Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
GRADE 3
READING
Administered March 2009
READING
What problem does Sticks have in this story?
- His mother doesn’t like his straight ears.
- He wishes that he could be more like his grandfather.
- The other young rabbits in his village are jealous of him.
- He wants to look like the other rabbits in his village.
Are you looking for a fun vacation spot? Do you like to sleep in a hotel, go shopping, and eat fancy meals? If so, Mona Island might NOT be the place for you! That’s because Mona Island has no hotels, no museums, no shops, and no restaurants. None at all!

But if you like nature, Mona Island is an amazing place to take a vacation. Some of the animals living there are not found anywhere else in the world. There are beautiful beaches and caves to explore. The sea around the island has colorful fish. There are many things that make Mona Island an unusual place.

Why Is Mona Island Unusual?

Mona Island is very small. On a map it looks like a tiny green lima bean floating in the big blue ocean. The only way to get there is by taking a long boat ride from the island of Puerto Rico.

The government of Puerto Rico takes care of the island and has made it a natural reserve. That means the island’s animals and plants are protected from being harmed by people. Mona Island is different from most places because people are not allowed to live there. Only a few park rangers are able to stay.

The park rangers’ job is to keep Mona Island safe and beautiful. They insist that rules be followed. One rule is that only 100 people at a time can visit the island. That way, the park rangers can make sure the land and animals remain safe.

Visitors to Mona Island must prepare wisely for their trip. Visitors can sleep only in certain areas and must bring their own tents. And if they want anything to eat or drink, they have to bring that along too. But people who take the trouble to come to Mona Island are rewarded with many wonderful sights.

July 2007
What Is There to See on Mona Island?

One thing that most people enjoy is getting to see the Mona Island iguana. This type of reptile grows to be about four feet long and lives only on Mona Island. It has scales that look like horns on top of its nose. The huge muscles on its face droop down and look like fat cheeks. It likes to lie around and warm itself in the sun. Almost 2,000 of these iguanas live on Mona Island.

Several types of sea turtles also live on Mona Island. They nest along the white sandy beaches. Some of these turtles weigh as much as 600 pounds. That’s almost as heavy as two refrigerators!

People also come to the island to get a close-up view of many kinds of fish and other sea life. Visitors can scuba dive and snorkel in the crystal-blue waters. They wear masks and special equipment to be able to breathe underwater. They can swim far below the surface. The water is almost transparent. Through the clear water, divers can see the bright colors of the fish.

Visitors can also explore caves. Some of the caves even have paintings and drawings on the walls. This artwork was made by the Arawak and Taíno Indians who lived on the island hundreds of years ago.

After a full day of fun activities, visitors can settle in, listen to the night sounds, and view the stars in the huge sky. The night sky is a stunning sight. Because the island is far away from other places, it is surrounded by darkness, and the stars are easier to see. Visitors say that watching the stars is amazing. It’s the perfect end to a perfect day.
1 Park rangers on Mona Island —
  ☐ help visitors set up their tents
  ☐ show people where to find food on the island
  ☐ teach people how to swim underwater
  ☐ protect the land and the animals on the island

2 Paragraphs 7 and 8 are mostly about —
  ☐ the muscles on an iguana
  ☐ the color of the sand on Mona Island
  ☐ the animals that can be seen on Mona Island
  ☐ the weight of the turtles on the beach
3 Read the chart and use it to answer the question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitors wear diving masks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which sentence belongs on the blank lines?

- They can see colorful fish underwater.
- They can find the island on a map.
- They are able to see the stars in the sky.
- They can find the paintings in the caves.

4 Which word from paragraph 9 helps the reader know what **transparent** means?

- clear
- special
- many
- bright

5 Where can artwork be seen on Mona Island?

- On the beaches
- In a museum
- On the wall of the hotel
- In the caves
What should visitors do before going to Mona Island?

- Find a hotel and restaurants that they will enjoy
- Read about the capital city of Puerto Rico
- Make sure they have a tent, food, and water
- Study information about the stars

What is the most likely reason the author wrote this article?

- To tell about a place that some people might enjoy
- To show the reader where the island is located
- To explain why animals live on the island
- To give facts about people who work on the island

In paragraph 11, the word stunning means —

- busy
- famous
- crowded
- beautiful

What is paragraph 6 mostly about?

