



Maine Through Year Assessment

Item Type Sampler Reading Grades 6–8

Student's Name:

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Directions:

On the following pages of your booklet are passages and questions for the Grades 6–8 *Maine Through Year Assessment Reading Item Type Sampler*.

Read these directions carefully before beginning this item type sampler.

This item type sampler will include several different types of questions. Some questions are based on one or two passages. Multiple Choice questions will ask you to select a single answer. Multiple Select questions will ask you to select multiple correct answers from among five or more answer choices. For some questions, there may be two parts, Part A and Part B, where each part has a Multiple Choice or Multiple Select question.

For all questions:

- Read each question carefully and choose the best answer.
- You may use scratch paper to make notes.
- Be sure to answer ALL the questions.

When you come to the word STOP, you have finished the Grade 6–8 Reading Item Type Sampler.

READING — ITEM TYPE SAMPLER

1. Read the passage.

The wind whipped through the trees while ice and snow pelted the old cabin. Nate knew things would likely get worse before they got better. Although the storm outside was ferocious, Nate left the comfort of the cabin and trudged toward home.

Which word is closest in meaning to ferocious as it is used in the passage?

- A. aggressive
 - B. barbaric
 - C. inhuman
 - D. intense
2. Read the passage.

from **The Wonderful Wizard of Oz**

When Aunt Em came there to live she was a young, pretty wife. The sun and wind had changed her, too. They had taken the sparkle from her eyes and left them a sober gray; they had taken the red from her cheeks and lips, and they were gray also. She was thin and gaunt, and never smiled now. When Dorothy, who was an orphan, first came to her, Aunt Em had been so startled by the child's laughter that she would scream and press her hand upon her heart whenever Dorothy's merry voice reached her ears; and she still looked at the little girl with wonder that she could find anything to laugh at.

(from The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum)

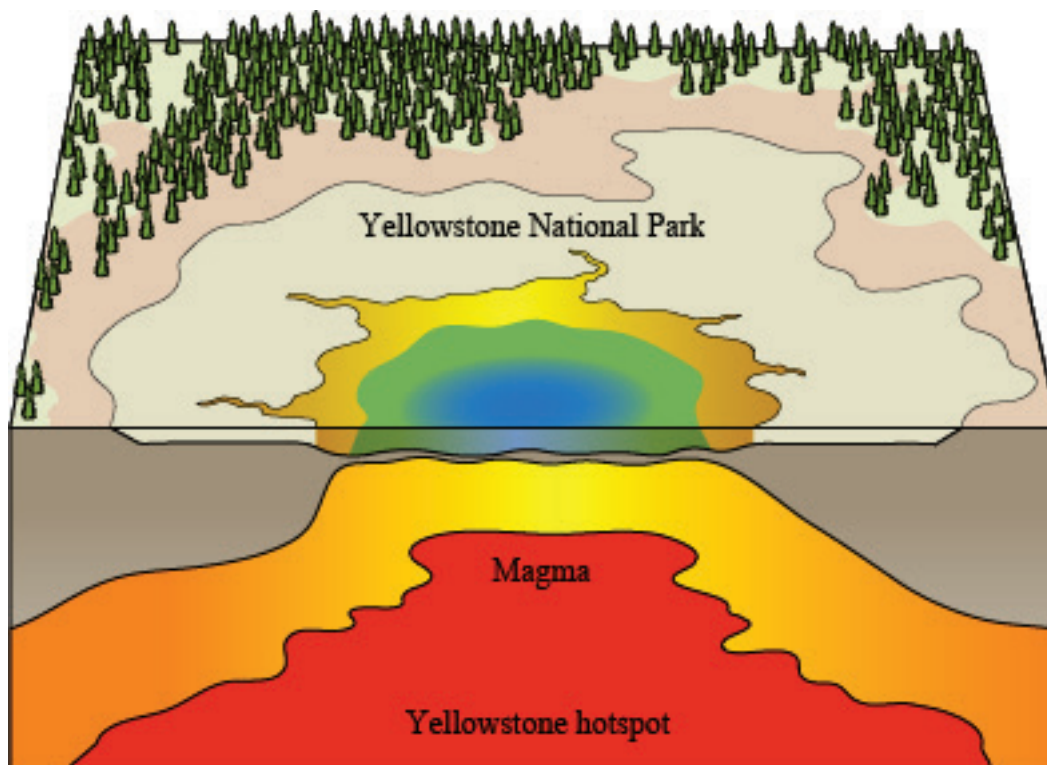
Which word best describes Aunt Em?

