



Grade 8

FCAT 2.0 Reading Sample Questions

The intent of these sample test materials is to orient teachers and students to the types of questions on FCAT 2.0 tests. By using these materials, students will become familiar with the types of items and response formats they will see on the actual test. The sample questions and answers are not intended to demonstrate the length of the actual test, nor should student responses be used as an indicator of student performance on the actual test. Additional information about test items can be found in the *FCAT 2.0 Test Item Specifications* at <http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcat2/itemspecs.asp>.

The FCAT 2.0 Reading tests and sample questions and answers are based on the 2007 Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.

The sample questions for students and the sample answers for teachers will only be available online, at <http://fcat.fldoe.org/fcat2/fcatitem.asp>.

Directions for Answering the Reading Sample Questions

Mark your answers on the Sample Answer Sheet on page 15. If you don't understand a question, ask your teacher to explain it to you. Your teacher has the answers to the sample questions.

Read the poem "The Kite" before answering Numbers 1 through 6.

THE KITE

This odd bird with wings always outstretched
 spends most of the time sleeping in my garage.
 But there are days when the wind is just right,
 and the sky spreads open its blue tapestry,
 and the bird begins to wake from her sleep,
 anxious to take wing on the moving currents of air.
 How do I know this, one might ask?
 Because I too begin to stir on these glorious days
 for want of open space and the freedom
 to drift as far as my imagination will take me.
 It is then that I go and lift the door to let out
 all the winter shadows, and scoop her off the floor,
 and tuck her beneath my arm as we head off for the shore.
 There, I slowly let her lift into the moving stream,
 spooling out, inch by inch, the thin line that binds us.
 In minutes, she is dancing up high in the clear blue gusts,

diving
 and dipping, rising and
 arcing, racing,
 swooping,
 soaring, gliding . . .

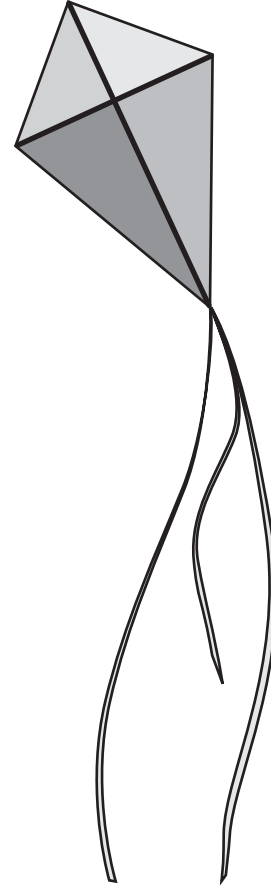
With every pivot and turn I am with her, my heart

racing,
 swooping,
 soaring, gliding . . .

But as I watch her and feel the gentle tug of our line,
 I begin to understand that there is something holding us back,
 that this springtime dance needs stretching out,
 that there is no end to wind and sky
 or where or when or what we can imagine.

This is too much joy to be tethered to a string,
 and taking one last look,
 I slowly open my hand

and let us go . . .



"The Kite" property of the Florida Department of Education.

Now answer Numbers 1 through 6 on your Sample Answer Sheet on page 15. Base your answers on the poem "The Kite."

1 Read these lines from the poem.

**This odd bird with wings always outstretched
spends most of the time sleeping in my garage.**

Based on the poem, what does the speaker mean by these lines?

- A. The kite is rarely used.
- B. The kite has no appeal.
- C. The kite serves no purpose.
- D. The kite is awkwardly constructed.

2 Which pair of words from the poem are most similar in meaning?

- F. scoop, tug
- G. binds, gusts
- H. currents, stream
- I. glorious, outstretched

3 Read this line from the poem.

that this springtime dance needs stretching out,

What does the speaker mean in this line?

- A. The kite needs a new string.
- B. The seasons need to change.
- C. The kite needs a stronger wind.
- D. The imagination needs endless freedom.

- 4 Which word best describes the poem's overall tone?
- F. comforting
 - G. doubtful
 - H. impatient
 - I. reflective
- 5 How is the main conflict in the poem resolved?
- A. The winter ends.
 - B. The string is released.
 - C. The garage is opened.
 - D. The wind strengthens.
- 6 With which statement would the poet most likely agree?
- F. Joy is harder to find the more one looks for it.
 - G. Only when we are free can we be truly happy.
 - H. Happiness results from discipline and hard work.
 - I. What is joyful to one may be sorrowful to another.

