

# GEPA FOR LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: PRACTICE TESTS 1 AND 2

## REMINDERS:

- As you do the extended writing tasks, you may refer to the **Writer's Checklist** (page 168).
- As you do the revise/edit task, you may refer to the **Revising/Editing Guide** (page 215).



# PRACTICE TEST 1

## LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: PART 1



Jane Marston

### WRITING TASK

Every picture tells a story, but the stories we see may be different. Look closely at the picture. What story is it telling? Use your imagination and experience to speculate what the story is about or to describe what is happening.

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# LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: PART 2

**Directions:** Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

**Introduction:** *Think you don't have enough time to read? Think again, says the author of this article.*

## No Time to Read?

by David McCullough

1 Once upon a time in the dead of winter in the Dakota territory, Theodore Roosevelt took off in a makeshift boat down the Little Missouri River in pursuit of a couple of thieves who had stolen his prized rowboat. After several days on the river, he caught up and got the draw on them with his trusty Winchester, at which point they surrendered. Then Roosevelt set off in a borrowed wagon to haul the thieves cross-country to justice. They headed across the snow-covered wastes of the Badlands to the railhead in Dickinson, and Roosevelt walked the whole way, the entire 40 miles. It was an astonishing feat, what might be called a defining moment in Roosevelt's eventful life. But what makes it especially memorable is that during that time, he managed to read all of *Anna Karenina*.

I often think of that when I hear people say that they haven't time to read.

3 Reportedly, the average American does have time to watch 28 hours of television every week, or approximately four hours a day. The average person I'm told reads at a rate of 250 words a minute. So, based on these statistics, were the average American to spend those four hours a day with a book instead of watching television, he or she could, in a week, read the complete poems of T.S. Eliot; two plays by Thornton Wilder, including *Our Town*; the complete poems of Maya Angelou; Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, *The Great Gatsby*, and *The Book of Psalms*.

That's all in one week.

5 But a week is a long time by today's standards, when information is available at the touch of a finger. Information has become an industry, a commodity to be packaged, promoted and marketed incessantly. The tools for

"accessing" data grow ever more wondrous and ubiquitous and essential if we are to keep in step, we've come to believe. All hail the web, the Internet, the Information Highway.

We're being sold the idea that information is learning, and we're being sold a bill of goods.

Information isn't learning. It isn't wisdom. It isn't common sense necessarily. It isn't kindness. Or good judgment. Or imagination. Or a sense of humor. Or courage. Information doesn't tell us right from wrong.

Knowing the area of the state of Connecticut in square miles, or the date on which the United Nations Charter was signed, or the jumping capacity of a flea may be useful, but it isn't learning of itself.

The greatest of all avenues to learning,—to wisdom, adventure, pleasure, insight, to understanding human nature, understanding ourselves and our world and our place in it,—is in reading books.

Read for pleasure. Read what you like, and all you like. Read literally to your heart's content. Let one book lead to another. They nearly always do.

Take up a great author, new or old, and read everything, he or she has written. Read about places you've never been. Read biography, history. Read books that changed history: Tom Paine's *Common Sense*; The autobiography of Frederick Douglass; Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*.

Read those books you know you're supposed to have read and imagine as dreary. A classic may be defined as a book that stays long in print, and a book stays long in print only because it is exceptional. Why exclude the exceptional from your experience?

Go back and read again the books written supposedly for children, especially if you think they are only for children. My first choice would be *The Wind in the Willows*. There's much, very much, you can learn in the company of Toad, Rat and Mole.

And when you read a book you love—a book you feel has enlarged the experience of

being alive, a book that “lights the fire”—then spread the word.

To carry a book with you wherever you go is old advice and good advice. John Adams urged his son, John Quincy, to carry a volume of poetry. “You’ll never be alone,” he said, “with a poet in your pocket.”

1. Why does the author begin the article with the anecdote about Theodore Roosevelt?
  - A. to suggest that lack of time is a poor excuse for not reading
  - B. to show how reading can lead to success in life
  - C. to demonstrate how reading helps pass the time during a long trip
  - D. to convince readers that *Anna Karenina* is a book well worth reading
  
2. In the first paragraph, the author writes that "Roosevelt took off in a makeshift boat down the Little Missouri River in pursuit of a couple of thieves who had stolen his prized rowboat." What does makeshift mean?
  - A. carefully constructed
  - B. serving as a temporary substitute
  - C. manufactured in a factory
  - D. painted many colors
  
3. Which detail BEST supports the author's main idea?
  - A. The average American watches about four hours of TV daily.
  - B. John Adams told his son to carry a book with him.
  - C. Theodore Roosevelt read a novel during a cross-country trip.
  - D. Reading is the greatest of all avenues to learning.
  