- A. ashamed
- B. cruel
- C. fearful
- D. miserable

The Giant Hotspot below Yellowstone

More Than Geysers and Grizzlies

- 1 For many people, a mention of Yellowstone National Park brings to mind geysers like Old Faithful, grizzly bears, and free-roaming bison. But they may be unaware of the fact that the park sits atop a very large hotspot. A hotspot is an area of Earth’s mantle, located beneath the crust, that contains superheated, slowly rising magma that flows as lava when it reaches the surface.



Hotspot Consequences

- 2 Although Yellowstone’s hotspot might not be the park’s most famous feature, it is responsible for some of the park’s main attractions. These attractions include many geysers in addition to Old Faithful, as well as brilliantly colored, steaming hot springs.
- 3 Old Faithful is a spewing plume of near-boiling water that can jet about 180 feet into the air. It erupts about every ninety minutes, day in and day out. It got its name from its predictability.

READING — ITEM TYPE SAMPLER

- 4 How does a chamber of piping-hot magma create a geothermal feature such as a geyser? First, we should consider what a geyser is—a spring, which is where water rises to the surface from underground. Most geysers are volcanic and, therefore, hot. (Nonvolcanic geysers are cold; their eruptions are driven by carbon dioxide, similar to soda fizzing out of a bottle after it has been shaken.) Geysers erupt because of their nearness to magma. The magma’s extreme heat boils the water. Boiling water leads to steam, which escapes through openings in Earth’s surface.
- 5 Geysers do not continually emit water but rather erupt periodically. Each eruption is like the release of a pressure valve, dispersing built-up energy. Once that has happened, the waters cool and trickle back underground. The cycle restarts.
- 6 Some springs do not erupt as geysers. They merely bubble and steam at Earth’s surface. These springs are lovely to behold because of their colors. These colors are caused by a huge diversity of microscopic life forms, which find the springs’ heat and chemical composition to be a perfect environment. These organisms include blue archaea, white cyanobacteria, yellow fungi, and green algae.

Impact on the Food Chain

- 7 Yellowstone visitors can appreciate these dramatic, reliable visuals at their leisure. Enjoying some of the park’s other features, however, requires patience and luck.
- 8 Many animal species call Yellowstone home, but they are not always easy to find. While driving along one of the park’s roads, picnicking at one of its roadside pullouts, or relaxing near one of its crystal-clear streams, visitors may be surprised by bison, elk, moose, wolves, or even grizzly bears.
- 9 The abundance of these creatures is partly due to the park’s protected status—humans are not developing the land, which leaves lots of room for animals to roam. But even the flourishing wildlife of Yellowstone can be traced to the **behemoth** below the land—the hot spot. That is because when a lava flow cools, the resulting volcanic rock helps create rich soil. That soil, in turn, supports the various vegetation in the food chain that feeds the animals of Yellowstone.

Duck for Cover?

- 10 Many Yellowstone visitors wonder whether all this heat just beneath their feet means they should keep an eye out for a volcanic eruption. (The most recent one was 70,000 years ago.) Someday, yes, lava will again coat Yellowstone, but scientists closely monitor underground activity. They say it may be thousands of years before there is another eruption.

3. Which paragraph MOST CLEARLY explains the connection between Yellowstone’s hotspot and the existence of geysers?

- A. paragraph 1
- B. paragraph 2
- C. paragraph 3
- D. paragraph 4

4. **This question has two parts. Answer part A, and then answer part B.**

Part A

Based on the passage, what is the MOST LIKELY reason that geysers erupt only periodically?

- A. The temperature of the magma is not always hot enough.
- B. It takes time for enough pressure to rebuild below ground.
- C. The chemical composition of an underground spring is always changing.
- D. Organisms like fungi and algae affect the environment beneath the surface.

Part B

Which detail from the passage BEST supports the answer to part A?

- A. It erupts about every ninety minutes, day in and day out. It got its name from its predictability.
- B. Geysers erupt because of their nearness to magma. The magma’s extreme heat boils the water.
- C. Once that has happened, the waters cool and trickle back underground. The cycle restarts.
- D. Some springs do not erupt as geysers. They merely bubble and steam at Earth’s surface.

READING — ITEM TYPE SAMPLER

5. What is the meaning of **behemoth** as it is used in paragraph 9?
- A. a sheet of volcanic rock
 - B. a body of bubbling water
 - C. something that is huge and powerful
 - D. something that is ancient and respected
6. How well does the author support the claim that geysers are among Yellowstone’s main attractions?
- A. Not at all—the author does not develop or support the claim with evidence.
 - B. Poorly—the author provides some evidence, but it is not sufficient to support the claim.
 - C. Somewhat—the author provides one piece of evidence to support the claim.
 - D. Very well—the author provides several pieces of relevant evidence to develop and support the claim.