Read the article “Rivers and Streams” before answering Numbers 7 through 13.

Rivers and Streams

by Patricia A. Fink Martin

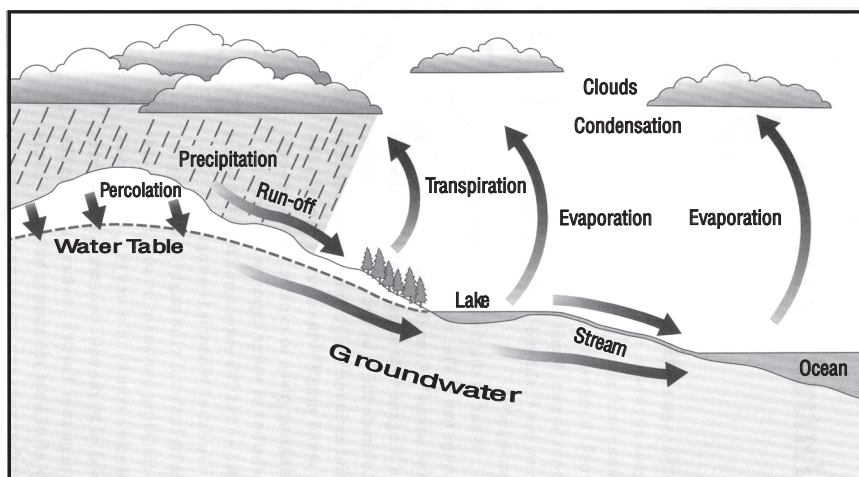
IT’S ALWAYS MOVING BUT IT NEVER GOES ANYWHERE. It can blast holes in solid stone and carve through massive layers of rock. It moves huge boulders, trees, and even houses. Much of the surface of Earth has been shaped and sculpted by its movement.

What is the force that accomplishes these feats? The moving water of rivers and streams. From the thundering majesty of Niagara Falls to the crashing, turbulent Colorado River, we are drawn to the power and excitement of running water. But even a small neighborhood creek can be a fascinating place to explore. The never-ending flow of water captures our attention. Where did this water come from? How did it get here? Where is it going?

Whether it’s the mighty Mississippi or a trickling mountain brook, all rivers and streams consist of water that is not reabsorbed by the soil. Most channels of water cut across Earth’s surface, seeking the path of least resistance, but some rivers and streams run underground for part of their journey. Regardless, the water flows on, joining other streams and rivers on its way to the sea.

The ocean is both the end and the beginning of water’s endless journey. Through the cycle of evaporation and precipitation, water falls on land in the form of rains or snow and returns to the ocean by way of mountain brooks, creeks, streams, and rivers.

The Hydrologic Cycle



We use many terms to describe bodies of running water, including arroyo, kill, run, and reach. Spring runs begin where water seeps from the ground, usually in a slow trickle. A river is a larger body of flowing water that usually receives several tributaries along its route.

Because these terms lack precise meanings, scientists use a classification system to rank, or order, streams according to the way their channels link up along the journey from the source to the ocean.

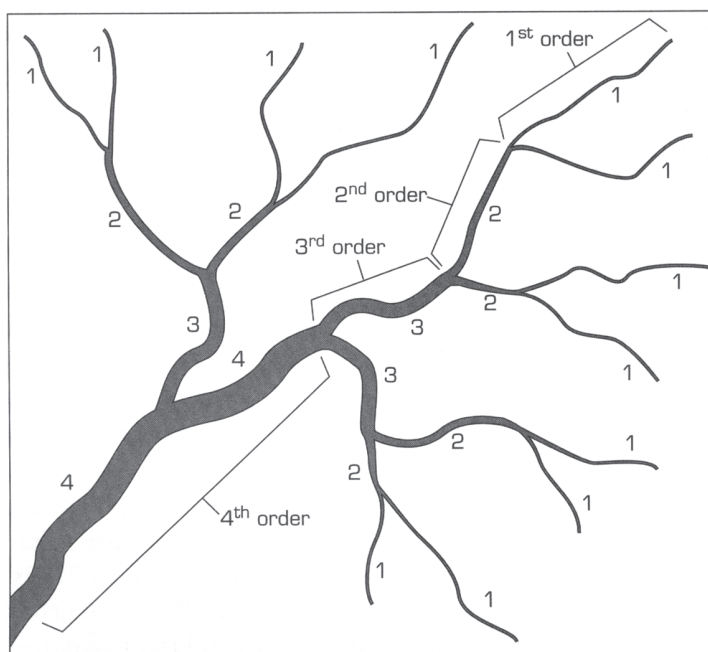
Small streams that carry water from a source such as a spring don't usually flow directly into the ocean. Instead, they flow into other streams which, in turn, combine to form larger streams. These larger streams unite to form rivers, which eventually lead to the ocean.