4. Why does the author present statistical information in paragraph 3?
  - A. to make the point that television has no value
  - B. to persuade people to read more poetry
  - C. to support the idea that people do have time to read
  - D. to show that television takes up more time than the Internet does
  
5. In paragraph 5, the author writes, "All hail the web, the Internet, the Information Highway." This is an example of
  - A. irony.
  - B. simile.
  - C. symbolism.
  - D. dialogue.
  
6. In paragraph 6, the author writes that "we're being sold a bill of goods." He means that we're
  - A. getting our money's worth.
  - B. learning the truth.
  - C. receiving too much information.
  - D. being deceived.
  
7. In the article, the author is trying to
  - A. describe the benefits of the Internet.
  - B. warn people about the dangers of watching television.
  - C. persuade people to read more.
  - D. explain which books are most worthwhile.





## LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: PART 3

### REVISE/EDIT

A number of school administrators have proposed requiring all students to spend some time doing community service. This proposal has become a controversial issue.

One of your classmates has written a letter to the editor of the school newspaper expressing his opinion on this issue. He has asked you to revise and edit his first draft. Read the student's draft, and think about how to improve the meaning and clarity of the letter. Then make your revisions.

Dear Editor:

The proposal doing community service is a really, really great idea. To many kids these days think about themselves only. And the stuff they want. its a shame but thats the way it is. To do community service make students more aware of others needs at the same time the kids would be help people who really needs help. Students could do say two hours a week. During then they could chose from a lots activitys for example chores for senior citizens. Reading to blind people. Or tutor younger children. Other possibles include to assist at the public library. helping to prepare meals for the homeless, clean up the neighborhood—it needs it! Community service benefits the giver. Also, the receiver, too. students can gains alot from the expereince. They get life lessons that goes beyond school stuff

and come away with the satisfaction of help peoples in need.

This proposal sure does deserve everyones' support cause it's

a super idea and everyone should get behind it 100%, that's

what I think

Sincerely,

# LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: PART 4

**Directions:** Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

**Introduction:** In this story, Mother Fletcher helps teach a policeman and his family about sharing.

## A Christmas Story

by Walter Dean Myers

It was rumored that Mother Fletcher was well over ninety years old. She had become a legend on 145th Street. If anybody wanted to know what the neighborhood looked like in the twenties, where Jack Johnson had lived, perhaps, or where James Baldwin's father had preached, Mother Fletcher could tell you. Patrolman William Michael O'Brien had heard about her shortly after his assignment to the precinct, but it wasn't until nearly three months later that he actually met the old woman.

He was on foot patrol and stopped to pass a few words with one of the local shopkeepers when a young black girl came running up to him and told him that Mother Fletcher was sick and needed an ambulance. O'Brien knew that in this neighborhood it was nearly impossible to get a doctor who would make house calls. But he had also been told that sometimes the people used ambulances just to go downtown.

He followed the girl into one of the buildings and into a first-floor apartment. The place was small but spotless. The floor was covered with a linoleum rug that was worn through in several spots. The porcelain in the kitchen sink was discolored but the brass fixtures were shining brightly.

"She's in here," the girl said, and went into the adjoining room.

Mother Fletcher sat upright in the white-sheeted bed, her pale green housecoat pinned at the neck. O'Brien had never seen as black a person in his entire life. Her skin was a dull ebony that seemed almost purple in the light of the lamp by her bed.

Her gray hair, still streaked with wisps of black and thinner on the sides than on the top, framed her face and, catching the light, made her look like a black version of a painted medieval saint. She was a small person, in the delicate way that a child is small, but with the quiet grace of her years. But what stood out most on the old woman were her eyes.

They were, if it was possible, even darker than her skin. Black shiny eyes that darted brightly about, checking the room for anything that might have been out of place.

"Didn't my great-great-grandchild there tell you I was sick?" Mother Fletcher shot a glance in the direction of the girl. "I gave her a dime to tell you."

