructed Response (2 points)

5. What is one word that describes Mole-Rat's character? Use one example from the passage to support your response.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“Mole-Rat Keeps His Feet Dry” reprinted by permission of SPIDER magazine, February 2002, copyright © 2002 by Gail Jarrow and Paul Sherman.



**Reading Item Sampler
Grade 4**

Copyright © 2005 by Alaska Department of Education & Early Development. The materials contained in this publication may be duplicated by Alaska educators for local classroom use. This permission does not extend to the duplication of materials for commercial use.