Keeping Streams in Order

This chain or network of streams and rivers can be classified according to **stream order**. The streams at the beginning of the system are called first-order streams. With no tributaries, first-order streams receive water directly from a source such as a spring, a lake, melting snow, rainwater, or even a melting glacier. These streams include the narrow cascading waters of steep mountain brooks and the cool, clear water of springs.

As the water continues its journey, these small first-order streams flow into other such streams and form second-order channels. Second-order streams combine to form larger third-order streams. Two third-order streams join to form a fourth-order stream.

Stream Order



What do these streams look like? Imagine a trout fisherman knee deep in the water. Against the sound of running water, you hear the swish of the line as she casts and the soft splash of the lure as it strikes the surface. You have probably just pictured a third- or fourth-order stream.

By the time a stream reaches the seventh order, the channel is wide and deep, and the water is heavy with mud and silt. These large streams are rivers. Streams rarely reach the tenth order before flowing into the ocean. The Mississippi River is the only example of a tenth-order stream in North America—some people even classify it as a thirteenth-order stream!

Running waters can also be classified according to the frequency

of water flow. Permanent or **perennial streams** flow all year round. **Intermittent streams** flow only during the wet season or after a period of heavy rain. At other times, these intermittent streams are just dry streambeds. Even more short-lived are the **ephemeral streams** found in very dry areas of the western United States. These streams flow in deep ravines or arroyos only during intense rainfall.

But a stream or river is more than just a body of flowing water. It includes the plants and animals that live in and around it, the nutrients dissolved in its water, and the soil and rocks carried in its flow. Even the dead leaves and branches that drop into the water are important parts of that stream. This unique body of water, with its living and nonliving components, constitutes an ecosystem.

“Rivers and Streams”: Copyright © 1999 by Patricia A. Fink Martin. Reprinted by permission of the publisher Franklin Watts, Scholastic Library Publishing. All rights reserved.

Now answer Numbers 7 through 13 on your Sample Answer Sheet on page 15. Base your answers on the article “Rivers and Streams.”

7 Read this sentence from the article.

From the thundering majesty of Niagara Falls to the crashing, turbulent Colorado River, we are drawn to the power and excitement of running water.

As used in this sentence, the word *turbulent* means

- A. enormous.
- B. raging.
- C. scenic.
- D. swift.

8 Which characteristic is typical of a fourth-order stream?

- F. It depends on water from heavy rains.
- G. It runs directly from a water source.
- H. It combines shallow tributaries.
- I. It flows directly into the ocean.

9 Based on the article, intermittent streams and ephemeral streams are similar in all the following ways EXCEPT for

- A. their typical location.
- B. their source of water.
- C. the speed of their current.
- D. the irregularity of their volume.

- 10 Read this sentence from the article.

The ocean is both the end and the beginning of water’s endless journey.

The author uses the words *endless journey* most likely to

- F. explain how water travels the path of least resistance.
 - G. emphasize that water moves through continuous stages.
 - H. tell how water has a tendency to pool into large bodies of water.
 - I. show how water from a spring merges with a network of streams.
- 11 According to the article, the distinguishing characteristic of streams found in deep ravines or arroyos is
- A. the width of their channels.
 - B. the frequency of their water flow.
 - C. the direction that their water runs.
 - D. the components that make up their ecosystem.
- 12 With which statement would the author of this article most likely agree?
- F. The ranking of rivers and streams is based on their tributaries.
 - G. Tenth-order streams are the most common streams in North America.
 - H. The ranking of streams helps scientists to estimate the amount of rainfall.
 - I. The force and size of a body of water determines whether it can support an ecosystem.
- 13 What is the primary reason that water continuously returns to the ocean through rivers and streams?
- A. Water follows the path of least resistance.
 - B. Rivers and streams do not often flow underground.
 - C. Water cycles through evaporation and precipitation.
 - D. Rivers and streams consist of water that is not absorbed by soil.

Read the passage “The Golden Touch” before answering Numbers 14 through 21.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was a popular nineteenth-century American writer known for his use of symbolism and his moral insight. In “The Golden Touch,” Hawthorne’s version of the classic myth, greedy King Midas desires gold more than anything else in the world. A mystical being visits Midas and grants him one wish: everything he touches will turn to gold.

