

READING COMPREHENSION TESTS

From Prior STAAR 2018

(Upper Elementary/Middle School)

This is a previously administered portion of a Texas Education Agency STAAR Reading Test. It is in the public domain. We provide this to you free as a service to help you determine whether your upper elementary or middle school student has identifiable skill gaps in reading passages and answering some very basic questions about what they have read.

These Tests Are In The Public Domain & Available on the TEA Website At The Link Below – You Will Need To Cut & Paste This Link or Search TEA website for 2018 STAAR Released Tests.

<https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/staar/archived-staar-released-test-questions>

We suggest you may want to give a briefer screening assessment rather than the full test. For your convenience, we have included a 2-Passage part of the full test in this document with an answer key just for questions on these passages. The full test and answer key and others are available to you at the link url provided.

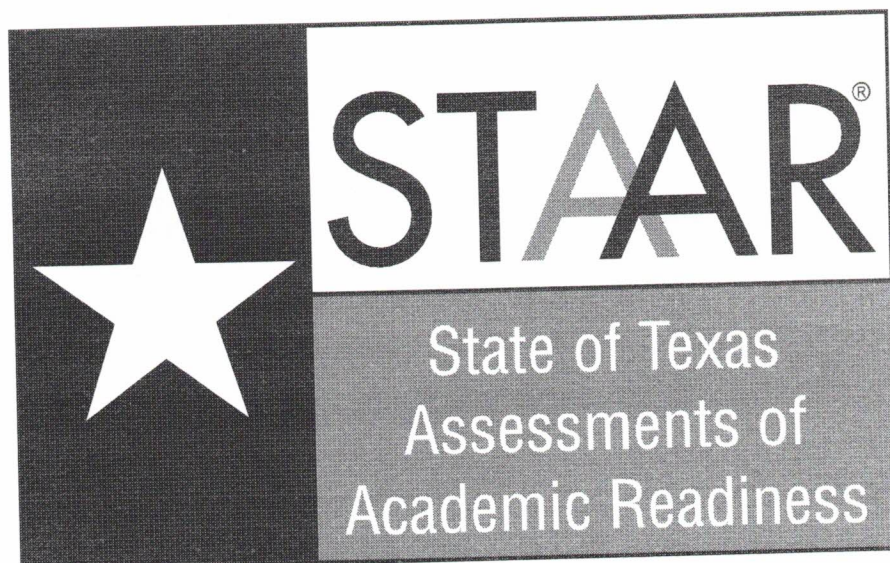
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Screening

6th Grade

READING

COMPREHENSION



GRADE 6
Reading

Administered May 2018

RELEASED

READING COMPREHENSION TEST

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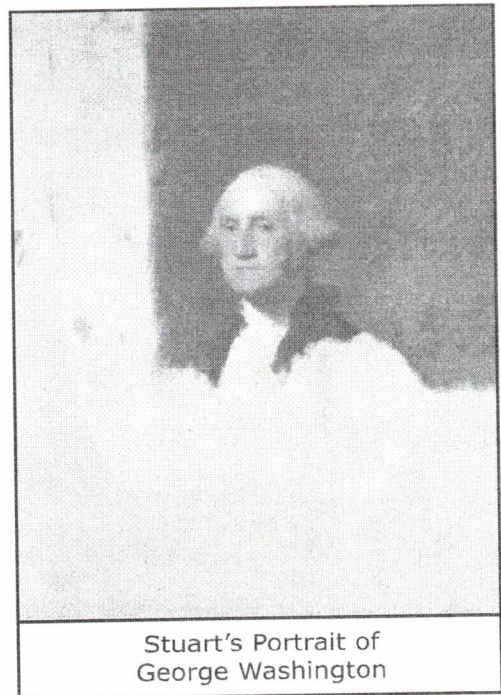
If you choose to administer this test to your child, have her/him circle or otherwise mark the multiple-choice answer for each question. Return the test to us electronically at ghscott2050@aol.com or by mail to 518 Earls Court, Katy, Texas, 77450. We'll provide you with the results at no cost.

Screening 6th Grade

Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to each question.

