

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
1	Option D is correct	The author uses energetic expressions such as “great activity,” “grab a coloring book and join the millions” and “coloring is for everyone” in paragraph 11 to show enthusiasm for the topic.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author uses positive language such as “great activity” and “coloring is for everyone,” the language is not witty and is not intended to show the author’s sense of humor.
	Option B is incorrect	Throughout the selection “Coloring Is for Everyone,” the author argues in favor of people taking up coloring, and the language in paragraph 11 supports this argument. The author’s language is not precise (“just as a way to relax for a while”), nor are the word choices intended to show the author’s knowledge of the topic.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the author is in favor of people pursuing coloring to relax, the phrases “keep those art supplies handy” and “grab a coloring book” are casual and colloquial word choices rather than strong ones meant to convey seriousness.

Item Position	Rationale	
2	Option B is correct	A rhetorical question is a question that is asked in order to create a dramatic effect or to make a point rather than to get an answer. In paragraph 1, the author's assertion that adults and teens are busy and stressed is followed by the suggestion that one of the best ways for them to relax "may involve a handful of colored pencils and a coloring book." The author's choice to make this suggestion, phrased as a question, creates a dramatic, surprising effect, since colored pencils and coloring books are usually associated with children rather than older people.
	Option A is incorrect	The author explains that adults and teens are stressed out by their busy lives. However, the author does not explain this problem in detail. Instead, the author uses the rhetorical question to introduce the idea of coloring to relax.
	Option C is incorrect	The author's use of a rhetorical question in paragraph 1 asks the reader to consider an idea rather than follow advice.
	Option D is incorrect	A reader may find it surprising that coloring could help adults or teens relax. However, the author does not use humorous language in the rhetorical question in paragraph 1 in order to interest the reader in the topic.

Item Position	Rationale	
3	Option D is correct	Figurative language is language that uses words that mean something different than their literal interpretation. The author’s use of figurative language in paragraph 10 in the phrase “books erupt with cheerful illustrations” emphasizes that Lacy Mucklow’s books contain many illustrations.
	Option A is incorrect	In this sentence from paragraph 10, the author does not compare Lacy Mucklow’s book to any other books, nor does the author refer to any research that may have gone into Mucklow’s book.
	Option B is incorrect	The author’s use of figurative language in this sentence from paragraph 10 suggests that Lacy Mucklow’s book is filled with illustrations. However, the author does not judge whether there are too many illustrations in Mucklow’s book.
	Option C is incorrect	The author’s use of the word “erupt” connotes lively and energetic illustrations. However, there is not enough evidence in the sentence from paragraph 10 to suggest that Lacy Mucklow’s illustrations are less relaxing than those in other adult coloring books.

Item Position	Rationale	
4	Option A is correct	The author uses a problem-and-solution organizational pattern to convey the relationship between the problem of people’s active, busy lives causing them stress and the solution that coloring books can offer. The author describes the ways in which coloring can help alleviate that stress by creating a focus or distraction, activating the part of the brain that controls emotions and stress.
	Option B is incorrect	Although coloring can be considered an art form, the author does not use a problem-and-solution structure to provide support that coloring leads to regular exposure to art. Instead, the author argues that coloring is beneficial because it can be relaxing.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 4, the author notes a 2019 study that asked students to color before an exam; the study showed that their stress levels decreased. However, the author does not mention a correlation between coloring and improved performance on exams.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 10, the author mentions that coloring book designers create books that “appeal to every taste and interest,” but the author does not use a problem-and-solution structure to explain how meeting the needs of consumers solves the problem of increased stress.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

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5	The word in paragraph 5 that most helps the reader understand the meaning of <i>reduction</i> is "decreased." The word <i>reduction</i> in paragraph 5 of the selection means "the action of making smaller or less in amount."

Item Position	Rationale	
6	Option D is correct	In the title of the selection, the author makes the claim that “coloring is for everyone” and supports this claim through the selection by mentioning various age groups and situations for which coloring might be beneficial. In paragraph 2, the author explains that “parents and teachers encourage young children to color.” In paragraphs 4 and 5, the author mentions a study of college students that suggests coloring helps reduce stress. And in paragraphs 6 through 9, the author supports the idea that coloring “takes us back to our childhood” and boosts creativity.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 2, the author mentions coloring as a way to develop children’s fine motor skills. However, the author does not support the claim that fine-tuning motor skills through coloring is a lifelong process.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author mentions coloring as a stress reliever several times in the selection, it is not the main claim of the selection. The author also mentions coloring as a way to be creative or have fun.
	Option C is incorrect	The author mentions in paragraph 6 that coloring “reminds us of a time when we may have had more time to play and relax,” which supports the claim that coloring can allow people to recall pleasant memories. However, this is not the main claim of the selection.

