

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

FCAT 8th Grade Reading

**Sample Test:
Mushrooms**



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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Mushrooms

Most of us are familiar with one or two kinds of mushrooms, usually white or brown varieties that find their way onto pizzas. Actually, more than 3,000 types grow around the world in a wide variety of flavors and sizes. Some are less than an inch high, and others are more than 15 inches tall. Some have unusual names like Portobello and Black Trumpet, and they are listed on sophisticated menus in fancy restaurants. But many centuries ago, long before pizzas and fancy restaurants existed, people were eating mushrooms.

Ancient hieroglyphics from more than 4,600 years ago tell us Egyptians called mushrooms "the magic food." They believed eating them resulted in immortality, and only pharaohs were given this privilege so that they could live forever. Of course, this meant Egyptian royalty enjoyed all the delicious mushrooms since no commoner could touch them! Other ancient civilizations in places such as Russia and Mexico thought mushrooms had ingredients that could produce superhuman strength and even help locate lost objects.

Centuries ago, people still associated magic with mushrooms. Sometimes they observed unusual places in a meadow, like a patch of bright green grass or a spot of bare soil. Then they imagined these places were the result of footprints left by fairies dancing at night. When mushrooms appeared near the edge of these "fairy rings," people liked to think of them as seats where the tired fairies could rest. But today we have a more scientific approach to the mushroom.

All of the many species of mushrooms are classified as fungi. They are plant-like organisms that usually grow in damp, dark places like caves or forest floors, but they can also grow in grassy areas. Fungi work with other plants and animals called decomposers to keep the soil fertile for plant growth. Like many other plants, mushrooms serve as a source of food for insects and small animals. Mushrooms differ from green plants because they lack chlorophyll and do not require sunshine to grow.

As the demand for mushrooms increased over the centuries, people established mushroom farms to plant and grow the fungi in special environments. Some farms were in caves, some underground, and some in special buildings. In the 1600s, for example, France developed the formal cultivation of mushrooms in special caves near Paris. Until the 1940s, most mushroom farms were in the Far East, especially China and Japan. Then during World War II, many American soldiers tasted the delicious varieties of mushrooms and learned about mushroom farming. After the war, they took this knowledge back to the United States, which soon became one of the world's major mushroom producers.

Health and safety are always concerns when growing any crop. One of the complications with mushrooms is that they can be poisonous or nonpoisonous. Common nontoxic varieties such as table and field mushrooms are safe to eat and can be purchased in grocery stores. These mushrooms are praised by health experts because they are fat-free, cholesterol-free, and low in calories. They are rich in B-vitamins, potassium, phosphorus, and iron. Chefs use them in dishes ranging from soups to gourmet sauces, and some mushrooms even have medicinal benefits. The silver-ear mushroom, for example, can be used to lower blood pressure.

Over the years, edible mushrooms have proven to be extremely popular in the marketplace. Today the USA is the world leader in supplying mushrooms, and other major contributors include France, China, Canada, Great Britain, and Italy. In 1986, 470 million pounds of mushrooms were produced throughout the world, and by 1999 this figure had almost doubled. Production was up to 860 million pounds and the market value was \$867 million. At this rate, it appears safe to say mushrooms are here to stay!

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**Sample Test:
Mushrooms**



Answer Book

Name _____ Date _____

Teacher _____ Score ____ / 12

Read the story "Mushrooms." Now answer Numbers 1 through 8. Base your answers on the story.

1

The author's purpose in writing this article was to

- (A) tell why pharaohs ate mushrooms
- (B) persuade people to buy more mushrooms
- (C) explain the history and uses of mushrooms
- (D) provide information for staying healthy with mushrooms

2

Read this sentence from the article.

Common nontoxic varieties such as table and field mushrooms are safe to eat and can be purchased in grocery stores.

What does the word *nontoxic* mean?

- (A) tasty
- (B) harmless
- (C) expensive
- (D) poisonous

3

Contrast the imaginary benefits associated with mushrooms long ago with the factual benefits of today. Support you answer with details and information from the article.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

4

What is the warning the author gives about mushrooms?

- (A) Only royalty can eat them.
- (B) Some varieties can be poisonous.
- (C) They should only be eaten in pizzas.
- (D) They must be grown in dark, damp places.

5

According to this article, what countries have been significant in the world's mushroom production? Support your answer with details and information from the article.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

6

How are mushrooms different from green plants?

- A They are very colorful.
- B They are a part of people's diet.
- C They appear around "fairy rings".
- D They don't need the sun for growth.

7

Which subheading would be most appropriate for the fourth paragraph of the article?

- A fungi
- B organisms
- C food sources
- D decomposers

8

With which of the following statements would the author most likely agree?

- (A) Mushrooms are profitable and fun to grow.
- (B) Identifying poisonous mushrooms is a relatively simple process.
- (C) The mushroom market has grown dramatically since World War II.
- (D) Ancient civilizations were able to grow remarkably large mushroom crops.

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Sample Test: Mushrooms



Answer Key

Answer Key: Mushrooms

This book contains answers and explanations for the Mushrooms 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. C
2. B
3. Example of a top-score response:

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

One of the imaginary benefits 4,600 years ago was that mushrooms resulted in immortality, so only Egyptian pharaohs could eat them. Commoners couldn't touch them. Some civilizations believed they could produce superhuman strength and even help locate lost objects. Later people believed mushrooms were seats around "fairy rings" in meadows where tired fairies could rest. A factual benefit today is that mushrooms are decomposers that help keep the soil fertile. They are also food for insects and small animals. They are fat-free, cholesterol-free, and low in calories, as well as being rich in B-vitamins, potassium, phosphorus, and iron. Some varieties have medicinal benefits such as the silver-ear mushroom that can lower blood pressure. Also, they taste good in pizzas and other foods and their 1999 market value was \$867 million.

4. B
5. Example of a top-score response:

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

France was where the formal cultivation of mushrooms occurred in caves near Paris in the 1600s. Until the 1940s, most mushroom farms were in China, Japan, and other parts of the Far East. This is where American soldiers learned about mushrooms. Today the United States is the number one mushroom producer and other major contributors include France, China, Canada, Great Britain, and Italy.

6. D
7. A
8. C