George Washington's Portrait

- 1 Many artists have hopes that their creations will become well known. But sometimes a work of art achieves greater recognition than the artist might have ever imagined. And in the case of Gilbert Stuart and George Washington, a work of art may not even be completed but still inspire people long afterward.
- 2 Stuart was a painter who lived from 1755 to 1828. He was known for both his talent as a painter and his charm as a person. He painted the portraits of approximately 1,000 people during his lifetime. Many distinguished and famous people sat for a portrait with him. But instead of making his subjects sit perfectly still, as was commonly practiced at the time, Stuart engaged them in interesting conversation. He wanted his subjects to feel at ease in order to capture their most natural expression and pose. Only then would Stuart paint the person.
- 3 One of Stuart's aspirations was to paint George Washington. Their meeting was not easy to arrange, but Stuart eventually got the opportunity in 1796. Stuart had a difficult time getting Washington to be comfortable. The president finally relaxed when Stuart began to talk about horses. This was one of Washington's favorite topics. The men chatted while Stuart painted the then 64-year-old president. Their time together was limited, however.
- 4 The result was a portrait of just Washington's head and shoulders. The reasons why Stuart never finished the rest of the portrait are uncertain. What is known is that the bottom and left parts of the canvas remained bare, and Stuart persuaded Washington to let him keep the original. Stuart made and sold multiple copies of the portrait in his lifetime—a common practice in the days before cameras.
- 5 Even unfinished, Stuart's original portrait is considered the definitive representation of George Washington. People have always believed that the portrait truly captures this great man's presence. The image was used on the dollar bill beginning in 1869 and has been featured there ever since. This means just about everyone in the United States has seen this work of art. While it is an amazing portrait, surely even Stuart would be amazed by its lasting popularity.



© Gilbert Stuart/CORBIS

The Story Behind *The Silmarillion*

- 1 J. R. R. Tolkien is best known for the world of fantasy he created in the novel *The Hobbit* and the trilogy *The Lord of the Rings*. Yet for Tolkien, one important work remained unfinished at his death in 1973. This book was *The Silmarillion*.
- 2 Tolkien's novels are based in a fictional world. In that world creatures such as elves and dwarves coexist with ordinary human beings. *The Silmarillion* can be thought of as a prequel to *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. It is an account of the history of this fantasy world before *The Hobbit* takes place. This history tells about when the villain of that world battled heroes to claim possession of jewels called Silmarilli.
- 3 But the story of how *The Silmarillion* was created may be just as interesting as the story told on its pages. It was Tolkien's first and last work. He began working on it in 1917 and continued adding to it and revising it for about 56 years. Tolkien was unable to complete the work before he died, so his son Christopher took on the challenge of finishing it. Tolkien had amassed many writings he wished to include in the book. Christopher thought, however, that presenting all the material would lead only to confusion for the reader, so he decided to select and arrange the pieces that together would create the most complete and understandable history of this fantasy world.
- 4 To accomplish this task, Christopher enlisted the aid of a friend. Guy Gavriel Kay had always been interested in writing, particularly fantasy. He worked on *The Silmarillion* with Christopher for approximately a year. This assignment changed Kay's life, and he eventually became a best-selling fantasy writer himself. Kay's work on *The Silmarillion* undoubtedly provided training and valuable experience on his journey to become an author.
- 5 The published version of *The Silmarillion* has five parts, which was what Tolkien wanted. But the parts had not been put together as a whole when Christopher took on the work after his father died. Some stories required organizing, and some parts were still incomplete and needed finishing.
- 6 *The Silmarillion* was published in 1977 to mixed reviews. Some people believed it was too different from what they had come to expect from Tolkien's writing. It had a grim mood and a complicated plot. Others were impressed with the masterful editing Tolkien's son had done. They knew that Christopher had started the task with many incomplete pieces. After *The Silmarillion*, Christopher published more of his father's unfinished writings, including a children's story and a poem about King Arthur. Their publication allowed still more of J. R. R. Tolkien's fantasies to be shared with devoted readers around the world.

Third party trademarks The Hobbit®, The Lord of the Rings® and The Silmarillion® were used in these testing materials.

