

Alaska

COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT STANDARDS BASED ASSESSMENTS (SBA)

Reading Item Sampler

Grade 5



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 two friends' adventure. Then, answer the questions that follow.

Snow Adventure

by Lucy Jane Bledsoe

Tiffany limped across the meadow, through the blowing snow, as best she could. Even if it seemed impossible, I didn't know what else to do but try to get back to the highway.

Everything was white, absolutely white. There was nothing to see but flying snowflakes. It was much colder, too, because the wind had a big bite. Walking made me warm, though, and the contrast of my warm face with the cold air fogged up my glasses. It was like walking blind.

It was then that I realized what we had to do. If we tried to walk out in a blizzard, we would get lost. It had taken us well over two hours—not counting all our stops—to get here in good weather, daylight, and with four strong ankles. It could take us three or four times that long now. We wouldn't get out before dark. We'd get very wet from the snow. We had to find somewhere in the forest, somewhere dry, to spend the night.

The wind was howling so loudly now that it was hard to be heard. I shouted to Tiffany, "We're going back. To the forest."

She made that face of hers, the stubborn one where her nostrils flare and her jaw clenches. "Okay," she said, understanding, and turned around.

As she limped back toward the woods, she yelled, "This is all my fault. I'm sorry."

But she was wrong. It wasn't her fault. The whole day had been my idea. I

was the one who insisted we keep going, even as the weather changed.

"It's not your fault," I shouted back. "Besides, I'm glad I'm not alone out here."

Then I had an idea.

"Hey," I said. "Remember the cedar tree? The one with the heavy branches that reach down to the ground? It was perfectly dry in there. We could stay there for the night."

"If we can find it again."

"Sure. It's right on the edge of the forest."

But when we got back to the forest, we didn't see it. We walked a long way in one direction, then a long way in the other. How could such a big tree disappear?

"I have to rest a minute," Tiffany said. Her ankle was really bothering her. She grabbed a big snow-covered tree branch. White snow swirled all around us. We could hardly see a thing.

"Hey," Tiffany said, shaking the branch she was holding. "Isn't *this* our tree?"

I squatted down and examined the lower branches. Sure enough, the thick mesh of branches reached down and touched the ground.

"Good observation," I said, lifting my mittened hand for a high five. She slapped it and almost fell off the crutch.

Reading Item Sampler: Grade 5

“Whoa,” I said, steadying her. “Let’s go inside.”

I dove in first and held the heavy branch up while Tiffany crawled in after me. Then I scooted over to the other side of the trunk to brush the snow off my parka. That way our side would stay dry.

“This side of the trunk is our porch,” I told Tiffany. “Come brush your coat off over here.”

“Totally cool,” she said. “This is the coolest fort I’ve ever seen.”

She was right. The bed of cedar needles was scratchy but dry and cushiony. The whole tree smelled sweet and fresh. Occasionally a really strong gust of wind pushed through the branches, but mostly it was quiet and calm inside our fort. I took off my glasses and polished them on my shirt.

We each had a drink of water. Then I crawled to the edge of the fort, reached under the branches, and scooped some snow into the water bottle to keep it full. I had learned this trick from Dad. As long as there’s lots of water in the bottle, added snow will melt. That’s why you have to do it every time you drink.

“Are you scared?” I asked Tiffany.

“No,” she said firmly. Then she added, “Sometimes when I start to feel scared, I pretend the scary thing is something different. Like all that snow falling? I decided that the earth is dressing up to go to a ball. The snow is a big, soft, elegant cape she’s throwing on. Then it’s not so scary.”

We both snuggled up closer to the cedar trunk.

Reading Item Sampler: Grade 5

Reporting Category: Forming a General Understanding
Grade Level Expectation: 2.2.4

1. As used in the passage, the phrase “the wind had a big bite” means the wind is
 - A terribly cold.
 - B quiet and calm.
 - C swirling around.
 - D warm to the face.

Reporting Category: Forming a General Understanding
Grade Level Expectation: 2.2.4

2. One of the friends thinks that it will take more than two hours to get back to the highway because
 - A the temperature is falling.
 - B they have to find water.
 - C it is hard to hear each other.
 - D Tiffany’s ankle is injured.

Reading Item Sampler: Grade 5

Reporting Category: Analysis of General Content and Structure
Grade Level Expectation: 2.8.1

3. How does Tiffany react when she hears they will have to go back toward the woods?
- A She refuses to go.
 - B She blames her friend.
 - C She understands the reasons.
 - D She thinks it is “totally cool.”

Reporting Category: Word Identification Skills
Grade Level Expectation: 2.1.4

4. As used in the passage, which word is a synonym for “elegant”?
- A white
 - B snowy
 - C beautiful
 - D enormous

Reading Item Sampler: Grade 5

Reporting Category: Forming a General Understanding

Grade Level Expectation: 2.5.2

Short Constructed Response (2 points)

5. Explain how the friends get water while they are in the forest. Use two examples from the passage to support your response.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“Snow Adventure” (originally “Predator and Prey”) copyright © 1997 by Lucy Jane Bledsoe from TRACKS IN THE SNOW. Used by permission of Holiday House, Inc.



**Reading Item Sampler
Grade 5**

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.