- Where visitors may sleep while staying on Mona Island
- What kind of food to bring to Mona Island
- Why visitors should go to Mona Island
- How visitors should prepare for a trip to Mona Island
10 Read the web below and use it to answer the question.

Which of these best completes the web?

- Visit with Taíno Indians
- Eat in fancy restaurants
- Look at bright stars
- See old buildings

11 The author included the photos to show —

- where the island is
- the animals that live on the island
- the size of the island
- what the weather is like on the island
There was no doubt about it. The new kid who was moving in next door to Jason was good. Jason sat on the front steps of his house. He had watched in admiration as the new kid jumped out of the movers’ truck that was parked in the driveway and right onto a skateboard. Wearing a bright red helmet and knee and elbow pads, the kid had traveled quickly down the sidewalk in front of Jason’s house, weaving around anything in the way.

As Jason watched, Mrs. Tuttle’s fluffy little white dog suddenly ran out onto the sidewalk. The kid jumped his skateboard over the ball of fur and flipped the skateboard up into his hands, just like a professional. Then he grabbed the leash and set off to return the runaway dog. “Wow!” Jason exclaimed. “I need to learn how to do those cool tricks!”

After returning the dog to Mrs. Tuttle, the kid rode his skateboard back to his house. Jason saw the kid make his way between workers who were carrying boxes and chairs into his new home. Jason felt shy about talking to the new kid, but he wanted to find out where that kid had learned to skateboard so well.

Jason sat on the porch steps, waiting for the kid to come back out. When he did, he was still wearing his helmet and other gear, and he was carrying the skateboard under one arm. Jason got up his courage and walked over to the new kid. “Hey, I saw you riding your skateboard,” Jason said. “You’re good.”

The kid smiled and quietly said, “Thanks.”

“Where are you from?” Jason asked.

“California,” the kid answered.

Jason nodded and said, “My name’s Jason.”

The helmet came off, and Jason watched long brown hair tumble down. The kid said, “I’m Amanda.”
Jason almost swallowed his gum. The new kid was a girl! After a few seconds he finally managed to say, “Hi.”

“My mom told me that there’s a skate park in the neighborhood. Is that right?” Amanda asked.

Jason shrugged. He knew Amanda was really good at riding a skateboard, and he could learn some things from her, like that flip she had just done. But he didn’t want his friends to know he was learning something from a girl. His friends would tease him forever! Then he had an idea. “It’s not too far, but you have to wear your helmet and knee and elbow pads,” Jason said.

“No problem,” Amanda said. “Let me ask my parents if I can go.”

As Amanda ran inside to get permission from her parents, Jason stared down at his feet. “If she can just keep her helmet on, everything will be fine,” he thought to himself.

Amanda came running out of her house, and she and Jason stopped by his house so he could get his gear and his parents’ permission. Then they rode away.
The park was filled with kids, some riding on skateboards and others on skates. Several guys waved to Jason as he showed Amanda around. Soon, though, Amanda was showing everyone what she could do on her skateboard. Sometimes she looked as if she were flying in the air. Jason began to panic when he realized that all his friends had stopped skating and were watching her, especially his best friend Patrick. Jason wondered if he could sneak out of the park without anyone noticing.

“That’s awesome!” Patrick said, skating over to Jason.

“Just moved in next door to me today,” Jason said.

“Do you think I could learn some of those tricks?” Patrick wondered aloud. “I always crash when I try to flip my skateboard like that.”

Jason took a deep breath and motioned Amanda over to him and Patrick. If Patrick judged Amanda on her skating abilities rather than on the fact that she was a girl, then things would be all right. Jason just hoped that Patrick would decide Amanda was O.K.

As Amanda skated up to the two boys and took off her helmet, Jason tried to think of what to say. Before he could open his mouth, Patrick said, “Wow, I never met a girl who could skate like that—or even a boy! Can you teach me that flip trick?”

From the information in the selection, the reader can tell that Amanda probably—

- is better at skateboarding than most kids at the skate park
- does not like people watching her on her skateboard
- wishes that Jason had not brought her to the skate park
- will not teach skateboard tricks to any of the boys

Where does Amanda want Jason to take her?

