

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
1	Option A is correct	Christopher’s mother said he could go to the picnic if “he didn’t get into any more trouble this week.” Christopher tries to be very careful not to get into trouble at school on Friday so he can go to the picnic.
	Option B is incorrect	Although Christopher’s friends do sit next to him on the bus, where his friends sit is not related to attending the picnic.
	Option C is incorrect	Although Christopher attempts to tell the principal about the incident with his rubber bands, another band snaps off his braces and lands on the principal’s desk, making the explanation unnecessary.
	Option D is incorrect	The story takes place on a Friday, and the principal tells Christopher, “I haven’t seen you since Wednesday,” so he has been to the principal’s office this week.
2	Option J is correct	Timothy tells Christopher he only has “to stay out of trouble one more day.” When Christopher tells his friends about his misfortunes, they “tried to make their friend feel more hopeful,” by offering advice such as, “take deep breaths.”
	Option F is incorrect	Christopher’s friends do not express any opinion about the bus driver being unfair.
	Option G is incorrect	It is Christopher’s mother, not the principal, who made the conditions that determine if he will be allowed to go to the picnic, and Christopher’s friends do not express any thoughts on what the principal might do.
	Option H is incorrect	Christopher’s friends do not express any amusement with his actions.
3	Option B is correct	In paragraph 22, the principal says, “I haven’t seen you since Wednesday.” The story takes place on Friday, which means Christopher has seen the principal at least twice this week.
	Option A is incorrect	The author only includes dialogue from the principal in paragraph 22, so there is no way to know what Christopher is hoping.
	Option C is incorrect	There is no way to know what Christopher expects from the dialogue in paragraph 22.
	Option D is incorrect	The author only includes dialogue from the principal in paragraph 22, so there is no way to know what Christopher is willing to explain.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
4	Option J is correct	This is the most complete summary of paragraphs 7 through 10 of the story. In paragraph 7, Christopher imagines the bus’s wheels to be saying, “One more day!” and in paragraph 8 he yells out, “All right!” in response. Then, in paragraph 9, the bus driver scolds him, and in paragraph 10 it is explained that he didn’t mean to get into trouble.
	Option F is incorrect	Christopher does not talk to Timothy or Rashid in paragraphs 7 through 10.
	Option G is incorrect	This summary is incomplete. Important details from paragraphs 8 through 10 are not included in this summary.
	Option H is incorrect	Christopher does not talk to Timothy or Rashid in paragraphs 7 through 10.
5	Option B is correct	Christopher explains to his friends “that the week’s misfortunes were not his fault.” The author describes everything that went wrong during the week and includes all of Christopher’s excuses, which support the idea that Christopher does not take responsibility for his actions.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author does describe Christopher’s experience with his borrowed library book, this is only an example the author includes to show that when an incident happens Christopher makes an excuse for his action.
	Option C is incorrect	There is no evidence in paragraph 11 to support the idea that Christopher likes to joke around with his friends.
	Option D is incorrect	There is no evidence in paragraph 11 to support the idea that Christopher depends on his friends to get him out of difficult situations.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
6	Option J is correct	In paragraph 11, the author describes all of Christopher’s “ <u>misfortunes</u> ” such as scribbling “a math problem on his desk” and dropping “grape jelly on his library book.” These are examples of “Unlucky events.”
	Option F is incorrect	Although Christopher is trying to catch up on a demanding reading assignment during lunch, this is only one of several events the author lists when describing what contributed to the week’s misfortunes.
	Option G is incorrect	The author does not describe Christopher making any difficult decisions that could be related to the word <u>misfortunes</u> .
	Option H is incorrect	The author does not describe any confusing messages Christopher shares about his <u>misfortunes</u> .
7	Option C is correct	This sentence is an opinion presented by the author because “beautiful” and “unique” describe what some people, but not all people, think about the appearance of marbles.
	Option A is incorrect	The idea that the types of marble games played by people have not changed much over the years can be proven, making the sentence a fact, not an opinion.
	Option B is incorrect	The idea that marbles have been found in different areas of the world can be proven, making the sentence a fact, not an opinion.
	Option D is incorrect	The idea that some marbles contained swirls of one color, while others contained swirls of many colors can be proven, making it a fact, not an opinion.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
8	Option J is correct	The author explains that the “ <u>annual</u> National Marbles Tournament” has “thousands of competitors” come to it “Each year,” meaning that it has been happening year after year since it “was first held in 1922.”