Item Position	Rationale	
7	Option B is correct	The intended audience of the selection is most likely someone looking for a fun way to relieve stress. The author explains that “research suggests that people who feel anxious gain special benefits from coloring” (paragraph 4). Additionally, the author describes coloring as an activity that has “calming effects” (paragraph 6). Someone who is interested in a fun, stress-reducing activity would most benefit from reading this selection.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author does acknowledge coloring as an activity most often associated with childhood, the author focuses on coloring as a means of stress relief for all ages. Therefore, the intended audience is most likely not someone looking for a good activity for a child.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 3, the author notes that art therapists regard coloring as a “beneficial hobby.” However, the author focuses the selection on how coloring is a fun way to relieve stress. Therefore, the intended audience is most likely not people wanting to learn about a new hobby.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author mentions that coloring contributes to the development of fine motor skills in paragraphs 2 and 10, the author focuses on how coloring can help reduce stress. Therefore, the intended audience is most likely someone who is looking for a fun way to relieve stress.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

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8	For SCR items, please refer to the scoring guide.

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9	Option C is correct	In paragraph 2 of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> , the word <u>newfangled</u> means “having been recently created.” The first part of the compound word, “new-,” as well as the author identifying the toy as a “gizmo” and a “sort of helicopter,” establishes that the toy was something the Wright brothers had not seen before. The author’s use of the phrases “had only just made its way” in paragraph 3 and “new plaything” in paragraph 4 further supports this definition.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author describes what the toy looked like and how the parts fit together, the author provides no context in the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> to support the idea that the word <u>newfangled</u> means “having a specific use.”
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 2 of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> , the author provides details about how the parts of the toy worked together: the elastic “spinning the propeller” to make the toy fly. However, the author provides no context to support the idea that <u>newfangled</u> means “having significant power.”
	Option D is incorrect	Even though the reader may think that the father brought home the toy because it was popular or well known, the author provides no context in the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> to support the idea that <u>newfangled</u> means “having popularity with others.”

Item Position	Rationale	
10	Option A is correct	The author of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> explains that the Wright brothers were “fascinated” with the bat and that they “played with the bat so much” that it broke (paragraph 4). “Instead of crying” after it broke, they “built a new one.” They did this multiple times, which shows that they most likely had studied the bat to see what made it work (paragraph 4).
	Option B is incorrect	Although in the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> the author states that the Wright brothers continued to rebuild the toy after each version broke, the author does mention other toys that they may have played with in their lives.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 4 of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> , the author refers to the toy as a “new plaything” and describes the Wright brothers as being “fascinated” with it. The author’s use of these terms indicates this was their first experience with such a toy.
	Option D is incorrect	In the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> , the author does not provide evidence that the Wright brothers thought that the toy was broken when they got it. Rather, the brothers played with it so much that they broke it.

Item Position	Rationale	
11	Option A is correct	This statement is an accurate paraphrasing of the key details in the sentences from paragraph 5 of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> . It includes the idea that the little bat was the “first flying machine” the Wright brothers built. It also includes the detail that building the bat inspired them to build a “bigger” project.
	Option B is incorrect	Although this statement mentions that the Wright brothers wanted to build something “bigger,” the first part of the statement is an inaccurate paraphrasing of the sentences from paragraph 5 of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> .
	Option C is incorrect	Even though this statement correctly identifies the Wright brothers’ bat as their “first flying machine,” it lacks the key detail that the Wright brothers were inspired by their success to create a larger project.
	Option D is incorrect	The detail in this statement that the Wright brothers “did not stop with building just one” is an idea in paragraph 5; however, the paraphrasing in this statement omits the key information about the bat being their first flying machine and that it gave them an idea for an even bigger machine.

Item Position	Rationale	
12	Option C is correct	The theme, or universal idea about life, of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> is that small accomplishments sometimes lead to bigger achievements. The author develops this theme by highlighting the Wright brothers' persistence in building new bats. Their repeated successes enabled them to test different designs, which eventually helped them create their own flying machine.
	Option A is incorrect	The idea that people are not always inspired by what they see around them is not the theme of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> . The author states in paragraph 5 that the Wright brothers had fun building the bats and that the toy "gave them an idea for a bigger and better project."
	Option B is incorrect	The author mentions that the bat was made from simple materials: "paper, bamboo, and cork" (paragraph 2). In paragraph 4, the author explains that the Wright brothers built several versions of the bat. Given that the bat was made from simple materials and that the Wright brothers were able to rebuild the bat frequently, the theme of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> is not that complicated things are more valuable.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the Wright brothers were creative, the author explains in paragraph 6 of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> that they "tried a number of designs, using different combinations of materials, shapes, and concepts—but none of their supersized bats would fly." These details suggest that they made multiple attempts at their invention without achieving much success at first.