"I mean," O'Brien said, "what *exactly* is the matter?"

"How do I know? I'm not a doctor." Mother Fletcher pulled the housecoat tighter around her thin shoulders.

"What's your name, please?"

"Mother Fletcher."

"What's your first name?"



"I'm Mother Fletcher, that's all. Now, are you going to get me an ambulance or do I have to send that child out for another officer?"

"We can't just call an ambulance any time someone says to call one," O'Brien said.

"Boy, I am not someone," the old woman said. "I am Mother Fletcher and you can call for an ambulance. You know how to use that radio you got."

"What is your age?" O'Brien flipped out his radio and called the emergency network.

"Full-grown," came the flat reply.

O'Brien stepped into the next room and told the operator what he had. The ambulance arrived some fifteen minutes later. Two slim attendants carried the old woman out. O'Brien wrote up the incident in his book and promptly put it out of his mind. A week later he was called into one of the precinct offices, where a lieutenant and two patrolmen were waiting for him.

"O'Brien." Lt. Stanton rolled a cigar from one side of his mouth to the other. "What's this I hear about you taking graft?"\*

"I don't know what you're talking about," O'Brien answered.

"Well, this package just came in from someone on your beat and it's addressed to your shield number." The lieutenant was enjoying this. "Looks like graft to me, O'Brien. Open it up."

23 O'Brien looked at the childish scrawl on the top of the box. *To Officer 4566*. There was no return address. He flipped open the flimsy box and took out the contents. It was a knitted green cardigan. Instead of a brand name on the label it simply repeated his badge number, 4566. O'Brien tried it on and was surprised to discover that it fit even his long arms.

"I wonder who it's from?"

"Mother Fletcher," The lieutenant said. "You do anything for her?"

"Mother Fletcher? Oh, yes, the old black lady. I called an ambulance for her. No big thing."

"She probably started making that sweater for you on the way to the hospital," Lt. Stanton said. "We had another guy here about two years ago that straightened out a hassle she

had with her landlord. She made him a sweater, too. Then she decided that the landlord was right after all and she made *him* a sweater. I guess it makes her feel good. You can put a couple of bucks in the precinct fund to make up for the sweater. And don't forget to go around and thank Mother Fletcher. It's good for community P.R."

O'Brien got around to thanking the old woman a few days later, telling her how his wife had been jealous of such a fine sweater. Three weeks later another package arrived at the station house. It was a sweater for his wife. When he went over to thank Mother Fletcher for the second sweater he was careful not to mention that he had a six-year-old daughter.

Over the next months O'Brien learned more about Mother Fletcher from people on his beat. Some stories were a bit far-fetched, but they were all told in a way that said that people loved the old woman. She did her own shopping, always carrying the same blue cloth shopping bag, and always walking on the sunny side of the street "to keep the bones warm." Once O'Brien met her on the corner of 147th Street and asked her how she was feeling.

"I'm feeling just fine. I'm not cutting the rug," she said, "but I'm not lying on it, either."

O'Brien talked to her now and again when he saw her on the street, and started writing down everything she said, trying to piece together enough information to determine her true age. In truth, Mother Fletcher was the only one in his precinct that he thought of during his off-duty hours. The struggle and hassles of Harlem were not what he wanted to bring home with him. It didn't take O'Brien long to subscribe to the precinct motto—Eight and Straight. Eight hours on the job and straight out of the neighborhood.

To O'Brien, "out of the neighborhood" meant home to a ranch-style house in suburban Staten Island. He looked forward to the day when his wife, Kathy, could quit her job with the utility company and stay home with their daughter, Meaghan. He had told Kathy about Mother Fletcher and they had gone over his notes in the evenings trying to figure her age. Beyond this O'Brien was careful to keep his job apart from his family. At least he was until just before Christmas.

\*gift or money dishonestly accepted

"Hi, honey," Bill called out as he ducked in from the light snow.

"Dinner's almost ready," Kathy answered as she came from the kitchen. "Did you ask Mother Fletcher if she remembered when Woodrow Wilson was elected President?"

"Yep."

"Well, what did she say?" Kathy wiped her hands on her apron.

"She said she remembered it."

"Did she remember how old she was then?"