	Option F is incorrect	The phrase “fun of it” is used by the author to describe why “Most people enjoy playing marbles.”
	Option G is incorrect	The author uses the phrase “very seriously” to describe how some players approach the competition, not to describe how often the competition takes place.
	Option H is incorrect	The author uses “This competition” to describe what the National Marbles Tournament is, while “ <u>annual</u> ” is used to describe how often it happens.
9	Option D is correct	The conclusion that people used a variety of available materials to create marbles is supported by the author’s description of the different types of materials that were used as marbles, such as “nuts, fruit pits, or round pebbles.”
	Option A is incorrect	Early marbles were made of common items that would not be difficult to find, so this is not the correct conclusion.
	Option B is incorrect	Although children play with marbles, there is no context in this sentence to support the conclusion that the marbles were made by children.
	Option C is incorrect	The author does not mention the size of the marbles in this sentence, so this is not the correct conclusion.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
10	Option F is correct	In paragraphs 5 and 6, the author describes “special scissors that could cut melted glass” into marbles and “a marble-making machine.” These inventions made it possible to make more marbles in less time and at a lower cost.
	Option G is incorrect	Although the author describes “special scissors that could cut melted glass,” this is only a supporting detail from paragraph 5. The author describes “rollers” in paragraph 6, not “special scissors.”
	Option H is incorrect	The inventions described in paragraphs 5 and 6 do involve melting glass to make marbles. However, the author does not describe how the glass was melted.
	Option J is incorrect	The “marble-making machine” has the ability to roll glass “into a perfect sphere.” However, the author does not discuss in paragraphs 5 and 6 how the shape of marbles “improved over time.”
11	Option C is correct	Boys shooting marbles into a circle drawn in the dirt are shown in the photograph on the left. A close up of marbles within a circle on the ground is shown in the photograph on the right.
	Option A is incorrect	Where and when marbles were invented is not supported by the photographs.
	Option B is incorrect	People are shown playing marbles, not buying them, in the photographs.
	Option D is incorrect	The idea that some players may lose some of their favorite marbles is not conveyed in the photographs.
12	Option G is correct	The reader can infer from the words “through Time” in the subheading that the author will provide information about the “history” of marbles in this section.
	Option F is incorrect	In the introductory section, the author describes a scene at the beach to introduce the topic of marbles, so this is not where the reader would find information about the history of marbles.
	Option H is incorrect	The caption under the first photograph, “Kids Playing Marbles in the Sand,” is used to describe what the reader sees in the photograph. It does not include information about the history of marbles.
	Option J is incorrect	The reader can infer from the word “Games” in the subheading that the author will describe different methods of playing with marbles in this section, not provide information about the history of marbles.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
13	Option C is correct	While Max is digging a hole for Grandpa’s tree, he finds a coffee can, which leads him to talk with Dad and Grandpa about what life was like when Dad was young.
	Option A is incorrect	Dad shows surprise at Max finding the time capsule rather than pride in him for working in Grandpa’s yard.
	Option B is incorrect	Although Max is unhappy about digging in the yard, the plot focuses on Max’s surprise discovery of the time capsule and the events that unfold because of this discovery, not Max being tired and grumpy.
	Option D is incorrect	Although Max could be seen as a good helper for digging the hole, the plot focuses on the surprise discovery that Max made because of his digging, not Max being helpful.
14	Option G is correct	After seeing that Max found his time capsule, Max’s father explains that he “wanted someone in the future to find the things” he buried. With each item pulled out of the coffee can, he recalls a fond memory.
	Option F is incorrect	Max’s father says, “I had forgotten all about it,” when Max presents the time capsule, so Max’s father was not looking for it.
	Option H is incorrect	It is Max’s father who suggests that they “see how everything looks now,” so he is not upset that Max is no longer helping Grandpa by digging the hole for the tree.
	Option J is incorrect	The quote “Let’s see how everything looks now” is included to let the reader know that Max’s father wants Max to see what is in the can, not that he is concerned about what Max will think.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
15	Option D is correct	The term point of view refers to the person telling or narrating a piece of writing. In the story the author uses the third-person point of view from the perspective of an unknown observer. The narrator of this story refers to all the characters by their names and uses pronouns such as "he" and "his." The narrator does not participate in the action.