Item Position	Rationale	
13	Option D is correct	In lines 39 and 40 of the poem "The Yellow Kite," the poet shows that the speaker is on the verge of giving up because she doubts the quality of the kite she has built. In line 41, Nose encourages her to "Try again," which she does. In line 48, Nose further encourages her to run fast when the kite begins to fly. Nose's positive encouragement allows the siblings to have an afternoon of play. Nose assures his sister of her skills after the kite rips, telling her that it was "a good kite" (line 74).
	Option A is incorrect	In the poem "The Yellow Kite," the poet shows Nose's eagerness in line 55 when he says, "Let me hold it! Let me hold it!" However, the speaker hesitates to share and "hold[s] the string for a long while" (line 56), indicating the speaker's reluctance to share rather than eagerness.
	Option B is incorrect	Although Nose asks questions in the poem "The Yellow Kite," the questions do not lead the speaker to try a new approach. Instead, when Nose asks if the kite will fly after looking at the "fancy" kites in the sky, the speaker says, "Yes, . . . I made a good kite" (lines 30–33).
	Option C is incorrect	In the poem "The Yellow Kite," the poet does not provide evidence of Nose having an appreciative personality. Nose is eager and supportive, but his enthusiasm does not support the idea that the speaker is excited for the future.

Item Position	Rationale	
14	Option C is correct	In line 42 of the poem "The Yellow Kite," the speaker and Nose "climb to the top of the hill and wait" for better wind. The speaker is eager to fly her "good kite," which she is able to do when the wind changes in line 44.
	Option A is incorrect	In lines 9 through 11 of the poem "The Yellow Kite," the speaker mentions that "the park shines/with kite flyers/and all kinds of kites." The sky above the park is not open and free of obstacles in the sky for the speaker's kite to navigate.
	Option B is incorrect	In line 38 of the poem "The Yellow Kite," the speaker describes how the kite "looks like melted butter in the grass," indicating that the kite is not difficult to find. Thus, the bright day is not the part of the setting that most affects the speaker.
	Option D is incorrect	In lines 69 through 73 of the poem "The Yellow Kite," the speaker describes the way the kite falls once the wind dies down: the kite lands and then rips. The softening wind causes the kite flight to end, but the flight itself is what most affects the speaker.

Item Position	Rationale
15	The term <i>point of view</i> refers to the perspective from which the events in a story are told. The poem “The Yellow Kite” is written from a first-person point of view. The poet’s use of first-person pronouns throughout the poem conveys the speaker’s feelings and helps the reader understand the speaker’s thoughts and decisions.

Item Position	Rationale	
16	Option A is correct	The poet's main message in the poem "The Yellow Kite" is that trying something again even after disappointment can bring success. In line 33, the speaker is proud, stating, "I made a good kite." When the kite falls to the ground, Nose prompts her to "try again" (line 41). The speaker tries again and is successful. The poem ends with Nose encouraging the speaker to make another kite.
	Option B is incorrect	Although in the poem "The Yellow Kite" the speaker describes the kites at the park and how her homemade kite is not like the others, this is not the poet's main message. Later, in lines 63 and 64, the poet uses parentheses when the speaker compares her kite to the other kites, suggesting that the comparison is an unimportant detail to the speaker now that her kite is flying.
	Option C is incorrect	In the poem "The Yellow Kite," the speaker does benefit from having the encouragement of her brother, Nose. However, the main message in the poem is the importance of continuing to try even after disappointment, as demonstrated when Nose tells the speaker to "try again" (line 41).
	Option D is incorrect	Although the speaker and her brother find joy flying the kite in the outdoors in lines 49 through 65, the poet's main message is about the importance of trying again, as emphasized throughout the poem "The Yellow Kite" when Nose encourages the speaker to keep trying.

Item Position	Rationale	
17	Option D is correct	In lines 49 through 54 in the poem "The Yellow Kite," the speaker expresses the key idea that making an effort can provide a sense of satisfaction. In contrast, the author of excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> notes in paragraph 6 that the Wright brothers "tried a number of designs . . . but none of their supersized bats would fly." The Wright brothers were not satisfied with their early efforts.
	Option A is incorrect	In line 54 in the poem "The Yellow Kite," Nose cheers on the speaker when Nose says, "It's flying! It's flying!," but there is not enough evidence to support the idea that this encouragement boosts the speaker's self-esteem. Similarly, the author of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> indicates that the Wright brothers' relationship was important, but there is no evidence in the excerpt that their relationship boosted their self-esteem, leading to their success.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> explains that the Wright brothers based their designs on the original bat they received as a gift from their father, the poet of the poem "The Yellow Kite" does not provide evidence in lines 49 through 54 that the speaker will use the current kite designs for any future designs.
	Option C is incorrect	The speaker in the poem "The Yellow Kite" appears to be dedicated to getting her kite to fly as she runs "fast, fast, fast" to try to launch it into the air (line 49). However, there is no evidence in the poem to suggest that the speaker values work more than play. The author of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> explains that the Wright brothers "had so much fun building small bats" (paragraph 5) that the brothers continued inventing more machines, but the author does not provide evidence that supports the idea that the brothers were successful because they valued work more than play.