"Nope, unless you can figure out how old 'about half grown' is," Bill said. He tousled his daughter's hair and sat on the couch.

"What else did she say?" Kathy folded one leg under herself and sat on it.

"Not much. I think she knows that I'm trying to figure out her age and she's playing with me." Bill glanced toward the kitchen and sniffed the air. "Is that roast beef?"

"Chicken," Kathy answered. "So that's all she said today?"

"No, she complained about how loud the teenagers play their radios and, oh, yes, she invited us to Christmas dinner."

"Who invited us to dinner?" Meaghan looked up from her book.

"A lady Daddy knows in Harlem, sweetheart."

"Can we take presents over?"

"We won't be going over," Bill said.

"Why, Daddy?"

"We have other plans. We're going to . . . what are we doing for Christmas, Kathy?"

"Nothing."

"Then we can go!" Meaghan said.

"Kathy, will you deal with your daughter?" Bill smiled as he reached for the paper. "She's too much for me."

"No, I won't." Kathy got up. "I'm going to start serving dinner. And Meaghan has a right to ask a question."

"Hey, let's not make an issue of this," Bill said.

"She asked for a simple explanation, Bill." Kathy was annoyed.

"The lady is a little different, that's all." Bill spoke to his daughter. "The place she lives in isn't very nice and Daddy would rather not spend his Christmas in that kind of a neighborhood."

"Is she a poor lady?"

"Yes, she's a poor lady."

"Then we can take her a present because poor people like presents."

"We'll send her a present if you want, Meaghan." Bill rose from the couch and went into the living room, snapping on the television before sitting down. Kathy followed him in.

"I don't like the idea of being made out to be a bad guy, Kathy," Bill said without looking away from the six o'clock news. "One word from you could have helped that little situation in there."

"Why didn't you just give her the same answer you gave Mother Fletcher? What did you tell her?"

"There are times, Kathy, when you don't give direct answers to questions. It's a way of dealing with people. You don't reject them and you don't get yourself involved in a whole scene. Like this one, I might add."

"Would you mind giving *me* a direct answer? What did you tell her?"

"I told her yes, we'd come. But they know we don't come into that neighborhood when we're off duty," Bill answered. "And they're not that anxious to have us come, either."

"You said yes? That you'd come?" Kathy pulled her glasses from the top of her head and put them on. "That's your way of not answering a question directly?"

"I'll send her a present."

"That's awfully sweet of you, Mr. O'Brien." **68**  
Kathy went back to the kitchen.

Bill turned up the television and watched as some senator complained about the military budget. If his wife had chosen this occasion to have one of her special "I simply don't understand" periods, he wasn't going to fight her.

He also heard snatches of the conversation drifting from the kitchen. Meaghan was talking about getting a kitten and was trying to decide between a calico and a tabby. At any rate she seemed to have forgotten Mother Fletcher. He only hoped that Kathy would, too.

And apparently she had. For that was the last O'Brien heard about visiting the old woman. That is, it was the last thing until just after eleven on Christmas morning. He was sitting in his favorite armchair, feeling especially regal in the smoking jacket that Kathy had given him, watching a college football

game, when Kathy and Meaghan came into the room with their coats on.

"Going for a walk?" Bill asked, hoping he wouldn't be expected to leave his comfortable spot.

"We're going to Mother Fletcher's for dinner," Meaghan said brightly.

"You're not going to Mother Fletcher's, Kathy. And that's that!"

"Well, then I suggest you arrest me, Mr. O'Brien." The sunlight through the window caught the flare in Kathy's eyes. "Because that will be the only way you're going to prevent our going."

"I brought her a scarf," Meaghan held a small square package.

"What is this all about?" Bill felt his face getting red. "You don't even know this woman. Why do you have to drag Meaghan all the way to Harlem?"

"I'm not dragging her anywhere. I'm giving her the present of a visit to an old lady that even you like. Now, from what you say, all I have to do is to go over to the neighborhood and ask anyone where she lives because they all know, right? Or would you like to drop us off?"

79 The silence of the long drive was broken only by an occasional observation from Meaghan. O'Brien took his wife slowly, carefully, through the worst streets he could find until he finally pulled up in front of Mother Fletcher's place.