	Option A is incorrect	The story is not written in the first person from Max's perspective because Max is not narrating the story. The narrator does not use the pronouns "I" or "my" to tell the story.
	Option B is incorrect	The story is not written in the first person from Dad's perspective because Dad is not narrating the story. The narrator does not use the pronouns "I" or "my" to tell the story.
	Option C is incorrect	The story is not written in the third person from the perspective of Max's grandfather because Max's grandfather's feelings toward the events happening are not revealed through the narration.
16	Option G is correct	Max's physical exertion and his feeling that the job is taking a long time to complete are used to show that he is struggling with a difficult job.
	Option F is incorrect	Max has no idea that there is anything buried in his grandfather's yard, so he does not expect to discover a special surprise.
	Option H is incorrect	Max's sweat and his feeling that the job is taking a long time to complete are used to show that digging is a struggle for him, but this does not mean he dislikes spending time outdoors.
	Option J is incorrect	Max is digging a hole for his grandfather's tree because his father volunteered him, not because he is determined to help plant trees.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
17	Option A is correct	In paragraph 3, the author describes a girl from Papua New Guinea who found a message in a bottle and became pen pals with the student who sent the message (the <u>sender</u>).
	Option B is incorrect	Adding the suffix <i>-er</i> to the word "send" does not create a new word that refers to an object that is sent.
	Option C is incorrect	There is no evidence in the selection to support the idea that the person who sent the bottle sent it more than once.
	Option D is incorrect	Adding the suffix <i>-er</i> to the word "send" does not create a new word that refers to a method used to send things.
18	Option J is correct	In 2007, students in Hawaii released a bottle into the ocean. A girl in Papua New Guinea found a bottle and became pen pals with the student who released it.
	Option F is incorrect	There is no context to support the idea that other schools participated in the bottle experiment as a result of someone finding a bottle released by students in Hawaii in 2007.
	Option G is incorrect	The author only mentions a girl in Papua New Guinea who became pen pals with the student who participated in the 2007 bottle experiment in Hawaii. The author does not mention other people being encouraged to find pen pals.
	Option H is incorrect	There is no context to support the idea that students tried to send messages in bottles to their classmates as a result of the 2007 bottle experiment in Hawaii.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
19	Option C is correct	The author provides information on a few messages sent in bottles, including bottles that went from Seattle to Alaska, New Hampshire to the Caribbean, Hawaii to Papua New Guinea, and from a soldier to his daughter.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 5, the author notes that "Tossing a bottle in the ocean is not a very reliable way to deliver a message," so the author is not trying to persuade the reader to send a message in a bottle.
	Option B is incorrect	The author does not provide any instructions on how to start a floating bottle experiment at school, so this is not the author's purpose for the selection.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 4, the author briefly mentions that a soldier hoped a message in a bottle would reach his wife; however, the challenge of communicating with people who live across the ocean is not the author's purpose for the selection.
20	Option H is correct	In paragraphs 2 and 3, the author explains that people write messages, put them in bottles, and toss them into the ocean to be found by people living far away. Some bottles have traveled from Seattle to Alaska, New Hampshire to the Caribbean, and Hawaii to Papua New Guinea.
	Option F is incorrect	There is a reward mentioned in paragraph 2, but it is only a minor detail and it is not mentioned again in paragraph 3.
	Option G is incorrect	There is no explanation of why the bottles do not sink in these paragraphs.
	Option J is incorrect	Although the author shares a detail about a message placed in one bottle, the paragraphs are mainly about different bottles that have drifted in the sea and then been found, not the messages inside the bottles.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
21	Option A is correct	In "Max's Find," Max "felt a shiver of excitement" when he found the time capsule buried in his grandfather's yard. In "Messages in Bottles," the author describes finding a message as a "memorable event."
	Option B is incorrect	The author does not discuss the importance of following instructions that are included with messages in either the story or the selection.
	Option C is incorrect	In "Messages in Bottles," two people who have never met do become pen pals, but no new friendships are formed in "Max's Find."
	Option D is incorrect	In "Max's Find," Max finds a time capsule that was hidden for years, so it is not common to find one. In "Messages in Bottles," the bottles were not left in secret places, and there is no support for the idea that it is common to find bottles with messages inside.
22	Option G is correct	In "Max's Find," Max finds his father's time capsule buried in the same place his father left it many years ago. In "Messages in Bottles" the author describes the journeys that the bottles make to faraway places.
