

Elementary Level Reading Assessment Multiple Choice Items

The PSSA Reading Assessment is given in grades 3 through 8 and 11.

- Look at the sample questions included here and practice – your teacher has the correct answers
- Don't give up before you begin – even if the story looks difficult
- Read the questions before you read the story or passage
- Think about the questions while you read
- Use a highlighter or pencil to mark important parts of the story
- You can write notes in the story to help you later
- You will not be able to use a dictionary or thesaurus for the multiple choice questions
- Use reading skills:
 - prediction – try to guess what the story will be about and what will happen next as you read
 - previous experience – what do you already know about this subject?
 - visualize – picture in your head what you are reading about
 - story maps
 - check yourself while you read - are you understanding?
 - figure out an unknown word
 - look for the words **or** and **and** near the word, as they may give a synonym or clue to the meaning of the word
 - use your native language
 - look at the part of speech (is it a noun, verb, adjective, adverb)
 - think about the sentence and paragraph

Reading Assessment

Multiple Choice Items (continued)

- On a vocabulary question, if the unknown word is a verb, then the answer should also be a verb - if the unknown word is an adjective, then the answer should also be an adjective
- Use the headings in the story to help you find answers
- Watch out for these “tricksters” – they could make you pick a *wrong* answer:
 - questions or answers with words like **all**, **none**, **always**, **never** – these are tricky
 - the answer choice sounds good but it is not really in the story
 - the answer choice is in the story, but it does not really answer the question being asked – (be sure to choose the option that *answers the question*)

Reading Assessment

Open Ended (Performance) Items

- Look at the sample Released Performance Task included here and practice using the rubric
- Look at the sample Scored Student Response included here as a model of a great response
- Think about the topic and plan before you begin to write
- Make an outline before you begin to write
- Use a dictionary and a thesaurus
- Use a dictionary with your native language
- Use the rubric to review your answer and make sure you included what you need for the highest score
- Even if you can not complete the whole question, write what you can so you may receive some points

Grade 5 — Released Informational Passage and Items

In this article, the author tells how to train a pet. Read the article and answer the questions that follow.

Basic Training

by Michael Goldman

You can't teach your dog to read as television's Wishbone does. But you can teach it to be obedient—and maybe even do a few tricks.

Jackie Martin Kaptan, who trains the famous Jack Russell terrier, has 20 years' professional experience working with dogs—and even tigers, bears and wolves! Her plan can help you develop a perfectly behaved pooch.

Welcome to the Family, Fido!

All dogs need some training. A dog that acts nice and friendly today might not next week. It is, after all, an animal, and can act accordingly.

An untrained dog may bite, chew furniture, bark all night or run away. A trained dog will be a welcome, safe member of the family.

To get started, Ms. Kaptan says:

1. *Don't wait.* An 8-week-old puppy is ready for school.
2. *Get the right equipment.* See the box "Doggie Bag" for details.
3. *Take a class.* Check with your local parks and recreation department or the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for a beginner class. It will cost about \$50 to \$75.

4. *Start with basics.* Use a leash, and teach commands like "come."

"It's just like building a house," Ms. Kaptan says. "You need a foundation—sit, come, stay. Everything falls back on the basics."

Teach a Young Dog New Tricks

The most important thing you will teach your dog is to come when called.

"If you get in a dangerous situation," Ms. Kaptan says, "you really need your dog to respond to 'come'—*now*."

Ms. Kaptan uses mealtime to teach this command. You can too. Instead of giving your dog its food, hold the bowl across the yard or down the hall and say, "Rover [or your dog's name], come."

Or put the dog at the end of a 15-foot leash, say "come," and give it a treat when it does so.

"This is also a fun way to teach a dog his name," Ms. Kaptan says. "He'll learn that, whatever he's doing, he must stop and think, 'He's talking to *me*.'"

Use similar tricks to teach "sit" (put the food over the dog's head so it has to sit to see it) and "lie down" (put the food on the floor).