"Well, well, well!" Mother Fletcher was wearing an ankle-length green dress with a white lace collar. She wore a red and gold pin shaped like a tree. "I thought I was going to be having Christmas dinner by myself this year." Bill shot a glance in Kathy's direction as they entered the small apartment. The smell of the ham in the oven filled the room.

"Mother Fletcher, this is my wife, Kathy, and this is Meaghan."

"Well, ain't she the prettiest little thing. Look just like her mama, too. Sit on down in here while I see if I can't get something together for dinner. Did I wish you a Merry Christmas yet? Merry Christmas, children."

"Merry Christmas, and here's a present." Meaghan gave Mother Fletcher the package.

"Thank you, child," Mother Fletcher said.

"Daddy didn't want to come," Meaghan said, pulling off her coat.

"I just didn't want to put you out," Bill said quickly.

"Child, I don't blame you one bit," Mother Fletcher said. "You working here all week and then coming back on a holiday. But it's good for you to see we have holidays here, too. You see the people in the street all wishing each other a Merry Christmas and dressed up in their churchgoing clothes. You see them in this frame and you get a different picture of them. Don't you think so, Officer?"

"Yeah, I guess you're right," Bill answered.

"You can take your coat off," Mother Fletcher said. "I'll put it in a safe place."

"Those plates are so lovely!" Kathy went to the kitchen table where three plates were set out. "Are they antiques?"

"Everything in this house is an antique, including me," Mother Fletcher said as she took another plate from the cabinet.

"It's a lovely setting and there sure are a lot of pots on the stove for you not to be expecting anyone."

"Well, honey, let me tell you something. You don't survive, and that's what I been doing all these years, you don't survive sitting around expecting folks to act right." She opened the oven door, poked a fork in the ham and watched the clear juices run down its side, and then closed it. "'Cause the more you expect the more you get your heart broke up. But you got to be ready when they do act right because that's what makes the surviving worth surviving. That make any sense to you, honey?"

"It makes quite a bit of sense."

"That child of yours eat sweet potatoes?"

"Yes, she loves them," Kathy said. "Can I help you with anything?"

"You can help me with anything you have a mind to," Mother Fletcher said. "'Bout time you asked me, too, old as I am."

"You're not as old as Santa Claus," volunteered Meaghan.

"Santa Claus?" Mother Fletcher put down the dish towel and turned her head to one side. "Child, I knew Santa Claus when he wasn't nothing but a little fellow. Let's see now. He wasn't any bigger than you when I knew him. Me and him used to play catch down near the school yard."

And Mother Fletcher went off into telling stories to Meaghan about how long she had

known Santa Claus and how she used to have to lend him her handkerchief because his nose was always running.

And the Christmas dinner wasn't the best that the O'Briens would ever have but it was far from being the worst. But then, that's not what this story is about. This story is about how a policeman's young family brought a few

hours of happiness to an old woman. Or perhaps it's about how an old woman taught a young family something about sharing. Or maybe, just maybe, it is about how a six-year-old girl found the only person in the world who played catch with Santa Claus when he was a little boy, even though she was a lot older than he was.

1. In paragraph 6, the author writes: "Her gray hair, still streaked with wisps of black and thinner on the sides than on the top, framed her face and, catching the light, made her look like a black version of a painted medieval saint." This is an example of
  - A. a dialogue.
  - B. personification.
  - C. alliteration.
  - D. a simile.
  
2. In paragraph 23, O'Brien opens the box and finds a cardigan. A cardigan is a
  - A. cap
  - B. scarf
  - C. sweater
  - D. blanket
  
3. In paragraph 28, the author writes: "When he went over to thank Mother Fletcher for the second sweater he was careful not to mention that he had a six-year-old daughter." Why did O'Brien not want to mention this?
  - A. He was afraid Mother Fletcher would feel bad that she had no children.
  - B. He didn't want Mother Fletcher to make his daughter a sweater.
  - C. It was a secret that he had a child.
  - D. He didn't want to reveal personal information to Mother Fletcher.
  
4. The precinct motto, "Eight and Straight" (paragraph 31), suggests that
  - A. Eight patrolmen were assigned to the neighborhood.
  - B. The policemen who worked in Harlem did not live there.
  - C. The neighborhood was about eight blocks long.
  - D. The precinct had strict rules about how many hours the police could work.
  