Use "George Washington's Portrait" (p. 11) to answer questions 14–18.
Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

14 Which words from paragraph 2 help the reader understand the meaning of engaged?

- F *charm as a person*
 - G *sat for a portrait*
 - H *practiced at the time*
 - J *interesting conversation*
-

15 Paragraph 2 is mainly about the —

- A method Stuart used when he was painting portraits
 - B number of portraits Stuart painted during his lifetime
 - C reason Stuart wanted to paint portraits of famous people
 - D popularity of the portraits Stuart painted during his lifetime
-

16 The reader can conclude from the information in paragraph 3 that Stuart —

- F worried that his portrait would not please Washington
- G was determined to create a portrait of Washington
- H was nervous in the presence of Washington
- J shared similar interests with Washington

17 The author includes the details in paragraph 5 most likely to —

- A** explain why this particular portrait of Washington is so well known
 - B** express regret that the painting of Washington became famous only after Stuart's death
 - C** demonstrate that Washington was an important figure in history
 - D** emphasize that most of Washington's portraits were left unfinished
-

18 What is the best summary of the selection?

- F** In 1796 painter Gilbert Stuart had the opportunity to paint a portrait of George Washington. It had been difficult to arrange time for the two men to get together. While Stuart painted Washington, the two men talked about horses.
- G** The most famous portrait of George Washington was painted by Gilbert Stuart, who lived from 1755 to 1828. Stuart painted portraits of other famous people as well. He never finished his portrait of Washington, but Stuart kept the original and sold copies of it anyway.
- H** An accomplished painter who completed hundreds of portraits, Gilbert Stuart lived from 1755 to 1828. Stuart wanted the subjects of his portraits to feel relaxed so that he could create a portrait of them that looked natural. One of Stuart's most famous paintings is a portrait of President George Washington.
- J** During his career Gilbert Stuart painted portraits of many famous people, including George Washington. Although Stuart was unable to complete a portrait of Washington during the time they had together in 1796, the work became the most popular portrait of Washington ever painted.

Use "The Story Behind *The Silmarillion*" (p. 12) to answer questions 19–24.
Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

19 Read this information about the origin of the word amass.

from the Latin *a-* + *massare*, meaning "to form a lump"

This information helps the reader understand that amassed in paragraph 3 means —

- A searched for
- B shared with a group
- C gathered together
- D stored in a safe place

20 By using a problem-and-solution organizational pattern in paragraphs 3 through 5, the author of the selection is able to —

- F demonstrate that Tolkien needed help completing his book and describe how only certain parts of his story were used
- G show that Christopher needed to work with another author and tell how he was able to persuade his friend to work with him
- H highlight that Christopher had trouble deciding which of his father's writings to include in the book and identify how he made his choices
- J emphasize that Tolkien could not finish his book and explain how Christopher's efforts led to the completion and publication of the work

21 Based on the information in paragraph 5, the reader can conclude that Christopher —

- A** had little prior experience writing books
 - B** tried to include alternate endings in the book
 - C** encountered many challenges while organizing the book
 - D** planned to publish more than one book of his father's work
-

22 According to the selection, why did Christopher decide not to include all his father's writings in *The Silmarillion*?

- F** He believed they would cause the reader to become very confused.
- G** He worried that some of the ideas would be unfamiliar to the reader.
- H** He planned to create a different ending for the story.
- J** He wanted the final book to have only five parts.

- 23** Which sentence best shows the author of the selection's attitude toward the writing of *The Silmarillion*?
- A** The *Silmarillion* *can be thought of as a prequel to The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings.*
 - B** *But the story of how The Silmarillion was created may be just as interesting as the story told on its pages.*
 - C** *Kay's work on The Silmarillion undoubtedly provided training and valuable experience on his journey to become an author.*
 - D** *The Silmarillion was published in 1977 to mixed reviews.*
-

- 24** What makes *The Silmarillion* unique among Tolkien's writings?
- F** The story takes place in an imaginary land.
 - G** It was the only piece of writing published after his death.
 - H** The story includes fictional creatures and humans.
 - J** It was both the first and last book he ever worked on.

Use "George Washington's Portrait" and "The Story Behind *The Silmarillion*" to answer questions 25–28. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 25 Read this sentence from paragraph 5 of "George Washington's Portrait."

People have always believed that the portrait truly captures this great man's presence.

Which sentence from the second selection shows that Tolkien's *The Silmarillion* was **not** as well received?