The Golden Touch

from a tale retold

by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–1864)



Midas started up, in a kind of joyful frenzy, and ran about the room, grasping at everything that happened to be in his way. He seized one of the bedposts, and it became immediately a fluted golden pillar. He pulled aside a window curtain, in order to admit a clear spectacle of the wonders which he was performing; and the tassel grew heavy in his hand—a mass of gold. He took up a book from the table. At his first touch, it assumed the appearance of such a splendidly bound and gilt-edged volume as one often meets with, nowadays; but, on running his fingers through the leaves, behold! it was a bundle of thin golden plates, in which all the wisdom of the book had grown illegible. He hurriedly put on his clothes, and was enraptured to see himself in a magnificent suit of gold cloth, which retained its flexibility and softness, although it burdened him a little with its weight. He drew out his handkerchief, which little Marygold had hemmed for him. That was likewise gold.

Midas now took his spectacles from his pocket, and put them on his nose, in order that he might see more distinctly what he was about. To his great perplexity, however, excellent as the glasses

were, he discovered that he could not possibly see through them. But this was the most natural thing in the world; for, on taking them off, the transparent crystals turned out to be plates of yellow metal, and, of course, were worthless as spectacles, though valuable as gold. It struck Midas, as rather inconvenient that, with all his wealth, he could never again be rich enough to own a pair of serviceable spectacles.

“It is no great matter, nevertheless,” said he to himself, very philosophically. “We cannot expect any great good, without its being accompanied with some small inconvenience. The Golden Touch is worth the sacrifice of a pair of spectacles, at least, if not of one’s very eyesight. My own eyes will serve for ordinary purposes, and little Marygold will soon be old enough to read to me.”

What was usually a king’s breakfast in the days of Midas, I really do not know, and cannot stop now to investigate. To the best of my belief, however, on this particular morning, the breakfast consisted of hot cakes, some nice little brook trout, roasted potatoes, fresh boiled eggs, and coffee, for King Midas himself, and a bowl of bread and milk for his daughter Marygold. At all events, this is a breakfast fit to set before a king; and, whether he had it or not, King Midas could not have had a better.

He took one of the nice little trouts on his plate, and, by way of experiment, touched its tail with his finger. To his horror, it was immediately transmuted from an admirably fried brook trout into a gold-fish, though not one of those gold-fishes which people often keep in glass globes, as ornaments for the parlor. Its little bones were now golden wires; its fins and tail were thin plates of gold; and there were the marks of the fork in it, and all the delicate, frothy appearance of a nicely fried fish, exactly imitated in metal. A very pretty piece of work, as you may suppose; only King Midas, just at that moment, would much rather have had a real trout in his dish than this elaborate and valuable imitation of one.

“I don’t quite see,” thought he to himself, “how I am to get any breakfast!”

He took one of the smoking-hot cakes, and had scarcely broken it, when, to his cruel mortification, though, a moment before, it had been of the whitest wheat, it assumed the yellow hue of meal. To say the truth, if it had really been a hot cake, Midas would have prized it a good deal more than he now did. Almost in despair, he helped himself to a boiled egg, which immediately underwent a change similar to those of the trout and the cake. The egg, indeed, might have been mistaken for one of those which the famous goose, in the story book, was in the habit of laying; but King Midas was the only goose that had had anything to do with the matter.

“Well, this is a quandary!” thought he, leaning back in his chair, and looking quite enviously at little Marygold, who was now eating her bread and milk with great satisfaction. “Such a costly breakfast before me, and nothing that can be eaten!”

Hoping to avoid what he now felt to be a considerable inconvenience, King Midas next snatched a hot potato, and attempted to cram it into his mouth, and swallow it in a hurry. But the Golden Touch was too nimble for him. He found his mouth full, not of mealy potato, but of solid metal, which so burnt his tongue that he roared aloud, and, jumping up from the table, began to dance and stamp about the room, both with pain and affright.

“Father, dear father!” cried little Marygold, who was a very affectionate child, “pray what is the matter? Have you burnt your mouth?”

“Ah, dear child,” groaned Midas, dolefully, “I don’t know what is to become of your poor father!”