Item Position	Rationale	
18	Option C is correct	Both the author of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> and the poet of the poem “The Yellow Kite” demonstrate the message that it can often take multiple attempts at something before people are successful. In the excerpt, the author explains that “Orville and Wilbur tried a number of designs” and built several prototypes of their flying machine (paragraph 6). Similarly, the speaker in the poem is encouraged to “try again” (line 41) and is finally successful in flying her kite.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the Wright brothers in the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> worked together to build a flying machine, they did not complete this goal successfully. In the poem “The Yellow Kite,” Nose only encourages the speaker to try again and fly her kite; he does not help her. Therefore, the importance of helping others complete a goal is not the central message of either the excerpt or the poem.
	Option B is incorrect	In the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> , the author explains that “without even thinking about it, the young Wright brothers had built their first flying machine,” which suggests that they did not have a plan before they started their project (paragraph 5). In the poem “The Yellow Kite,” the poet gives no indication that the speaker had a plan for the day. Instead, the speaker is uncertain how the events will unfold; at first the speaker believes that she “made a good kite” (line 33), but when she is unsuccessful in flying it, she questions herself: “Maybe it wasn’t a good kite./Maybe it can’t fly” (lines 39–40).
	Option D is incorrect	The author of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> characterizes the Wright brothers as “inventive” (paragraph 5) and capable of building smaller bats that could fly, yet “the youngsters didn’t yet know enough about the physics of flight to create a human-sized flying machine” (paragraph 7). Hence, they lacked the skills needed to design a quality product. Likewise, although the speaker in the poem “The Yellow Kite” uses simple materials to build the kite—and it does successfully fly—the kite eventually rips and “won’t fly anymore,” indicating that while it did work, it is not a quality product (lines 72–73).

Item Position	Rationale	
19	Option B is correct	In the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> , the author explains that the Wright brothers “had so much fun building small bats” that “they set out to create a bat so big that the two of them could fly in it” (paragraph 5). Despite being unsuccessful, building that bat is what “launched the Wright brothers’ future fascination with flight” (paragraph 7). Although Nose in the poem “The Yellow Kite” encourages his sister to “make another” kite (line 75), there is no indication that the speaker will build or invent anything in the future. Therefore, the difference between the bats and the kite is that the bats influenced future inventions.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 4 of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> , the author explains that the Wright brothers built numerous versions of the bat, several of which “ ‘flew successfully.’ ” In the poem “The Yellow Kite,” the speaker describes the way the kite “flies as high/as the fancy kites” (lines 62–63). Therefore, the fact that the bats can fly at great heights in the excerpt is not a difference from the speaker’s kite in the poem.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 2 of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> , the author explains how the bats were designed to fly when released: “When the boys twirled the propeller with their fingers, the elastic wrapped tightly around the stick. When they let go, the elastic unwound quickly, spinning the propeller. The toy flew!” In the poem “The Yellow Kite,” the speaker explains that she must run in the wind for the kite to fly when released: “I run fast, fast, fast until I feel the wind/snatch the kite and steal it away” and then “the wind rolls my kite across the sky” (lines 49–52) Both bats and kites are designed to fly when released.
	Option D is incorrect	In lines 20 through 24 of the poem “The Yellow Kite,” the poet describes the kite as being made from “yellow paper, / and tape, and drinking straws” as well as string and a Popsicle stick. These items may be considered common household items. However, the bat is not made from common household items; it is “made of paper, bamboo, and cork” (paragraph 2).

Item Position	Rationale	
20	Option D is correct	The theme is a central message that conveys a universal idea about life. Both the author of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> and the poet of the poem "The Yellow Kite" support the theme that cooperation allows people to accomplish more. The author of the excerpt supports the theme in paragraphs 4 through 6, noting that the Wright brothers came up with an "idea for a bigger and better project" together (paragraph 5). The poet supports this theme in the poem when Nose encourages the speaker. In turn, the speaker cooperates and shares the kite with Nose.
	Option A is incorrect	The author of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> and the poet of the poem "The Yellow Kite" both describe siblings who collaborated to accomplish a goal. The author of the excerpt describes the Wright brothers working to try to create a large flying machine, and the poet describes the speaker and her brother flying a kite on a windy day. Neither the excerpt nor the poem references friends who provide a sense of belonging.
	Option B is incorrect	The author of the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> explains in paragraph 1 that "the gift [Milton Wright] brought for his sons, Wilbur and Orville, sent their imaginations soaring." The author elaborates that the gift inspired them to build "their first flying machine" (paragraph 5). In the poem "The Yellow Kite," the speaker's parents are not characters. Instead, Nose, the speaker's brother, encourages the speaker's persistence.
	Option C is incorrect	In the excerpt from <i>Orville and Wilbur Wright: Pioneers of the Age of Flight</i> , the Wright brothers enjoyed playing with the bat and inventing their own flying machines. However, the author does not discuss how they benefited from other inventions. Additionally, the poet of the poem "The Yellow Kite" shows the speaker and Nose enjoying the kite that the speaker built, but they do not benefit from other inventions either.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

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21	Option B is correct	The author’s use of the phrase “long proposed” in the sentence from paragraph 3 provides support that building a bridge to link San Francisco and Marin County was a desirable idea.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author mentions both San Francisco and Marin County in the sentence from paragraph 2, the author is providing a geographical description of the two areas. The author does not mention that linking the two areas was desirable.
	Option C is incorrect	Even though the author mentions Joseph Strauss, the engineer who designed the Golden Gate Bridge, in the sentence from paragraph 4, the author is merely showing that Strauss was confident in his design, not that the idea of linking the two areas was desirable.
	Option D is incorrect	In the sentence from paragraph 5, the author refers to the design that would eventually be implemented, but the author does not mention that linking San Francisco and Marin County was a desirable idea.