- A *It is an account of the history of this fantasy world before *The Hobbit* takes place.*
- B *Some stories required organizing, and some parts were still incomplete and needed finishing.*
- C *Some people believed it was too different from what they had come to expect from Tolkien's writing.*
- D *They knew that Christopher had started the task with many incomplete pieces.*

-
- 26 One **similarity** between painter Gilbert Stuart and author J. R. R. Tolkien is that both men —
- F were accomplished in their field of creative art
 - G spent several decades working on a single project
 - H needed the assistance of another person to complete their work
 - J were known for their interest in having conversations with others

- 27 One **difference** between the portrait and the book discussed in the selections is that —
- A copies of the incomplete portrait were sold, but the book was sold only after it was completed
 - B few people saw the portrait while Stuart was alive, but many saw the book manuscript while Tolkien was alive
 - C Stuart did not prepare before he painted his portrait, but Tolkien spent time preparing to write his book
 - D the portrait was not considered Stuart's best work, but the book was considered Tolkien's masterpiece
-

- 28 In what way are the portrait of George Washington and the book *The Silmarillion* **similar**?
- F Each earned a great amount of money for its creator.
 - G Each remained incomplete at the time of its creator's death.
 - H Each was included in a larger body of work that its creator had made.
 - J Each required that people other than its creator work on it.

Answer Keys For Reading Passages From Prior Released STAAR Tests From 2018

The Full STAAR Tests From Which Two Passages for Each Grade Year Have Been Selected to Give You Insight Into Potential Reading Skill Gaps Your Child May Have. These Are Provided to You Free As A Service. A URL Link To the TEA Website Where Complete Tests Available to You Is Shown Below

5th Grade		6th Grade		7th Grade	
Question	Answer	Question	Answer	Question	Answer
8	F	14	J	17	B
9	B	15	A	18	J
10	H	16	G	19	A
11	D	17	A	20	H
12	F	18	J	21	C
13	C	19	C	22	J
14	H	20	J	23	B
15	D	21	C	24	H
16	F	22	F	25	C
17	C	23	B	26	G
18	G	24	J	27	D
You may have to type the URL below OR when on TEA Website Search "2018 Released STAAR Tests)		25	C	28	F
		26	F	29	C
		27	A		
		28	G		

<https://tea.texas.gov/student-assessment/testing/staar/archived-staar-released-test-questions>

Item Number	Reporting Category	Readiness or Supporting	Content Student Expectation	Correct Answer
1	1	Readiness	6.2(B)	A
2	2	Readiness	6.8(A)	H
3	2	Readiness	6.6 Fig. 19(D)	D
4	2	Readiness	6.6(A)	H
5	2	Supporting	6.6(C)	B
6	2	Supporting	6.3(A)	F
7	2	Supporting	6.8 Fig. 19(D)	C
8	2	Supporting	6.4 Fig. 19(D)	G
9	2	Supporting	6.4(A)	B
10	2	Supporting	6.4 Fig. 19(D)	J
11	2	Supporting	6.3 Fig. 19(D)	C
12	2	Supporting	6.4 Fig. 19(D)	H
13	2	Supporting	6.3 Fig. 19(D)	D
14	1	Readiness	6.2(B)	J
15	3	Readiness	6.10(A)	A
16	3	Readiness	6.10 Fig. 19(D)	G
17	3	Readiness	6.9 Fig. 19(D)	A
18	3	Readiness	6.10 Fig. 19(E)	J
19	1	Readiness	6.2(A)	C
20	3	Readiness	6.10(C)	J
21	3	Readiness	6.10 Fig. 19(D)	C
22	3	Readiness	6.10(A)	F
23	3	Readiness	6.10 Fig. 19(D)	B
24	3	Readiness	6.10(A)	J
25	1	Readiness	6.19(F)	C
26	1	Readiness	6.19(F)	F
27	1	Readiness	6.19(F)	A
28	1	Readiness	6.19(F)	G
29	2	Supporting	6.3(A)	D
30	2	Supporting	6.6(B)	F
31	2	Readiness	6.6 Fig. 19(D)	C
32	2	Readiness	6.6(A)	G
33	2	Readiness	6.6 Fig. 19(E)	A
34	1	Readiness	6.2(E)	G
35	3	Supporting	6.12(B)	D
36	3	Readiness	6.10(C)	G
37	3	Readiness	6.10(A)	B
38	3	Readiness	6.10 Fig. 19(D)	H
39	3	Readiness	6.10(D)	D
40	3	Readiness	6.9 Fig. 19(D)	G