	Option F is incorrect	In "Max's Find," the time capsule is opened by Max, not his father who made it. Therefore, this option is not correct.
	Option H is incorrect	In "Messages in Bottles," the author describes bottles that have been found "More than 50 years later" and "Eighty-five years" later, so messages in bottles are not always found quickly. Therefore, this option is not correct.
	Option J is incorrect	In "Messages in Bottles," the author does describe one bottle that is intended for a soldier's wife, but the other bottles aren't meant for anyone specific. Therefore, this option is not correct.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
23	Option D is correct	Max expresses appreciation and interest in learning about his father through pictures and items from the past. The author of "Messages in Bottles" describes a similar appreciation because the soldier's daughter was "thrilled" to "learn more about her father."
	Option A is incorrect	In these sentences, the idea of a message traveling far is presented, which is not similar to the appreciation and interest in learning about a family member that is conveyed in the sentences from "Max's Find."
	Option B is incorrect	In these sentences, the author explains why people send messages in bottles, which is not similar to the appreciation and interest in learning about a family member that is conveyed in the sentences from "Max's Find."
	Option C is incorrect	In these sentences, the author explains why someone might send a message in a bottle, which is not similar to the appreciation and interest in learning about a family member that is conveyed in the sentences from "Max's Find."
24	Option H is correct	Max finds the time capsule when he is digging a hole to plant a tree. In "Messages in Bottles," the author explains, "There is no telling where a bottle may end up." The people find the bottles by chance.
	Option F is incorrect	Although Max's father made the time capsule in the 1980s, the people sending messages in bottles create their messages during many different years.
	Option G is incorrect	Max finds the time capsule buried in the dirt, not covered by water.
	Option J is incorrect	The time capsule that Max finds does hold many items, but the bottles only carry a message, no items.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
25	Option B is correct	Imagery is the use of vivid language to represent objects, actions, or ideas. The imagery in the third stanza most appeals to the reader’s sense of taste. The poet describes things you can taste, such as “batters rich and thick” and “spoons she lets you lick.”
	Option A is incorrect	There are no sounds described in the third stanza, so the imagery does not appeal to the reader’s sense of sound.
	Option C is incorrect	There are no smells described in the third stanza, so the imagery does not appeal to the reader’s sense of smell.
	Option D is incorrect	There are no descriptions of how things feel in the third stanza, so the imagery does not appeal to the reader’s sense of touch.
26	Option F is correct	Only the second and fourth lines rhyme in each stanza. For example, the poet rhymes “day” with “stay” (stanza 1), “aromatic” with “attic” (stanza 2), and “thick” with “lick” (stanza 3).
	Option G is incorrect	None of the first and third lines rhyme with each other.
	Option H is incorrect	The second and fourth lines of each stanza rhyme, but the first and third lines do not rhyme.
	Option J is incorrect	Neither the first and second lines nor the third and fourth lines rhyme.
27	Option D is correct	The line “And suddenly you realize—” is included to express the speaker’s surprise and suggest that Grandma’s visit was unexpected.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the exclamation point at the end of the stanza is included to express excitement about Grandma’s visit, there is no context to support the idea that every day is exciting.
	Option B is incorrect	Although Grandma’s visits are portrayed as special events, there is no context to support the idea that Grandma does not visit often.
	Option C is incorrect	None of the activities that take place during Grandma’s visit are described in stanza 1.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
28	Option H is correct	The speaker enjoys Grandma’s visits because “The house is full of oven smells” (stanza 2), “And you begin to think of things” to eat (stanza 3), “And then there are stories” (stanzas 4 and 5), “And always there is music” (stanza 6), and Grandma listens and makes you laugh (stanza 7).
	Option F is incorrect	The reason Grandma comes to visit is not revealed in any stanza.
	Option G is incorrect	Although the events of each stanza may have happened in the past, the poet mentions the speaker’s relatives only in stanza 5.
	Option J is incorrect	In stanzas 2 and 3, the poet does describe details related to food, but the rest of the stanzas do not mention food.
29	Option B is correct	Most of the lines in the poem are written with the same meter. Most first and third lines have about seven syllables, while most second and fourth lines are shorter and have about five syllables, which are used to create an identifiable rhythm in the poem.
	Option A is incorrect	Some lines, such as “The house is full of oven smells” (line 5), are written with seven words, while other lines, such as “Floating, aromatic—” (line 6) are written with only two words, so this is not an element of the poem.