7. The author presents these two ideas in the passage.
- Yellowstone’s hotspot contributes to the unique geothermal features in the park.
 - Yellowstone’s hotspot helps support plants and animals in the park.

How does the author develop these ideas?

- A. by describing the events that happened between the formation of the hotspot and the most recent volcanic eruption
- B. by comparing the reasons that attract park visitors to geysers and hot springs with the reasons that attract wildlife to geysers and hot springs
- C. by explaining that magma from the hotspot heats the water that erupts from geysers and that lava from the hotspot's volcanic activity has enriched the soil
- D. by listing the effects of the hotspot on wildlife and describing how the presence of geysers and hot springs has caused the park to be given a protected status

READING — ITEM TYPE SAMPLER

The next two passages are paired. Read the first passage, and then read the second passage. Questions 8–17 are about the passages.

To the Market

Golden sunlight glistens
On the lapping water of the khlongs
As Mae readies our long-tail boat
For our daily voyage on the canals.

- 5 The khlongs in Bangkok are old.
Really old. Really. Really. Old.

The canals were dug hundreds of years ago.
My mother taught me this on our first trip
To sell our goods at the floating market.

- 10 “King Rama I had them **excavated** when he built
His Grand Palace with its golden spires.”

Mae finds every opportunity to teach me about
Our people, our culture, and Thailand’s history.
And for that I am grateful.

- 15 I am proud of our people,
Our culture, and our history.
One day, I, too, will tell my children
The stories of our people.

- Early mornings are best on the khlongs.
- 20 Few people travel to the market
As early as Mae and I do.
Fewer people make less congestion.
- Before the city wakes, we slice smoothly
Through the coffee-colored waters,
- 25 Underneath rickety bamboo bridges, and
Along the narrow passageways by the wooden houses
And shops that always remind me of
Long-legged egrets,
Their tan bodies perched
- 30 Up
Up
Up
Out of the water on tall, spindly stilts.
- Finally, we make it to the floating market.
- 35 Other vendors arrive on their wooden vessels.
Some set up steel semicircle woks
And latticed metal grills over portable flames
So they can cook up their specialties.
Pad thai, with its fried, flat rice noodles,
- 40 Scrambled eggs, bean sprouts,
Crunchy peanuts, and spicy shrimp,
Is my favorite.

READING — ITEM TYPE SAMPLER

Mae prefers the khanom sai sai.

“It looks like a little gift,” she says.

- 45 She loves the silvery, steamed rice flour and
Coconut cream concoction,
Wrapped in a pyramid of burnished banana leaves
And fastened with tiny wooden picks.

Mae and I do not sell food at the floating market.

- 50 Instead, we sell ngobs.

“Everyone needs a ngob for protection from the
Heat of the jungle sun,” Mae says.

We make our traditional Thai hats together at home
By weaving the dried leaves of the ola palm

- 55 Into a crisscross pattern over a bamboo frame.

“Just like my grandmother taught me,” Mae says
As she shows me how to weave.

Mae is right about everyone wanting our hats.

Every day it is the same.

- 60 We arrive at the market with a boat full of hats

And we return home with none.

“I’ll take three,” one man says,

Thrusting a handful of baht into my hand.

“This one is perfect,” a young girl tells her sister,

- 65 Who hurriedly buys the ngob before someone else

Can snatch it up.

The sun shines brightly at the floating market.

Its golden rays look pretty on the water,
But without our woven hats,
70 People cannot stay for long.

Soon the day is finished and the fiery jungle sun
Has moved across the sky
Sinking
Down
75 Down
Down
Into the west,
Painting the sky
Mango orange
80 And dragon-fruit pink.

The floating market closes for the night.
Mae and I return upstream
On the coffee-colored waters of the khlongs.
Fireflies flicker, like golden glitter dust,
85 Near the wooden egrets perched tall in the water.
Crickets chirp the evening's refrain
As we glide beneath the canal's rickety bamboo bridges.

"Someday, far into the future, you'll tell your children
About our days gliding along the khlong
90 To sell our ngobs at the floating market,"
Mae says as she anchors our long-tailed boat

READING — ITEM TYPE SAMPLER

To its bamboo post.

“Yes, Mae, I will tell them all about it.”

I smile as we leave the dock together

95 And walk along the jungle trail

Toward home.

