



Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

4th Grade Reading

Sample Test:
Zinnia and Her Babies

Reading Book

Helpful Tips

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

This symbol is next to questions that require a short written answer. A full and complete answer to each of these questions is worth 2 points. A partial answer is worth 1 point.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

This symbol is next to questions that require a longer written answer. A full and complete answer to each of these questions is worth 4 points. A partial answer is worth 1, 2, or 3 points.

Answers to the short- and long-answer questions can receive full or partial credit. You should try to answer these questions even if you are not sure of the correct answer. If you get a portion of the answer correct, you will get a portion of the points.

- Read the question carefully.
- If you do not understand the question, go back and review the passage.
- Write your answer on the lines provided in the Answer Book.
- Remember that it is necessary to include details and information from the passage in your answer.
- Be sure to answer every part of the questions.
- Use clear, concise language to explain your answer.
- Reread the answer to make sure it says what you want it to say.

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By Margery Bianco
(1881-1944)

Some time ago, in writing about cats, I spoke of Zinnia, the little black cat who has such a liking for dogs. I told how she will sit staring pensively, or thoughtfully, at some dog which may happen to be in the room. Then all at once she will jump up, walk over to him, and begin washing his face and smoothing his hair, holding his head between her two paws if he tries to move. What a terrible time she had trying to straighten out the big long-haired collie! Much as she likes dogs, their occasional untidiness gets very much upon Zinnia's nerves. Sooner or later she decides that something must be done about it.

I think Zinnia made up her mind long ago that all this so-called "cat and dog" business was just nonsense. Dogs are just like cats, if you treat them the right way, and a little good sound cat training will do them all the good in the world. Zinnia's owners are always afraid that she will one day, in her fearlessness, happen upon the wrong dog. Then she may get unpleasantly surprised. But so far all the dogs she has met have either returned her friendliness, or have been far too surprised by it to think of attacking her.

The only other creatures that Zinnia seems to like better than dogs are kittens. She loves anybody's kittens, though naturally she prefers her own. She is a born mother, and the voice of a kitten mewling will always bring her on a trot to see what the trouble is. Quite likely she may decide that the kittens are fretful, or fussy, because they are not in what she considers a good and comfortable place. In that case she will probably pick them up one by one and carry them off somewhere else. She won't bother to consult their own mother at all.

One summer I remember Zinnia was bringing up a family of her own, four babies a few weeks old. She had them in the barn. The barn was big and airy; the kittens had their own box lined with hay, and plenty of space to crawl safely about in. But that didn't satisfy her. It was sunny June weather; kittens should be out in the garden, enjoying the fresh air.

Every morning there they were, all four of them, packed into an old wooden wheelbarrow by the woodshed. They whimpered and blinked in the sunlight, looking anything but comfortable on the bare earthy boards. There Zinnia would leave them, while she went off on some hunting excursion of her own.

Zinnia is a grandmother now, many times over. Most of her various babies are grown up and have families of their own, though each summer there are new ones to take their place.

Zinnia herself is growing middle-aged. Her little pointed face, with its pale-green slanting eyes, is a shade more pointed than it used to be. Her black fur, always a little reddish in the light, is taking on more and more of a rusty tone, the color of an old iron kettle that has been lying out in the sun. But she is as keen a mouser as ever. Her sense of responsibility is more marked, or noticeable, as time goes by. When I last visited her, only a short time ago, we had a very good example of it.

A grown up daughter of Zinnia's, Topsy, had died quite suddenly, leaving two pretty little kittens about ten days older than Zinnia's own kittens. Luckily they were nearly big enough to lap for themselves. In the meantime they could be fed warm milk with a medicine dropper. But they missed their own mother and the warmth and comfort of her body curled up beside them in the basket. Everyone was worried about poor Topsy's kittens and how they would get along without her. Before twenty-four hours had passed, Zinnia, as usual, had come to the rescue. She heard the little orphans mewling, took one look at them, and seized first one and then the other. She dragged them up two flights of stairs to the attic, where she settled them comfortably in the box with her own three babies.