Item Position	Rationale	
22	Option A is correct	The reader can conclude that the Golden Gate Bridge has a secure place in history because of the engineering obstacles that were overcome to build it. In paragraph 1, the author explains that the bridge's construction "brought change not only to the areas it connected but also to bridge-building projects across the United States." In paragraph 3, the author states that "many engineers did not believe spanning the distance and deep water was possible" and that building a bridge in "ferocious winds and blinding fog" seemed "impossible." But when the bridge opened, "it was the longest suspension bridge in the world" (paragraph 10).
	Option C is correct	The reader can conclude that the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge led to improvements in worker safety in the United States. In paragraph 6, the author states that "in the early twentieth century, worker safety was not a priority for the building industry." The author goes on to explain that Joseph Strauss implemented safety rules and measures that were new to the industry and that they "saved the lives of 19 men on this project alone" (paragraphs 7–8). Therefore, the reader can conclude that the Golden Gate Bridge signifies improvements made in worker safety in the United States at that time.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author mentions "the expense involved in such a huge endeavor" in paragraph 3, the author does not present the Golden Gate Bridge as an example of costly bridge construction in general. Therefore, this is not a conclusion that can be made by the reader.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 3, the author explains that "engineers did not believe spanning the distance and deep water was possible." Additionally, "city officials rejected Strauss's design and his notion to finance" the project (paragraph 5), leading Strauss and others to work on a design that was finally accepted. Although this information suggests that Strauss and city officials had to compromise, there is not enough evidence for the reader to conclude how these experts debated the bridge's construction.
	Option E is incorrect	In paragraph 5, the author explains that "Strauss then joined forces with a team of engineers. Together they designed an elegant suspension bridge that officials finally accepted." Although Strauss worked with other engineers, there is not enough information for the reader to conclude that the Golden Gate bridge led other people to build on the ideas of Strauss.

Item Position	Rationales	
23	Option C is correct	In paragraph 2, the author states that “the only way to move between the areas was by boat” and that there was “limited ferry service” between the areas. The author includes this information most likely to explain why a bridge was needed to connect San Francisco and Marin County and surrounding communities.
	Option A is incorrect	The author includes geographic information about where the bridge was built. However, the most likely reason the author includes this information is to explain why the bridge was needed to connect the two places: “the only way to move between the areas was by boat” (paragraph 2).
	Option B is incorrect	The author explains in paragraph 2 that there was “limited ferry service” to connect San Francisco and Marin County, which supports the idea that the author includes the information in paragraph 2 most likely to explain why people needed a bridge to connect these places.
	Option D is incorrect	The author mentions the “many small communities that surround San Francisco Bay” in paragraph 2, but this fact is not the focus of the paragraph. Instead, the author provides this information most likely to suggest that there were many people in the area who could benefit from the construction of the bridge.

Item Position	Rationales	
24	Option D is correct	The author includes the second photograph most likely to illustrate the main idea of paragraph 8, which is that “[Joseph] Strauss had a sturdy net stretched from one end of the bridge to the other” and that this “innovation proved to be one of Strauss’s greatest safety measures” because it “saved the lives of 19 men on this project alone.”
	Option A is incorrect	The second photograph depicts several people, but the author does not discuss the teamwork of the workers who built the bridge.
	Option B is incorrect	The author does not discuss the bravery required of the workers. The author includes the second photograph most likely to show one of Strauss’s “safety measures” to protect the people building the bridge (paragraph 8).
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 8, the author describes “workers dangling high in the air,” which the second photograph supports by showing workers in a net high above the bay. However, the photograph does not show the height of the bridge after construction was completed.

Item Position	Rationales	
25	Option A is correct	In paragraphs 4 and 5, the author provides support for the key idea that Joseph Strauss's perseverance in overcoming obstacles presented by city officials led to the building of the Golden Gate Bridge. In these paragraphs, the author explains that Strauss suggested an idea to pay for the bridge by "charging future motorists a toll for crossing it" (paragraph 4), but city officials rejected it. This led to Strauss's decision to work with "a team of engineers" to design "an elegant suspension bridge that officials finally accepted" (paragraph 5).
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author states that the city officials "rejected . . . his notion to finance the bridge with toll money," this rejection is a detail in the article, not a key idea. The author shows how Strauss was able to overcome this obstacle and others through problem solving and collaboration in order to build the bridge.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 4, the author mentions Strauss's proposal to pay for the bridge "by charging future motorists a toll." However, there is not enough information in the article to support the idea that Strauss was more knowledgeable about finance than city officials.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author explains that the city officials "rejected Strauss's design and his notion to finance the bridge," there is no information in the article that suggests that the city officials did not understand his design (paragraph 5). Once Strauss worked with others to redesign the project, the city officials "finally accepted" the design (paragraph 5). The author includes the details in these paragraphs to support the key idea that Strauss was able to overcome obstacles.