And, truly, my dear little folks, did you ever hear of such a pitiable case in all your lives? Here was literally the richest breakfast that could be set before a king, and its very richness made it absolutely good for nothing. The poorest laborer, sitting down to his crust of bread and cup of water, was far better off than King Midas, whose delicate food was really worth its weight in gold. And what was to be done? Already, at breakfast, Midas was excessively hungry. Would he be less so by dinner-time? And how ravenous would be his appetite for supper, which must undoubtedly consist of the same sort of indigestible dishes as those now before him! How many days, think you, would he survive a continuance of this rich fare?

“The Golden Touch” by Nathaniel Hawthorne. In the public domain. Image: Copyright © Getty Images / Jupiterimages / liquidLibrary.

Now answer Numbers 14 through 21 on your Sample Answer Sheet on page 15. Base your answers on the passage “The Golden Touch.”

14 Which statement describes King Midas at the beginning of the passage?

- F. He is confused by his trouble with daily activities.
- G. He is desperate to reverse his wish to his advantage.
- H. He is pleased that his daughter can enjoy her breakfast.
- I. He is happy about the possible fortune his wish can bring.

15 Read this excerpt from the passage.

At his first touch, it assumed the appearance of such a splendidly bound and gilt-edged volume as one often meets with, nowadays; but, on running his fingers through the leaves, behold! it was a bundle of thin golden plates, in which all the wisdom of the book had grown illegible.

Which definition provides the meaning of *leaves* as it is used in the excerpt above?

- A. sheets of paper secured together
- B. removable sections for a table top
- C. hinges on a folding door or shutter
- D. types of vegetation growing on plants

16 Why does King Midas decide to wear his spectacles?

- F. to admire his golden clothing
- G. to request his daughter to read to him
- H. to carefully inspect the breakfast set before him
- I. to better appreciate the golden transformation of the book

- 17 Read this sentence from the passage.

Here was literally the richest breakfast that could be set before a king, and its very richness made it absolutely good for nothing.

Which sentence below correctly expresses the meaning of the sentence above?

- A. King Midas believes he deserves the best breakfast money can buy.
 - B. King Midas will remain hungry since his breakfast has actually turned to gold.
 - C. King Midas knows he will be turned into gold if he attempts to eat his breakfast.
 - D. King Midas will refuse to eat because he dislikes the expensive foods on the breakfast table.
- 18 What can the reader determine from information found in the italicized introduction and the last paragraph of the passage?
- F. Both provide a message about greed.
 - G. Both present ideas about making wishes.
 - H. Both relay a story about thinking carefully.
 - I. Both clarify the meaning of a classic myth.
- 19 Which statement from the passage supports the idea that Midas was actually in a more unfortunate situation after his wish was granted?
- A. "We cannot expect any great good, without its being accompanied with some small inconvenience."
 - B. "My own eyes will serve for ordinary purposes, and little Marygold will soon be old enough to read to me."
 - C. "The poorest laborer, sitting down to his crust of bread and cup of water, was far better off than King Midas, whose delicate food was really worth its weight in gold."
 - D. "He hurriedly put on his clothes, and was enraptured to see himself in a magnificent suit of gold cloth, which retained its flexibility and softness, although it burdened him a little with its weight."

- 20** Based on the end of the passage, which statement describes the author’s tone?
- F. sorrowful toward King Midas’s fate
 - G. playful about King Midas’s situation
 - H. judgmental of King Midas’s behavior
 - I. impatient with King Midas’s manners
- 21** What is the theme of this passage?
- A. It is wise to be careful about your wishes.
 - B. Sharing with others results in great joy and rewards.
 - C. Overcoming challenges and misfortunes brings happiness.
 - D. It is often difficult to see daily experiences in a positive way.

Name _____

Answer all the Reading Sample Questions on this Sample Answer Sheet.

1 (A) (B) (C) (D)

8 (F) (G) (H) (I)

15 (A) (B) (C) (D)

2 (F) (G) (H) (I)

9 (A) (B) (C) (D)

16 (F) (G) (H) (I)

3 (A) (B) (C) (D)

10 (F) (G) (H) (I)

17 (A) (B) (C) (D)

4 (F) (G) (H) (I)

11 (A) (B) (C) (D)

18 (F) (G) (H) (I)

5 (A) (B) (C) (D)

12 (F) (G) (H) (I)

19 (A) (B) (C) (D)

6 (F) (G) (H) (I)

13 (A) (B) (C) (D)

20 (F) (G) (H) (I)

7 (A) (B) (C) (D)

14 (F) (G) (H) (I)

21 (A) (B) (C) (D)



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