There will be no neglected kittens in any house where Zinnia lives, as long as she is there to look after them.



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4th Grade Reading

Sample Test:
Zinnia and Her Babies

Answer Book

Name _____ Date _____

Teacher _____ Score ____ / 8

Read the story “Zinnia and Her Babies.” Now answer Numbers 1 through 6. Base your answers on the story.

1 Read this sentence from the story.

There will be no neglected kittens in any house where Zinnia lives, as long as she is there to look after them.

What does *neglected* mean?

- A tired
- B strange
- C busy
- D overlooked

2 What happened right AFTER Zinnia left her kittens in the wheelbarrow?

- A She went to eat.
- B She went to hunt.
- C She went to play.
- D She went to sleep.

3

Why did the author write this story?

- A To explain how cats live.
- B To tell about one cat's life.
- C To explain why cats are neglected.
- D To tell how one cat takes care of dogs.

4

Why were Zinnia's owners afraid she would get hurt by a dog?

- A She might hiss at or claw a dog.
- B She might become angry at an untidy dog.
- C She might run across a mean dog.
- D She might want the dog to live at the house.

5

How do you know that Zinnia is a cat that takes care of others? Use facts and details from the story to support your answer.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

6

What caused Zinnia to begin caring for Topsy's kittens? Use information and details from the story to support your answer.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN



Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

4th Grade Reading

Sample Test:
Zinnia and Her Babies

Answer Key

Answer Key: Zinnia and Her Babies

This book contains answers and explanations for Zinnia and Her Babies Sample Test questions. Multiple-choice items are scored by awarding one point for each correct answer. Answers to short-response and extended-response “Read, Think, Explain” questions are scored with two-point and four-point rubrics respectively. For short- and extended-response questions, there is often more than one acceptable response. Partial credit is given for accurate but incomplete answers. The overall characteristics of top-score and partial-credit responses for the “Read, Think, Explain” questions are given in the general two-point and four-point rubrics below.

Sample top-score responses are provided for each “Read, Think, Explain” question.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Rubric for Short-Response Questions

- 2 Points:** The response indicates that the student has a complete understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that is accurate, complete, and fulfills all the requirements of the task. Necessary support and/or examples are included, and the information given is clearly text-based.
- 1 Point:** The response indicates that the student has a partial understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that may include information that is essentially correct and text-based, but the information is too general or too simplistic. Some of the support and/or examples may be incomplete or omitted.
- 0 Points:** The response is inaccurate, confused, and /or irrelevant, or the student has failed to respond to the task.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Rubric for Extended-Response Questions

- 4 Points:** The response indicates that the student has a thorough understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that is accurate, complete, and fulfills all the requirements of the task. Necessary support and/or examples are included, and the information is clearly text-based.
- 3 Points:** The response indicates that the student has an understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that is accurate and fulfills all the requirements of the task, but the required support and/or details are not complete or clearly text-based.
- 2 Points:** The response indicates that the student has a partial understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that may include information that is essentially correct and text-based, but the information is too general or too simplistic. Some of the support and/or examples and requirements of the task may be incomplete or omitted.
- 1 Point:** The response indicates that the student has very limited understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The response is incomplete, may exhibit many flaws, and may not address all requirements of the task.
- 0 Points:** The response is inaccurate, confused, and/or irrelevant, or the student has failed to respond to the task.

1. D
2. B
3. B
4. C

5. Example of a top-score response:

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Zinnia took care of others in many ways. For example, Zinnia cleaned and tidied dogs, even a long-haired collie. She moved her own and other kittens to comfortable places as well. Zinnia also raised her grand kittens when their mother died.

6. Example of a top-score response:

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Zinnia started caring for Topsy's kittens when Topsy died. She heard the kittens mewing and came to the rescue. Zinnia took care of Topsy's kittens along with her own. Zinnia is a born mother.