Item Position	Rationales	
26	Option C is correct	In paragraph 6, the author states that “in the early twentieth century, worker safety was not a priority.” However, given that “the Bay Area is known for ferocious winds and blinding fog” (paragraph 3), Joseph Strauss wanted to ensure the workers’ safety in all conditions. The threat of termination was one way to make workers understand the precarious working conditions and Strauss’s commitment to keep his workers safe.
	Option A is incorrect	The author discusses hazardous conditions in paragraph 3 and safety standards in paragraph 6. Strauss threatened to fire people who disobeyed his hard hat rule most likely in order to maintain a safe working environment, not to gain the worker’s respect.
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 10, the author states that the bridge “took four years to complete.” Since there is no other information about the expected timeline to build the bridge and because the author includes information about safety conditions in paragraph 6, Strauss threatened to fire workers most likely in order to maintain a safe work environment.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author states in paragraph 7 that “Strauss implemented safety rules never before seen in the United States,” there is no indication that he did this because workers had not previously worn safety equipment. Strauss implemented the hard hat rule—and threatened to fire workers who refused to follow it—most likely to keep workers safe in “ferocious winds and blinding fog” (paragraph 3).

Item Position	Rationales	
27	Option A is correct	One of the author's central claims is that Joseph Strauss was integral in the design of the bridge as well as making worker safety a priority, so this information should be included in a summary of the article.
	Option B is incorrect	The author includes information about the original stripes to be painted on the bridge, but this is a minor detail about the bridge and does not need to be included in a summary of the article.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the author explains that workers did endure harsh working conditions during this time, this idea does not include Strauss's role in creating safe working conditions, which is important to include in a summary of the article.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author mentions that city officials thought the bridge would be costly and that a team of engineers created a bridge design that was approved, this statement excludes Strauss's role in these events, which is an important idea to include in a summary of the article.

Item Position	Rationale
28	The student response below has been identified by Texas educators as meeting the requirements for a 10-point (maximum score) response based on the rubric criteria. For additional information, refer to the Grade 7 scoring guide available on the STAAR Reading Language Arts Resources webpage. Joseph Strauss was an inventor that helped design and plan out the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge. During the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge he made safety measures that would change construction environments forever. His impact helped design more safety features and saved tons of people. Joseph Strauss helped make construction safer by designing safety nets and making a rule to wear safety helmets. During the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge, Joseph Strauss made a safety net that would save the construction workers if they fell while building. This is shown when the author writes in the article Building the Golden Gate Bridge, "In addition, Strauss had a sturdy net stretched from one end of the bridge to the other during the roadway construction phase. Workers dangling high in the air could feel safer with a net below them. This innovation proved to be one of Strauss's greatest safety measures" (9). During the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge, Joseph Stauss made a rule to all construction workers saying that they had to wear a safety helmet otherwise they would be fired. This is shown when written, "He made hard hats mandatory for the first time. He threatened to fire any worker who refused to wear one" (7). Joseph Strauss made this rule in order to make sure people were safe and secure during construction. Tons of people die during construction today because they do not have access to safety measures but, thanks to Joseph Strauss many of lives were saved during construction. Joseph Strauss's impact on the world helped design more safety features and saved tons of people.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
29	Option D is correct	Sentence 8 is written clearly and correctly. It does not need to be revised.
	Option A is incorrect	A misplaced modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that is improperly separated from the word it modifies or describes. In this revision, the writer misplaces the phrase “for her role.” This phrase should follow the word “recognition,” which it modifies, or applies to.
	Option B is incorrect	Here the writer incorrectly places the phrase “named Gladys West.” This phrase should follow the noun that it modifies (“individual”).
	Option C is incorrect	This option distorts the meaning of sentence 8 by claiming that someone deserves recognition for Gladys West and her role. Instead, the writer is stating that Gladys West deserves recognition for the role she played.

Item Position	Rationale	
30	Option C is correct	Adding this sentence provides more information about West's education. This supports sentence 13 and helps further develop the writer's account of how West became qualified for her jobs with the navy.
	Option A is incorrect	This factual detail contrasts West with many of her classmates, but it does not help the reader understand how she was able to move from her early school days to her sophisticated work for the navy. This sentence does not support sentence 13 or idea being developed in the third paragraph.
	Option B is incorrect	By inserting this sentence, the writer just repeats an idea that has already been presented in sentence 13, where the writer noted West's "excellence" as a student.
	Option D is incorrect	This detail about West's feelings for her family and her home is not directly relevant to the idea developed in the third paragraph. Adding this sentence does not help explain how she was able to rise from her rural upbringing to do important technical work as a computer programmer.

