

NATIONAL LANGUAGE ARTS

Grade 2 Contest

PART I: VOCABULARY

Directions: Read each sentence. Decide which word means the same or nearly the same as the word that is underlined in the sentence. Write the letter of the correct word on the answer sheet.

1. The fierce bark of my neighbor's dog is very frightening to the children.
A. loud
B. violent
C. plain
D. still
2. Marisa is the most dependable friend I have ever known.
A. reliable
B. curious
C. pleasant
D. unusual
3. When I get tired of my old toys, I offer them to my little brother.
A. loan
B. take
C. bring
D. give
4. I did not feel ready to take the spelling test because I had no time to study.
A. tired
B. hopeful
C. prepared
D. happy

PART II: WORD RELATIONSHIPS

Directions: Read the words in each group. Three of the words belong together. One word does not belong. Write the letter of the word that does not belong on the answer sheet.

5. A. zebra
C. gerbil
- B. lion
D. tiger
6. A. branches
C. roots
- B. grass
D. leaves
7. A. eggs
C. soda
- B. milk
D. juice
8. A. post office
C. museum
- B. park
D. library

PART III: READING COMPREHENSION

Directions: Read each paragraph. Answer each question, writing the letter of the correct answer in the space next to the number on your answer sheet.

Paragraph A:

Although they live in water, whales are not fish. They are mammals and are warm-blooded. Their thick layer of fat helps keep them warm in cold water. Whales propel themselves through the water with their tails. Most of them have a stiff fin on their back to help them stay on course while they swim. Whales have flippers on each side of the front of their body. They use them to steer, to stop, and to knock away an attacker. Whales have lungs and breathe through a blowhole at the top of their head. When a whale comes to the surface and exhales, water in the blowhole bursts into the air.

Whale babies grow very quickly. Blue whales grow the fastest of all. They drink about forty-four gallons of milk a day and gain seven pounds an hour. From the time it is born underwater, a baby whale stays very close to its mother. Even though it cannot swim yet, the first thing a newborn whale must do is come to the surface of the water for air. Its mother helps it to the surface until the baby is able to swim on its own. The mother spends many months with her baby until it can take care of itself.

Blue whales, the largest animals on the earth, can grow to over eighty-five feet and weigh as much as one hundred tons. Because of their large size and incredible speed, whales have few enemies besides humans. However, pollution is the greatest threat that whales face today. Pollution interferes with the ability of whales to navigate, making them swim into shallow waters and wash ashore. Oil spills, sewage dumping, and toxic waste cause the foods that whales eat to become poisons in their bodies.

Go on ---->

9. Whales use their flippers to _____.
- A. breathe when they come to the surface
 - B. keep themselves warm in cold water
 - C. steer, to stop, and to knock away an attacker
 - D. propel themselves through the water
10. A baby whale stays with its mother until it _____.
- A. can take care of itself
 - B. grows to over eighty-five feet
 - C. can swim into shallow water
 - D. bursts water into the air through its blowhole
11. The best title for this story is _____.
- A. "The Story of Mammals"
 - B. "All About Whales"
 - C. "Baby Animals"
 - D. "Hunting For Whales"

Paragraph B:

Clean white walls and shiny floor,
"Quiet Please" sign on the door,
People going out and in,
One man has a great big grin.

"Well, come in please," he says to me.
But I don't smile, I want to flee.
I'd rather not be coming here,
Now suddenly I'm full of fear.

It seems to me this won't be fun.
I wish I could get up and run.
Tell me what's this all about?
Why must my tonsils now come out?

"Guess what," I tell him, "I'm better you see.
Can't I just take them home with me?"
"No," he says, "Let's make a deal."
He promises ice cream for my next meal.

And probably before I leave,
Balloons and presents I'll receive.
When I'm home, mom will care for me.
I'll rest a lot and watch TV.

But do you know the best news yet?
It's something I won't soon forget.
For fourteen days I'll get to stay
Out of school. . .hip hip hooray!

12. In Stanza 1 the person in the poem is probably _____.

- A. in school
- B. going home
- C. coming into the hospital
- D. leaving the hospital

13. In Stanza 4 the person in the poem most likely says that he is all better, because he _____.

- A. really wants to go home
- B. would like to get presents
- C. really wants to get some ice cream
- D. would like to stay in the hospital

14. In the last stanza of the poem, the person in the poem lets us know that _____.

- A. he can't wait to go back to school
- B. he is happy to be missing a lot of school
- C. he wishes he still had his tonsils
- D. you have to be quiet in a hospital

Paragraph C:

The youngest American to circle the earth in a spacecraft and the first American woman in space were the same person, Sally Ride. Born on May 26, 1951, Sally grew up knowing that she could do anything she set her mind to do. She believed in herself, worked hard, and was successful in school and in sports. She was determined to do her best in whatever she tried. She also liked to travel with her family and learn all about people in other countries.

Even though Sally was younger than her classmates, she graduated at the top of her class. Her favorite subject was science. In college Sally studied the science of stars and planets called astrophysics. She graduated from Stanford University and became a research assistant, but what she really wanted to do was be an astronaut. NASA looked for people who were the very best in what they did. Only thirty-five of those who applied to the space program were actually chosen for the astronaut class in 1978. Sally Ride was one of them.

Sally was only thirty-one years old when she went into space in 1982. She rode in the spaceship Challenger and was a mission specialist. When the six-day mission was over, Sally Ride had made history. One year later she became the mission specialist on the second flight of the Challenger spacecraft. She ran scientific experiments and helped put two satellites into orbit. She even worked a fifty-foot robot arm, which was the first to be used in space. The mission took six days to complete and traveled 2.5 million miles. Sally Ride's ability and hard work helped to make the missions a success.

Go on ---->

15. Sally Ride began to train as an astronaut in

- A. 1982
- B. 1951
- C. 1978
- D. 1983

16. On the second Challenger mission Sally

- A. studied astrophysics
- B. worked a fifty-foot robot arm
- C. was a research assistant
- D. spent ten days in orbit

17. This story tells us that Sally Ride was

- A. the first person to ever orbit the earth
- B. very shy as a child
- C. the only woman who wanted to be an astronaut
- D. the first American woman in space

PART IV: SPELLING

Directions: Read each sentence. On your answer sheet write the letter of the word that is spelled correctly.

18. Our whole family plans to go to the _____ the next time it is in town.
A. cercuss B. cirrcus
C. circus D. cercis
19. My dog shows his _____ by wagging his tail.
A. happiness B. hapyness
C. happyness D. happenis
20. We had to clear _____ off our desks before the teacher would hand out our test papers.
A. evrything B. everething
C. everthing D. everything
21. The best part of my fishing trip was when I _____ a ten-pound trout.
A. caght B. cought
C. caught D. cawtt

PART V: LANGUAGE STRUCTURE

Directions: Read the sentence carefully. Choose the correct word for the underlined space in the sentence. Write the letter of that word on your answer sheet.

22. Zachary is always _____ that someday he will have his own puppy.
- A. dreamed B. dreaming
C. dream D. dreams
23. The children _____ all the snow off their clothes before they came into the house.
- A. shake B. shook
C. shakes D. shaked
24. All of the second graders _____ to gym at the same time.
- A. going B. gone
C. go D. goes
25. Mr. Anderson was sure that no one _____ the answer to the bonus question on the spelling test.
- A. know B. knowed
C. known D. knew