Rules for Success

Throughout your training, stick to a few basic rules:

- Praise often and consistently. Praise is the key to success. Reward a successful command with a treat.
- Correct when necessary, with a sharp "No!" or a gentle tug on the dog's leash. Correct forcefully—but not painfully.
- Establish a regular training time, close to a meal. Keep it short, maybe 20 minutes.
- Keep your commands simple.

When your first eight weeks are up, don't quit. That's the time to polish basic commands and move on to simple tricks: speak, shake, roll over and other fun commands.

Train Yourself Too

Whatever you teach your dog, teach yourself one thing first: Be consistent.

"Consistency is fairness," Ms. Kaptan says. "You can't correct a dog today and not correct him tomorrow [for the same mistake]. He has to feel secure in what's expected of him."

Learn when to praise your dog and when to correct it. Keep the training an ongoing process. And remember, you're not just training your dog to do tricks. You're training it to be a member of the family.

"A dog has so much to offer," Ms. Kaptan says. "They're not happy at home, sitting in a backyard week after week. They want to be with you, and they want to work."

DOGGIE BAG: A TRAINER'S SHOPPING LIST

Before you begin training, get the proper equipment.

- **Crate.** Don't let your dog travel in a vehicle without a crate. "It's like a car set for your dog," trainer Jackie Kaptan says. *Price:* \$20 for a small dog up to \$130 for a large dog.
- **Collar.** All dogs should wear a simple collar for hanging tags showing vaccination, owner ID and other necessary information. To control the animal during training—and only when training—some dog owners might need a training collar (or "choke chain"). "Your goal should be that your dog becomes so well-trained you can go back to the straight collar alone," says Jacque Schultz of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. *Price:* \$10 and up.
- **Leash.** Get at least a 15-footer. *Price:* \$10 and up, or make your own with a 15-foot cotton clothesline.
- **Fanny pack or bike bag.** Keep dog treats handy when a reward is needed. *Price:* \$2 and up.
- **Tennis ball and other toys.** Rawhide chew bones are great, but beware of squeaky toys—dogs can chew off small pieces and choke. Also avoid chew bones with formaldehyde. *Price:* about \$2 to \$10 each.

Now read each question and mark the **best** answer on your answer booklet.

87. Training, according to the basic rules, should last
- A three weeks.
 - B beyond eight weeks.
 - C eight months.
 - D one year.
88. To find more information about the best collar for training, refer to
- E "Teach a Young Dog New Tricks."
 - F "Rules for Success."
 - G "Doggie Bag: A Trainer's Shopping List."
 - H "Train Yourself Too."
89. Which definition **best** fits the word *polish* as used in this article?
- A make smooth and glossy
 - B improve and refine
 - C make elegant
 - D reflect shine
90. Which is a statement of opinion?
- E Teach a dog to come when called.
 - F Buy the right training equipment.
 - G Use mealtime for pet training.
 - H All dogs should be trained to do tricks.
91. Which is a statement of fact?
- A A collar tag shows vaccination and owner ID.
 - B Don't expect overnight success in dog training.
 - C A tug of war with a dog is fun.
 - D Rawhide chew bones are good toys.
92. This article is developed by using
- E veterinarian opinions.
 - F video examples.
 - G training rules.
 - H time order.

93. Dogs can be trained to be a safe member of the family
- A with consistency and praise.
 - B by using similar tricks.
 - C with mealtime as a reward.
 - D by waiting a year before training.

94. The term "choke chain" is an example of
- E rhyme.
 - F alliteration.
 - G meter.
 - H onomatopoeia.

95. Proper equipment is important for
- A correct identification.
 - B simple tricks.
 - C basic commands.
 - D effective training.

96. The phrase, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," is an idiom meaning old dogs
- E cannot hear well.
 - F know all the tricks.
 - G learn when they are puppies.
 - H are difficult to train.

97. A crate is good for pet travel because
- A "It's like a car seat for your dog."
 - B "It's like building a house."
 - C "They're not happy at home."
 - D "He has to feel secure."

98. To remember the basic rules for training dogs,
- E reread the article.
 - F copy the selection.
 - G highlight the title of each section.
 - H underline the quotations.

99. Jackie Kaptan would most likely have written more books about
- A dog breeds.
 - B famous dogs.
 - C dog training.
 - D presidents' dogs.