Item Position	Rationale	
31	Option B is correct	The closing sentence of a paragraph should capture the overall idea of the paragraph or emphasize an important message. In the fifth paragraph, the writer gives details about a project West worked on for the military. This option provides an effective closing sentence for the paragraph because in it, the writer explains that West's work on this project was critical to the success of GPS.
	Option A is incorrect	In this paragraph, the writer has described the context, nature, and significance of West's work for the military. This new sentence, about the growth of computer programming as a career, is not directly related to this topic, so it is not an effective closing sentence for the paragraph.
	Option C is incorrect	By adding this general statement, the writer fails to sum up or emphasize anything about how West's work as a programmer made the invention of an accurate GPS possible, which is the topic of the fifth paragraph.
	Option D is incorrect	This cannot be a suitable closing sentence for the paragraph. With this sentence, the writer merely restates the idea expressed in the paragraph's opening sentence, while also noting that testing new technologies is common in the military.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale
32	For SCR items, please refer to the scoring guide.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
33	Option B is correct	In this revision, the writer removes the unnecessary repetition of the phrase "the receiver," thus creating a more effective sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	With this revision, the writer incorrectly places the phrase "to pinpoint its exact location on Earth." This results in a confusing sentence in which it is not clear what the receiver measures.
	Option C is incorrect	Here the writer misplaces the phrase "that information" by separating it from the verb "cross-references." This creates an awkward and confusing sentence.
	Option D is incorrect	In this option, the writer has created a convoluted sentence that has no clear meaning. She has also misplaced the phrase "on Earth," which should follow the word "location" to make good sense.

Item Position	Rationale	
34	Option C is correct	A transition is a word, phrase, or sentence that connects topics or ideas. By adding this transition phrase, the writer makes it clear that the family has now moved over to the giant tank at the aquarium, where they are observing events that are taking place there.
	Option A is incorrect	Adding this phrase indicates that Laila’s attention has shifted to something happening “down the street,” not at the aquarium. Since sentence 22 is used to inform the reader of what Laila and her family see at the aquarium, this phrase is not an appropriate transition into the sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	In sentence 22, the writer begins to describe a woman feeding fish to the seals in a large glass tank. The young woman is not coming out to clean the tank, so inserting this phrase makes no sense in this context.
	Option D is incorrect	The location of a nearby subway stop is not relevant to the events occurring at the aquarium, so this option would not provide an effective transition into sentence 22.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
35	Option B is correct	In sentence 16, the writer describes Rashad’s disappointment with the family’s “walk around the city.” Adding this new sentence provides more details about why Rashad misses their traditional hikes in the mountains.
	Option A is incorrect	Sentence 3 is a quotation from Dad, who expresses his enthusiasm for the experience of walking in the city. It does not make sense for that sentence to be followed by one that expresses a negative view of the same experience.
	Option C is incorrect	This new sentence does not match the context created by sentence 18, in which Laila shares her excitement at seeing seals swimming nearby. This is not a suitable place to insert the new sentence.
	Option D is incorrect	In sentence 24, the writer makes it clear that Laila is beginning to enjoy the new city environment. The new, more negative sentence would be out of place here.

Item Position	Rationale	
36	Option D is correct	In the 10th paragraph, the writer describes how Rashad and his family stop at an Italian bakery to get snacks. The fact that the bakery also serves breakfast is not relevant to the story, so sentence 31 should be removed.
	Option A is incorrect	A topic sentence captures the subject of an entire paragraph. The subject, or topic, of the tenth paragraph is the family's exploration of the city's Italian neighborhood as part of their walk. Thus, sentence 27 serves as the paragraph's topic sentence and cannot be removed.
	Option B is incorrect	Removing sentence 29 would take a key moment out of the story, the moment at which Mom suggests getting a snack at the bakery. Without this sentence, the rest of the 10th paragraph would make no sense.
	Option C is incorrect	In sentence 30, the information about Rashad's choice of snacks is essential to the writer's aim of showing that Rashad has a new and satisfying experience at the bakery. Sentence 30 should not be removed.

Item Position	Rationale	
37	Option B is correct	In this story, the writer tells how Rashad and his family come to embrace the idea of exploring the city as their new summer tradition. Adding this sentence, in which Laila shows her enthusiastic agreement with the idea, provides the paper with an effective closing sentence—one that captures and confirms the story’s overall meaning.
	Option A is incorrect	Adding this sentence to the end of the story would puzzle the reader and take attention away from the family’s shared excitement about their new tradition. This is not an effective closing sentence for the story.
	Option C is incorrect	Since the family has already watched the seals at the aquarium, this proposal from Laila is not supported by the context and would not provide the story with a more effective closing.
	Option D is incorrect	Inserting this sentence would indicate that Laila enjoys her snack, but it would not show that she agrees with Rashad’s suggestion that the family adopt this new summer tradition. Since arriving at that agreement lies at the heart of the story, this is not an effective closing sentence.