	Option C is incorrect	Characters are introduced in a few, but not all, of the stanzas, such as Grandma (stanza 1) and Mommy (stanza 4), so this is not an element of the poem.
	Option D is incorrect	Most of the stanzas include different reasons to enjoy Grandma’s visits, not different problems, so this is not an element of the poem.
30	Option F is correct	At the end of the poem, the poet includes the lines “You wish that she could stay with you / And never never go,” which express the idea that the speaker wants Grandma to stay longer.
	Option G is incorrect	There are no secrets being shared at the end of the poem.
	Option H is incorrect	The speaker shows no curiosity about why Grandma leaves.
	Option J is incorrect	The poet includes the lines “You’re sure she will come back again” in the last stanza, but it is not specified when Grandma will come back.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
31	Option A is correct	In paragraph 4, the author explains that “people <u>secured</u> acorns in baskets” and put them in rushing water that “washed away the tannins.” The acorns were <u>secured</u> in the baskets so they wouldn’t move when placed in rushing water.
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 4, people <u>secured</u> acorns in baskets, so they already had everything they needed. They weren’t trying to get something.
	Option C is incorrect	Although people <u>secured</u> acorns in baskets “to make certain” they didn’t move, the closest definition to <u>secured</u> in paragraph 4 is focused on the actual act of placing the acorns in the basket where they wouldn’t move.
	Option D is incorrect	There is no reference to promising any type of payment for acorns in paragraph 4.
32	Option H is correct	In paragraph 7, the author includes the fact that an acorn weevil uses its “long snout to drill a hole” into acorns. In the photograph, an acorn weevil with a long snout is shown.
	Option F is incorrect	Although it is true that acorn weevils are usually the first insects to live in acorns, this is not a fact that is supported by the photograph.
	Option G is incorrect	Although it is true that acorn weevil larvae eat the inside of the acorn, only the outside of the acorn is shown in the photograph.
	Option J is incorrect	Only the outside of the acorn is shown in the photograph, so any facts concerning the inside of the acorn are not supported.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
33	Option B is correct	In paragraph 3, the author explains that ancient Romans ground the acorns before using them to make bread. In paragraph 4, the author explains that to prepare acorns, people would run them through water and bury them in mud to make them taste better.
	Option A is incorrect	There are no other types of nuts mentioned in the selection, so the reader cannot conclude that acorns are similar to many other types of nuts that people eat.
	Option C is incorrect	Although many animals do use acorns, the rarity of acorns is not discussed in the selection, so this cannot be concluded.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author does include descriptions of falling acorns, no damage is actually described, so this cannot be concluded.
34	Option F is correct	This is the most complete summary of the selection. The introduction is restated and key details are explained, such as how people, animals, and insects use acorns.
	Option G is incorrect	This summary is incomplete. There is no mention of how insects or animals use acorns in this option.
	Option H is incorrect	This summary is incomplete. There is no mention of the definition of acorns or that people have found ways to prepare acorns in this option.
	Option J is incorrect	This summary is incomplete. There is no mention that groups of people have found different uses for acorns in this option.
35	Option C is correct	The author explains in paragraph 7 that when the acorn falls to the ground, "this signals to the larvae that it's time to chew their way out."
	Option A is incorrect	Although baby acorn weevils do eat the nut meat inside their acorns, it is when the acorn falls to the ground that they know to leave, not when they're finished eating.
	Option B is incorrect	The adult acorn weevil only drills a hole to lay eggs, not to signal the baby acorn weevils to leave.
	Option D is incorrect	Baby acorn weevils leave the acorns when they fall to the ground during autumn. At this time, the weather is actually getting colder, not warmer.

2019 STAAR Grade 4 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
36	Option J is correct	A woodpecker with an acorn in its beak and a tree trunk with many holes are shown in the photograph. The author explains in paragraph 6 that "An acorn is carefully hammered into each hole" and that the finished "acorn storage tower" resembles a "skyscraper covered with little windows," thus the woodpecker is creating storage for many acorns.
	Option F is incorrect	It is not specified what the woodpecker uses the acorns for in either the photograph or paragraph 6.
	Option G is incorrect	It is not specified where the woodpecker will lay its eggs in either the photograph or paragraph 6.
	Option H is incorrect	It is not specified which type of acorns the woodpecker prefers in either the photograph or paragraph 6.