5. The character who is most reluctant to share the Christmas dinner is
  - A. Mr. O'Brien.
  - B. Mrs. O'Brien.
  - C. Meaghan.
  - D. Mother Fletcher.
  
6. In paragraph 68, when Kathy says, "That's awfully sweet of you, Mr. O'Brien," her tone is probably
  - A. merry.
  - B. enthusiastic.
  - C. sad.
  - D. sarcastic.
  
7. What causes O'Brien to have Christmas dinner at Mother Fletcher's home?
  - A. Kathy threatens to go without him.
  - B. Mother Fletcher invites him.
  - C. The police lieutenant tells him to go.
  - D. He decides it's the right thing to do.











# PRACTICE TEST 2

## LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: PART 1



Frank Santiago

### WRITING TASK

Every picture tells a story, but the stories we see may be different. Look closely at the picture. What story is it telling? Use your imagination and experience to speculate what the story is about or to describe what is happening.

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# LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: PART 2

**Directions:** Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

**Introduction:** This excerpt from a longer essay discusses drug addicts—people “hooked on” illegal drugs. It also discusses another kind of addict—the person hooked on television. The author paints a disturbing picture of how these addicts are alike.

## Crack and the Box

by Pete Hamill

1 Television, like drugs, dominates the lives of its addicts. And though some lonely Americans leave their sets on without watching them, using them as electronic companions, television usually absorbs its viewers the way drugs absorb their users. Viewers can't work or play while watching television; they can't read; they can't be out on the streets, falling in love with the wrong people, learning how to quarrel and compromise with other human beings. In short, they are asocial. So are drug addicts.

2 One Michigan State University study in the early eighties offered a group of four- and five-year-olds the choice of giving up television or giving up their fathers. Fully one third said they would give up Daddy. Given a similar choice (between cocaine or heroin and father, mother, brother, sister, wife, husband, children, job) almost every stoned junkie would do the same.

There are other disturbing similarities. Television itself is a consciousness-altering instrument. With the touch of a button, it takes you out of the “real” world in which you reside and can place you at a basketball game, the back alleys of Miami, the streets of Bucharest, or the cartoony living rooms of Sitcom Land. Each move from channel to channel alters moods, usually with music or a laugh track. On any given evening, you can laugh, be frightened, feel tension, thump with excitement. You can even tune in *MacNeil/Lehrer*<sup>1</sup> and feel sober.

4 But none of these abrupt shifts in mood is *earned*. They are attained as easily as popping a pill. Getting news from television, for example, is simply not the same experience as read-

ing it in a newspaper. Reading is *active*. The reader must decode little symbols called words, then create images or ideas and make them connect; at its most basic level, reading is an act of the imagination. But the television viewer doesn't go through that process. The words are spoken to him by Dan Rather or Tom Brokaw or Peter Jennings<sup>2</sup>. There isn't much decoding to do when watching television, no time to think or ponder before the next set of images and spoken words appears to displace the present one. The reader, being active, works at his or her own pace; the viewer, being passive, proceeds at a pace determined by the show. Except at the highest levels, television never demands that its audience take part in an act of imagination. Reading always does.

In short, television works on the same imaginative and intellectual level as psychoactive drugs<sup>3</sup>. If prolonged television viewing makes the young passive (dozens of studies indicate that it does), then moving to drugs has a certain coherence. Drugs provide an unearned high (in contrast to the earned rush that comes from a feat accomplished, a human breakthrough earned by sweat or thought or love).

And because the television addict and the drug addict are alienated<sup>4</sup> from the hard and scary world, they also feel they make no difference in its complicated events. For the junkie, the world is reduced to him and the needle, pipe, or vial; the self is absolutely isolated, with no desire for choice. The television addict lives the same way. Many Americans who fail to vote in presidential elections must believe they have

1. a serious news program

2. TV newscasters

3. drugs that affect the mind

4. separated from society

no more control over such a choice than they do over the casting of *L.A. Law*.<sup>5</sup>

The drug plague also coincides with the unspoken assumption of most television shows: Life should be *easy*. The most complicated events are summarized on TV news in a minute or less. Cops confront murder, chase the criminals, and bring them to justice (usually violently) within an hour. In commercials, you drink the right beer and you get the girl. *Easy!* So why should real life be a grind? Why should any American have to spend years mastering a skill or a craft, or work eight hours a day at an unpleasant job, or endure the compromises and crises of a marriage? Nobody *works* on television (except cops, doctors, and lawyers). Love stories on television are about falling in love or breaking up; the long, steady growth of a marriage—its essential *dailiness*—is seldom explored, except as comedy. Life on television is almost always simple. . . .