The Birdhouse

- 1 Dad and Grandad unloaded the heavy crates and furniture from the trailer, while Jesse set up the folding tables in a large U shape to define the perimeter of their assigned space. They had been coming to the craft fair every weekend for as long as Jesse could remember. He knew the routine by heart. Once the tables were in place, he started emptying the crates and placing their contents onto the tables. “Next year, I’m trading jobs with you, Jesse,” Grandad said, struggling to catch his breath as he and Dad lowered the dresser to the ground beside a small nightstand.
- 2 “Yes, I think Jesse will be ready to do an adult’s work next year,” Dad said, pushing the dresser a few inches to the left. “He’s been mighty handy in the shop these days.” Jesse smiled as he heard the men talking about him. He loved these mornings, when it was just the three of them working together, getting ready to show their talents to the world. He couldn’t wait for the day when he could work in the shop every day as an artisan, making a masterpiece out of simple slabs of wood.
- 3 Jesse opened up the legs of the easel and set it at the end of their booth. Then he pulled out the old wooden sign and placed it on the easel: WWW Woodworking.
- 4 It was a brisk fall morning, and all three of the Watsons had flannel shirts on to ward off the chill. Barbecue food trucks had been smoking their meats overnight, and the aroma filled the air as the men finished setting up the booth. The last item Jesse unwrapped and set in place was the thing he treasured most: a red birdhouse. He had made this item by himself. He set it atop a wooden box, up just a little higher than all the other items on the table. In front of the birdhouse, he placed a hand-written note, “Not for Sale.”
- 5 Jesse had read a story in school about a mama bird who needed a place to lay her eggs. That story sparked an idea that gnawed at Jesse until he sat down one night and sketched out a design on paper. He calculated measurements. He drew out the plans for each piece of wood that would have to be cut, glued, and nailed in place. When the sketch was finished, he looked it over and smiled. It was a birdhouse, but not an ordinary birdhouse. It was a replica of the WWW Woodworking shop.
- 6 With his sketch in hand, Jesse asked his father for some scrap wood, and then he set to building. Grandad watched closely as Jesse used the saw to cut the wood to the precise measurements he had calculated. Four pieces for the sides, one for the bottom, and two for the roof. Then Jesse sanded each piece by hand until all were perfectly smooth. He glued and clamped the pieces together and let them dry overnight. Then he hammered a few nails in place for extra stability. With Grandad watching, he drilled a little hole so the bird could enter.

READING — ITEM TYPE SAMPLER

- 7 He painted the house red with a gray roof. He added a little white door and window to match the ones on the woodshop. He even whittled and carved tiny posts from twigs and glued them in place on the little porch. For the crowning touch, he painted a miniature sign, “WWW Woodworking,” and glued it above the door. “It’s absolutely beautiful,” his mother said when she saw it.
- 8 Before the craft fair officially opened for the day, people started trickling into the Watsons’ booth and examining their wares. “How much for this set of wooden bowls?” a lady asked.
- 9 “Fifty dollars,” Dad said.
- 10 “I have forty,” the woman replied, pulling two twenty-dollar bills from her wallet. “Will you take that?”
- 11 Jesse was always uneasy when customers tried to **haggle** with him, and he admired the cool and confident way Dad could negotiate. “Throw in another five, and you have a deal,” Dad said.
- 12 The woman stood there a moment, her mind engaged in deliberation. Finally, she fished another bill from her wallet and handed forty-five dollars to Dad. He placed the bowls in a paper sack and thanked the woman for her business.
- 13 The day wore on, with crowds of people snaking in and out of each booth as they made their way through the fair. A few people tried to buy the birdhouse, but Jesse explained that a Watson never sells his first design. Then he showed them a picture of the woodshop so they could see the likeness.
- 14 The Watsons’ booth was busy all day. The family had built up a strong reputation for quality work. In fact, it was not uncommon for the Watsons to sell everything they’d brought—and take home orders for more. This day was no different. By afternoon, the last item sold. The only thing left was the WWW Woodworking sign and Jesse’s not-for-sale birdhouse.
- 15 As Dad and Grandad were loading the last cabinet into a buyer’s truck, a lady walked into the booth. Her face was kind, but her manner seemed businesslike and intentional.
- 16 “I’d like to talk to you about that birdhouse,” she said to Jesse, motioning toward the birdhouse with the wallet she held in her hand.
- 17 “I’m sorry, ma’am. It’s not for sale,” he replied. Before he could explain the family tradition, the lady interrupted.