Scored Student Responses
Basic Training
Grade 5 Informational Passage

184. After using Jackie Kaptan's dog-training ideas in raising your puppy, explain the changes in your dog's behavior.

As you write, be sure to:

- Include Jackie Kaptan's ideas.
- Explain the changes in your dog's behavior.
- Use your own ideas.
- Write neatly and clearly.
- Use only the space provided.

I used Jackie Kaptan's dog-training ideas when I was raising my puppy and I can tell a big difference between my dog and my neighbors dog. Some of Jackie Kaptan's ideas work a lot better than others. The ideas that really helped me were not to wait too long to start training my puppy, get the right equipment, and take a class. One of my friends tried to teach their new puppy with confusing commands. Her dog just sat there trying to figure out what she said. I told her some of Jackie Kaptan's ideas such as start with simple commands, and to put the dog at the end of a 15-foot leash and say "come" and give it a treat when she obeys. I also told her of something else to do with her dog. I told her that when her dog was trained well enough, she could set up a little course she could set up to get her puppy ready for some dog shows just like I do. I am amazed at the difference between my dogs behavior from before I started training by the time eight weeks were up. My dog had never before come to me when I called for her, she would never lay down when I told her to, and she would always jump on me, but now she always does what I tell her to. My whole family was amazed at what I taught her to do. I owe everything to Jackie Kaptan.

4 - This response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the text and task by exhibiting a level of comprehension that extends beyond the literal to the evaluative. Clearly stating changes in behavior (e.g., "I can tell a big difference between my dog and my neighbors dog") by using Jackie Kaptan's ideas (e.g., "not to wait too long to start training your puppy.") The student cites examples from the article to explain the ideas used, and concludes with a reference to his/her trained dog ("My whole family is amazed at what I taught her to do.") Through text support, his/her own personal ideas and there are no errors in text-based facts.

PENNSYLVANIA READING ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

This rubric was designed by the Reading Assessment Advisory Committee to be used in the Pennsylvania Reading Assessment. The elements of reading being assessed through this rubric are limited to those that can be addressed through written responses in the on-demand performance portion of the assessment, specifically *Understanding, Comprehension* and *Connections*. *Risk-taking* is also an important element, developing throughout life's learning process. However, given the constraints of this assessment, *Risk-taking* was not included. The RAAC advises that assessments developed at the classroom, school and district levels include this element.

LEVEL 4

- Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the complexity of the text through detailed elaboration and extensions of text with sophisticated ideas, insights and reflections. There are no errors in text-based facts.
- Exhibits a level of comprehension that extends beyond the literal, to the personal, critical and/or evaluative responses.
- Cites evidence, makes a variety of strong connections to other experiences, texts, concepts, issues and/or cultural settings.

LEVEL 3 *

- Demonstrates confident, coherent and adequate understanding and interpretation of the text through some elaboration and extension.
- There are no major errors in text-based facts.
- Exhibits a level of comprehension that reflects extensions that are more literal or personal.
- Makes connections to personal experiences, other texts and/or background knowledge.

LEVEL 2

- Demonstrates a limited understanding and/or interpretation of the text. There may be errors in text-based facts.
- Exhibits a level of comprehension that consists primarily of literal responses to the text.
- Makes connections between other experiences and text that are disjointed, fragmented, limited and not integral to the text.

LEVEL 1

- Demonstrates an attempt to respond with very limited evidence of understanding of the text.
- There may be errors in text-based facts.
- Exhibits a level of comprehension that consists of disjointed, incomplete or irrelevant responses.
- Might use relevant copied text.
- Makes only distant connections to the text, using sketchy details.

LEVEL 0 - consists of 3 types of responses:

- **Non-Scorable (NS)** papers are blank.
- **Off-Task (OT)** papers show no relationship to task and text, are illegible, irrelevant copied text, or written in a language other than English.
- **Intentionally Off-Task (IO)** papers are ones that have unrelenting profanity, are a refusal to perform, state a baseless charge of too personal or are drawings, scribbling, etc.

*Note - Level 3 (or higher) is to be viewed as the performance standard for all students.