- Jason’s house
- The skate park
- Mrs. Tuttle’s house
- A neighborhood park
15 Which is the best summary of this selection?

- Jason is pleased that his new neighbor is great at skateboarding. Jason learns that the new kid is a girl but wants her to teach him a few skateboard tricks anyway. Jason worries about what his friends at the park will think, but his friends want to learn from Amanda, too.

- Jason takes the new kid in his neighborhood to the skate park. While there, Jason sees many friends who are skating and skateboarding. His friends are surprised by the skateboard tricks the new kid is able to do.

- A new kid moves into Jason’s neighborhood. The kid is very good at skateboarding. Jason watches the kid jump over a white dog and move through a crowd of workers. Finally Jason goes to meet the neighbor and learns that the new kid is a girl.

- When Jason agrees to take Amanda to the skate park, she must wear a helmet and knee and elbow pads. Jason hopes that his friends won’t learn that Amanda is a girl, but when she meets Jason’s friends, everyone sees who she is.

14 Paragraph 16 is mainly about —

- what Amanda rides on at the park
- how Jason plans to escape from his friends at the park
- who Jason knows at the park
- what happens while Jason and Amanda are at the park
16 Jason wants to meet his new neighbor because he wants to —
- learn where the new kid is from
- know how the kid learned to skateboard so well
- take the kid to the skate park
- have the new kid meet his friends

17 What do Jason and Amanda do right before going to the skate park?
- Ask for permission
- Catch a neighbor’s dog
- Help carry boxes
- Meet new people

18 What does the word panic mean in paragraph 16?
- To become afraid
- To feel cared for
- To be surprised
- To grow tired
19 Which of the following hides the fact that the new kid is a girl?

- Knee pads
- Skateboard
- Elbow pads
- Helmet

20 The reader can tell that Jason —

- doesn't know any girls who can skateboard as well as Amanda can
- goes to the skate park with his friends every day
- wishes Patrick had seen Amanda jump over the runaway dog
- hasn't had much time to practice on his skateboard

21 In paragraph 10, Jason almost swallows his gum because he is —

- expecting the new kid to be a boy
- nervous about having a new neighbor
- excited about the skateboard tricks he will learn
- angry that Amanda didn’t tell him she was a girl
22 What happens after Jason and Amanda get to the skate park?
- Amanda searches for her knee and elbow pads.
- Jason and Amanda put on their gear.
- People stop to watch Amanda on her skateboard.
- Jason and Amanda ask for permission to go skateboarding.

23 What is Jason’s main problem at the skate park?
- Amanda has not taught him any skateboard tricks.
- He doesn’t want his friends to learn the truth about Amanda.
- His friends are watching Amanda instead of talking to him.
- Amanda continues to do difficult tricks.

24 The reader can tell that Jason and Amanda will probably —
- get in trouble with their parents
- find Mrs. Tuttle’s dog in the neighborhood
- help the workers carry boxes to Amanda’s house
- return to the park another day
Patrick woke to a loud whump-whump-whump. He had just turned ten and thought he was pretty brave, but his heart was pounding. It was very dark in his room at the cabin, not like his room at home. As he reached for the lamp, he heard the sound again. He quickly switched on the light and sighed in relief. Buffy’s tail was beating against the floor. He had forgotten about Buffy.

Patrick wasn’t used to dogs. His parents had always said pets were too much of a burden and a lot of work. His family was busy and didn’t think they could care for an animal. But a week ago Uncle Jack had pleaded with Patrick’s parents to keep Buffy until he returned. Uncle Jack would be working in another country for six months and couldn’t take Buffy with him. He had promised that Buffy would be no trouble. Surprisingly, Patrick’s parents had agreed to keep her, even though they were about to leave for the lake cabin.

At breakfast Patrick shared his scary story with his parents. “Do you see the trouble a dog can cause?” his mother asked. “Pets like company. After breakfast take Buffy outside to play. Your father and I have some repairs to make on the cabin.”

Soon Patrick went out the door toward the lake behind the cabin. Buffy followed Patrick like a shadow on a sunny day. Patrick’s father watched them go. “Looks like Buffy may be a good pet,” he said.

“We’ll see,” Patrick’s mother grumbled.