Item Position	Rationale	
38	Option C is correct	The first clause in sentence 2 is a subordinate clause, a clause that cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. Replacing the semicolon after “chip” with a comma corrects the punctuation error in sentence 2 since a comma is required after a subordinate clause at the beginning of a sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	The word “Whether” is spelled correctly and should not be changed.
	Option B is incorrect	Substituting “and” for “or” changes the meaning of sentence 2. The writer is listing distinct ice-cream flavors, and the use of “or” makes it clear that he is not referring to a combination of those flavors in one ice cream.
	Option D is incorrect	By using the verb form “has become” in sentence 2, the writer states that ice cream is now a household staple. Changing the verb to “had become” would indicate that this became true at some past time, which is not the writer’s intent.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
39	Option D is correct	Substituting “accessible” corrects the misspelling (“accessable”) in sentence 3.
	Option A is incorrect	The word “summer” should not be capitalized since it is not being used here as a proper noun, one that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event.
	Option B is incorrect	In the context of sentence 3, the phrase “this delectable summer treat” clearly refers to ice cream. Therefore, the singular noun “treat” should not be replaced by the plural noun “treats.”
	Option C is incorrect	Deleting “was” removes the verb from sentence 3. This changes the sentence to a sentence fragment, or incomplete sentence.

Item Position	Rationale	
40	Option B is correct	Sentence 4 features a comma-splice error, an error that occurs when two independent clauses (each of which can stand alone as a complete sentence) are connected only with a comma. In this rewrite of the sentence, the writer corrects that error and creates an effective, properly punctuated sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	This option includes a sentence fragment, or incomplete sentence. The second punctuated phrase lacks a subject and therefore cannot stand alone as a sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	Here too, the second punctuated phrase ("Of making this beloved dessert") is a sentence fragment.
	Option D is incorrect	This is not a correct way to rewrite sentence 4. In place of the verb "revolutionized," the writer uses the word "revolutionizing." The result is a sentence fragment.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
41	Option C is correct	By changing the preposition “within” to “into,” the writer more clearly expresses the action denoted by the verb “was inserted.”
	Option A is incorrect	The pronoun “It” is the subject of sentence 6. Changing “It” to “And” creates a sentence fragment, or incomplete sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	The plural noun “ingredients” is used correctly in sentence 6. The context provides no support for using the singular possessive form (“ingredient’s”).
	Option D is incorrect	The writer’s use of the article “a” in “a bucket” indicates that only one bucket is referred to here. Changing the singular “bucket” to “buckets” is incorrect.

Item Position	Rationale	
42	Option D is correct	In sentence 2, the writer's use of the words "band" and "faces" makes it clear that multiple people would be making music onstage. Therefore, using the plural possessive noun "members' " is the correct way to indicate whose faces the girls want to see.
	Option A is incorrect	The singular possessive noun "member's" does not match the writer's use of the plural noun "faces." The band consists of more than one member, so the apostrophe must be shifted to form the plural possessive noun "members'."
	Option B is incorrect	Possessive nouns are used to indicate possession, or ownership. In sentence 2, there is no support for the idea that expressions own anything, so using the possessive noun ("expression's") is incorrect.
	Option C is incorrect	The writer aims in sentence 2 to inform the reader that she and her friend want to see the expressions on the faces that belong to the band members. To express this relation of "belonging to," she needs to use an apostrophe to form the plural possessive noun "members'."

Item Position	Rationale	
43	Option B is correct	In the phrase “the Lead Singer,” the word “the” makes it clear that “Lead Singer” is not being used as a proper noun, or a noun that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event. Therefore, “lead singer” should not be capitalized.
	Option A is incorrect	The exclamation point at the end of the singer’s greeting has been properly placed by the writer to signal the singer’s enthusiasm in addressing the audience. This punctuation should not be deleted from sentence 4.
	Option C is incorrect	Removing the word “and” from sentence 4 results in a comma-splice error, an error in which two independent clauses (each of which can stand on its own as a complete sentence) are connected only with a comma.
	Option D is incorrect	Changing “burst” to “bursted” introduces the incorrect past-tense form of an irregular verb.

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 7 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
44	Option D is correct	No change is needed in this sentence because the sentence is complete and contains no grammatical or spelling errors.
	Option A is incorrect	Sentence 5 is a compound sentence in which two independent clauses (each of which can stand alone as a complete sentence) are joined by the conjunction "and." The comma after "ELEVATE" is the correct punctuation to use in this situation.
	Option B is incorrect	The apostrophe in the word "we're" is used correctly in sentence 5 to indicate that this word is a contraction of the words "we" and "are."
	Option C is incorrect	Since the singer is addressing the audience, the second-person plural pronoun "you" is correct here. Changing it to "them" would distort the meaning of the singer's announcement.

Item Position	Rationale	
45	Option C is correct	Sentence 9, as written, is a sentence fragment, or an incomplete sentence. In this option, the writer correctly uses that fragment as a phrase that applies to the pronoun “I” in sentence 8. This produces an effective sentence with no grammatical errors.
	Option A is incorrect	By placing a comma after the word “too,” the writer introduces a comma-splice error—creating a type of run-on sentence in which two independent clauses (each of which can stand alone as a complete sentence) are connected only with a comma.
	Option B is incorrect	The second punctuated phrase here is a sentence fragment, so this is not a correct way to rewrite sentences 8 and 9.
	Option D is incorrect	Here the second punctuated phrase (“That this was going to be a night to remember”) is another sentence fragment, or incomplete sentence.