



Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

4th Grade Reading

Sample Test:
Bonzai

Reading Book

Helpful Tips

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

This symbol is next to questions that require a short written answer. A full and complete answer to each of these questions is worth 2 points. A partial answer is worth 1 point.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

This symbol is next to questions that require a longer written answer. A full and complete answer to each of these questions is worth 4 points. A partial answer is worth 1, 2, or 3 points.

Answers to the short- and long-answer questions can receive full or partial credit. You should try to answer these questions even if you are not sure of the correct answer. If you get a portion of the answer correct, you will get a portion of the points.

- Read the question carefully.
- If you do not understand the question, go back and review the passage.
- Write your answer on the lines provided in the Answer Book.
- Remember that it is necessary to include details and information from the passage in your answer.
- Be sure to answer every part of the questions.
- Use clear, concise language to explain your answer.
- Reread the answer to make sure it says what you want it to say.

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Bonsai

For many years the Chinese and Japanese have practiced the unusual hobby of making tiny trees. This hobby, called bonsai (bon - si), probably began in ancient China to show admiration for trees growing on mountains or cliffs. The gardeners appreciate how these trees have struggled under harsh growing conditions in order to survive. Because of strong wind, poor soil, and the need to root in tiny cracks, full grown trees look small and twisted. Bonsai gardeners try to create trees that look like old twisted trees to honor such determination and will to survive.

To produce these tiny trees, gardeners select a tree, such as an evergreen, maple, larch, or beech. The gardeners put seeds, cuttings, or a very young sapling in a tray made of shallow earthenware. The future tree needs to be placed off-center so that it can be more easily pruned, or trimmed and cut, into an irregular shape.

Once the tree is planted, the gardeners shape it by wrapping branches with wire to force their growth in a certain direction. In this way, the gardeners can make almost any shape they like over time. One branch can spread sideways, for example. Other branches can stay short and close to the dwarf trunk.

Once the tree is established, gardeners must also control the rate of growth. They do this by sometimes re-potting the bonsai. Each time, they skillfully prune just the right roots to reduce growth and produce the tiny, twisted branches.

Fully grown bonsai which would normally be 15 or 20 foot trees, range from barely two inches to an average of two feet. They take at least five years to create. With this much time and care required, it's not surprising that the gardener is proud of the grown bonsai as a work of art. It honors those qualities that have enabled trees in nature to survive by barely hanging on.



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4th Grade Reading

Sample Test:
Bonzai

Answer Book

Name _____ Date _____

Teacher _____ Score ____ / 14

Read the story “Bonzai.” Now answer Numbers 1 through 8. Base your answers on the story.

1

Read this sentence from the article.

The future tree needs to be placed off-center so that it can be more easily pruned into an irregular shape.

What does the word *irregular* mean?

- (A) similar
- (B) usual
- (C) normal
- (D) uneven

3

Describe how the gardener gets the tree's branches into the desired shape. Use details and information from the article to explain your answer.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

4

Why did the author write the article "Bonsai"?

- (A) To persuade people to plant bonsai trees.
- (B) To inform people about China and Japan.
- (C) To inform people about the hobby of bonsai.
- (D) To persuade people to visit China and Japan.

5

How do gardeners control how fast a bonsai tree will grow?

- (A) By planting seeds and watering young saplings.
- (B) By planting the tree off-center in a shallow tray.
- (C) By planting cuttings and wrapping the branches with wire.
- (D) By planting the tree in different pots and trimming the roots.

6

How are today's bonsai trees like trees found in ancient China or Japan? Use details and information from the article to explain your answer.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

7 Read these sentences from the article.

Fully grown bonsai which would normally be 15 or 20 foot trees, range from barely two inches to an average of two feet. They take at least five years to create. With this much time and care required, it's not surprising that the gardener is proud of the grown bonsai as a work of art.

Write one FACT from the sentences above. Then write one OPINION from the sentences above. You may use your own words.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

8 Why does the gardener plant the bonsai tree off-center in a shallow tray?

- (A) Because it is easier to create an irregular shape.
- (B) Because the containers have wire in the middle.
- (C) Because the containers have cracks in the middle.
- (D) Because it is closer to the side and easier to water.



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Sample Test:
Bonzai

Answer Key

Answer Key: Bonzai

This book contains answers and explanations for the Bonzai Sample Test questions. Multiple-choice items are scored by awarding one point for each correct answer. Answers to short-response and extended-response “Read, Think, Explain” questions are scored with two-point and four-point rubrics respectively. For short- and extended-response questions, there is often more than one acceptable response. Partial credit is given for accurate but incomplete answers. The overall characteristics of top-score and partial-credit responses for the “Read, Think, Explain” questions are given in the general two-point and four-point rubrics below.

Sample top-score responses are provided for each “Read, Think, Explain” question.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Rubric for Short-Response Questions

- 2 Points:** The response indicates that the student has a complete understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that is accurate, complete, and fulfills all the requirements of the task. Necessary support and/or examples are included, and the information given is clearly text-based.
- 1 Point:** The response indicates that the student has a partial understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that may include information that is essentially correct and text-based, but the information is too general or too simplistic. Some of the support and/or examples may be incomplete or omitted.
- 0 Points:** The response is inaccurate, confused, and /or irrelevant, or the student has failed to respond to the task.

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Rubric for Extended-Response Questions

- 4 Points:** The response indicates that the student has a thorough understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that is accurate, complete, and fulfills all the requirements of the task. Necessary support and/or examples are included, and the information is clearly text-based.
- 3 Points:** The response indicates that the student has an understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that is accurate and fulfills all the requirements of the task, but the required support and/or details are not complete or clearly text-based.
- 2 Points:** The response indicates that the student has a partial understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The student has provided a response that may include information that is essentially correct and text-based, but the information is too general or too simplistic. Some of the support and/or examples and requirements of the task may be incomplete or omitted.
- 1 Point:** The response indicates that the student has very limited understanding of the reading concept embodied in the task. The response is incomplete, may exhibit many flaws, and may not address all requirements of the task.
- 0 Points:** The response is inaccurate, confused, and/or irrelevant, or the student has failed to respond to the task.

1. D

2. Example of a top-score response:

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Early Chinese gardeners were trying to pay honor to trees that had to struggle to survive in the harsh growing conditions on mountains or cliffs. The trees had to survive in strong wind and poor soil. They had to take root in tiny cracks on the mountain side. The trees had determination and will to survive.

3. Example of a top-score response:

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Gardeners determine the tree's shape by wrapping wire around the branches. This forces the branches to grow in certain directions, such as sideways, or short and close to the trunk. Gardeners can create any shape they want by doing this over a long period of time.

4. C

5. D

6. Example of a top-score response:

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

Today's bonsai trees are still very much like the ancient ones found in China or Japan. They both have irregular shapes with tiny, twisted branches.

7. Example of a top-score response:

READ
THINK
EXPLAIN

A fact from the article is that bonsai trees range from two inches to about two feet. An opinion from the article is that it's not surprising that the gardener is proud of the bonsai as a work of art.

8. A