Patrick and Buffy spent the morning running and playing. Patrick’s new friend showed that she could roll over, fetch a stick,
and even play tag. The sun had warmed the air, and Patrick said to Buffy, “Maybe we could cool off in the lake. Mom and Dad can see us from the cabin.”

When he got to the lake, Patrick was a little hesitant. He hadn’t visited the cabin since last year, and he wasn’t a very good swimmer. His mother had told him he could wade in the water up to his knees. So after thinking it over for a while, he decided to go in the lake. After all, he wasn’t alone. Buffy was with him.

The two friends jumped and splashed together in the lake. Patrick threw a stick, and Buffy retrieved it. No matter where Patrick threw it, Buffy swam after it like a trained athlete and returned it every time. Patrick was having so much fun playing with Buffy that he didn’t realize he was so far from shore. Suddenly, the bottom of the lake seemed to disappear beneath his feet, and he went below the surface of the water.

Patrick sank like a rock to the bottom of the lake. When his feet finally touched squishy mud, he pushed up with all his might. He struggled to get to the top. His face came out of the water, and he rolled over on his back to float. “Help!” he cried. His body was too tired to move.

Just when Patrick felt hopeless, he heard a bark. He turned his head to see Buffy swimming toward him. She grabbed Patrick’s shirt and began to swim, pulling him toward the shore.

Patrick was relieved when his feet could touch the bottom of the lake again. He slowly started walking toward shore and saw his mother running from the cabin.

“Patrick! Are you O.K.?” she screamed. Patrick could only nod and wave.
Patrick’s mother ran into the water and walked with him to shore. When they reached dry ground, Patrick sat down to catch his breath. Buffy sat on one side of him, and his mother sat on the other. Patrick looked up at his mother and then hung his head. In between breaths he said, “I’m sorry, Mom. I got busy playing with Buffy, and I forgot to be careful.”

Patrick’s mother wrapped one arm around Patrick, and with the other she reached out to pat Buffy. “I’m sorry, too,” she said, smiling. “And I’m glad your uncle left Buffy with us. She’s a good lifeguard. I guess she’s not really that much trouble.”
25 Patrick’s mother runs to the lake to —
- go for a swim
- see if Buffy is causing problems
- make sure Patrick is all right
- watch Buffy fetch a stick

26 Who is the hero in this story?
- Patrick’s mother
- Uncle Jack
- Patrick’s father
- Buffy

27 Which word means about the same as hesitant in paragraph 7?
- Excited
- Careless
- Brave
- Unsure

28 Read the sentence below from paragraph 10.

She grabbed Patrick’s shirt and began to swim, pulling him toward the shore.

How does Patrick most likely feel at this moment?
- Amused by the dog’s actions
- Thankful that the dog is there
- Sad that he isn’t able to play
- Worried that his shirt may be torn
29 Why is Patrick unable to move in the water?

- He is too cold.
- His parents are watching.
- He is too tired.
- His knees are shaking.

30 Paragraphs 6 through 8 are mostly about —

- why Patrick is not a good swimmer
- what Patrick and Buffy do together
- how often Patrick visits the cabin
- where Patrick is allowed to go in the water

31 How does Patrick’s mother change by the end of the story?

- She is upset that the family is at the cabin.
- She is happy that the family is taking care of Buffy.
- She is angry that Patrick’s clothes are wet.
- She is curious about why the lake is dangerous.

32 The author wrote this story probably to —

- show the reader how to care for a dog
- explain games dogs play in water
- teach the reader to be brave in the water
- tell about how a dog saves a boy
33 In paragraph 8, the word retrieved means —
- fell apart
- brought back
- reminded again
- made better

34 Patrick feels relieved in paragraph 11 because he —
- can give Buffy back to his uncle
- is able to splash in the water
- knows he is no longer in danger
- can play with Buffy again

35 At the end of the story, Patrick is most likely —
- happy that his mother is not angry with him
- surprised that he is not a good swimmer
- hopeful that Uncle Jack will return soon
- relaxed by the cool water in the lake

36 Which sentence from the story shows why Patrick’s parents don’t want a pet?
- He had forgotten about Buffy.
- His family was busy and didn’t think they could care for an animal.
- Uncle Jack would be working in another country for six months and couldn’t take Buffy with him.
- Patrick and Buffy spent the morning running and playing.