- 18** “Yes, I know,” she said. “I was here earlier and overheard you talking about it.” She paused for only a moment. “I really like your work. Would you be willing to make me another one just like it?” she asked. “I’ll pay.” Jesse stood there for a moment with his hands in his pockets, looking at the dry ground and scuffing it with his foot.
- 19** “How about thirty dollars?” the lady asked.
- 20** Jesse looked up and met the lady’s eyes. A little smile formed in the corner of his mouth as he said, “Throw in another five, and you have a deal.”
- 21** “Wonderful,” said the lady. She handed the money to Jesse, along with her business card. “My number is on the card. Let me know when the birdhouse is ready, and I will pick it up.”
- 22** Jesse looked at the card: Greene Thumb Plants and More, Shante Greene, Owner. “Thank you, Ms. Greene. I’ll give you a call.” Jesse stuck out his hand to seal the deal.
- 23** “Thank YOU, Mr. Watson,” she said, shaking his hand. “I may want more when you finish this one. In fact, I have a feeling we will be seeing a lot of each other.”

READING — ITEM TYPE SAMPLER

8. Which statement BEST describes how stanza 1 and stanza 5 are alike in *To the Market*?
- A. Both describe how the speaker feels about the work she does.
 - B. Both describe the setting where part of the action takes place.
 - C. Both explain the history of the city where the market is located.
 - D. Both explain the reason the speaker and her mother are on a journey.
9. The prefix **ex-** means *out of* or *away from*.
What does the word **excavated** mean as used in line 10 of *To the Market*?
- A. placed on top of
 - B. paid for work completed
 - C. formed by hollowing out
 - D. adorned with fine decorations
10. Which **two** sets of lines from *To the Market* show that the speaker is involved in the action of the poem? Select **two**.
- A. Early mornings are best on the khlongs. / Few people travel to the market / As early as Mae and I do.
 - B. Some set up steel semicircle woks / And latticed metal grills over portable flames / So they can cook up their specialties.
 - C. Mae prefers the khanom sai sai. / “It looks like a little gift,” she says.
 - D. We make our traditional Thai hats together at home / By weaving the dried leaves of the ola palm / Into a crisscross pattern over a bamboo frame.
 - E. “This one is perfect,” a young girl tells her sister, / Who hurriedly buys the ngob before someone else / Can snatch it up.

11. In *To the Market*, what can the reader infer about the speaker?
- A. She finds the work at the market exhausting.
 - B. She prefers selling the ngobs over making them.
 - C. She is proud of her family and the work that they do.
 - D. She wishes her family lived closer to the city and the market.
12. **This question has two parts. Answer part A, and then answer part B.**

Part A

Which statement BEST describes Jesse in *The Birdhouse*?

- A. He is proud of the work he put into making his birdhouse.
- B. He is excited about the money he will make selling his birdhouse.
- C. He is nervous about how other people will feel about his birdhouse.
- D. He is concerned his birdhouse is not as good as the other items at the booth.

Part B

Which detail from the story BEST supports the answer to part A?

- A. He set it atop a wooden box, up just a little higher than all the other items on the table.
- B. The family had built up a strong reputation for quality work.
- C. Jesse stood there for a moment with his hands in his pockets, looking at the dry ground and scuffing it with his foot.
- D. A little smile formed in the corner of his mouth as he said, “Throw in another five, and you have a deal.”

READING — ITEM TYPE SAMPLER

13. Which sentence BEST explains what happens when Ms. Greene shows interest in the birdhouse in *The Birdhouse*?
- A. Jesse agrees to build a large number of birdhouses for Ms. Greene.
 - B. Jesse wishes his father was there to work out the price with Ms. Greene.
 - C. Jesse becomes confused when Ms. Greene hands him her business card.
 - D. Jesse is able to negotiate a price for building another birdhouse for Ms. Greene.
14. What does the word **haggle** mean as used in paragraph 11 of *The Birdhouse*?
- A. build by hand
 - B. ask a question
 - C. solve a problem
 - D. argue over price
15. What can the reader infer from the interaction between Ms. Greene and Jesse in *The Birdhouse*?
- A. Ms. Greene will likely convince Jesse to sell his birdhouse to her.
 - B. Ms. Greene will likely buy items from Jesse and sell them in her shop.
 - C. Ms. Greene will likely sell plants from her shop to Jesse and his family.
 - D. Ms. Greene will likely ask Jesse to show her how to build things out of wood.

16. How are the speaker of *To the Market* and Jesse in *The Birdhouse* similar?
- A. Both enjoy the scenery as they travel.
 - B. Both are inspired by nature to create their crafts.
 - C. Both expect to sell out of the items they brought.
 - D. Both understand the usefulness of what they are selling.
17. How are the settings of *To the Market* and *The Birdhouse* alike?
- A. Both are set in an outdoor market in ancient times.
 - B. Both are set along a body of water in the recent past.
 - C. Both are set in a historical place a hundred years ago.
 - D. Both are set outdoors in a public gathering place in modern times.