5. TV program

What is to be done? Television is certainly not going away, but its addictive qualities can be controlled. It's a lot easier to "just say no" to television than to heroin or crack. As a beginning, parents must take immediate control of the sets, teaching children to watch specific television *programs*, not "television," to get out of the house and play with other kids. Elementary and high schools must begin teaching television as a subject, the way literature is taught, showing children how shows are made, how to distinguish between the true and the false, how to recognize cheap emotional manipulation. All Americans should spend more time reading. And thinking.

For years, the defenders of television have argued that the networks are only giving the people what they want. That might be true. But so is the Medellin cartel.<sup>6</sup>

6. dealers in illegal drugs

1. In the first sentence, the author writes: "Television, like drugs, dominates the lives of its addicts." What is the meaning of dominates?
  - A. improves
  - B. lengthens
  - C. controls
  - D. confuses
  
2. In paragraph 1, asocial means
  - A. not social.
  - B. lonely.
  - C. bored.
  - D. friendly.
  
3. Why does the author mention the Michigan State University study (paragraph 2)?
  - A. to suggest that mothers are more important than fathers
  - B. to prove how silly children can be
  - C. to demonstrate the power of television
  - D. to show how drug use harms children
  
4. According to the author, what is the key difference between watching television and reading?
  - A. Watching TV is boring; reading is exciting.
  - B. Watching TV is passive; reading is active.
  - C. Watching TV requires no imagination; reading does.
  - D. Watching TV is often a group activity; reading is not.
  
5. In paragraph 4, the author writes: "But none of these abrupt shifts in mood is *earned*. They are attained as easily as popping a pill." The author is using
  - A. symbolism.
  - B. dialogue.
  - C. a simile.
  - D. personification.
  
6. According to the author, both television addicts and drug addicts
  - A. are excited by the world around them.
  - B. recognize the value of reading.
  - C. want to change their ways.
  - D. are isolated from the real world.
  
7. The author suggests that television misleads viewers by making life's events appear too
  - A. enjoyable.
  - B. difficult.
  - C. simple.
  - D. depressing.
  
8. The author believes that parents should
  - A. control their children's television watching.
  - B. not own television sets.
  - C. allow only older children to watch television.
  - D. not let their children watch commercials.



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## LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: PART 3

### REVISE/EDIT

Students in your social studies class have been drafting essays about the importance of keeping up with the news. As part of the assignment, the teacher has asked students to work in pairs to revise and edit their essays before submitting them.

One student has asked you to work with him on his essay. Read the student's draft, and think about how to improve the meaning and clarity of the essay. Then make your revisions.

Its important that every one keeping up what's happen in world so much happens evry day that we don't keep up soon we out of touch. Each week is new discoverys. In health and science. Reading about them help us what is go on in world round us in addition many scientifik discoverys affect daily living. Changes occurs daily in united states Around the world also. New leaders elect and new laws passed. in foriegn countries new government comes into power Wars and treaties and trade deals and many of these events affect our life direct Or indirect is so easy keep with current events can read newspapers and news mags and watch television and listen radio and get info through Internet. Keep up with news important. For another reason, to. Today's currant events is tomorrows' history so news story that is of today is will be the historickal events we talking about in years coming in future time.

# LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY: PART 4

**Directions:** Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.

**Introduction:** Sometimes unhappy beginnings have surprisingly happy endings, as Lisa discovers in this short story.

## Love! Who'd Have Gussed It?

by Cheryl Dale

I know it may sound terminally weird, keeping this cast. But that's exactly what I plan to do. Funny—six weeks ago I'd probably have slugged anyone for even suggesting that I would be sorry to see this pile of pink fiber go. But that was six weeks ago, and this is now. And in between then and now is . . . this guy named Robbie!

Robbie came into my life at a time when I thought the whole world had kapowed! around me. I broke my leg. Not the world's biggest deal, you say! Well, to me it was. I think I could have handled anything but a broken leg. You see, I'm a skater. Not exactly Kristi Yamaguchi, but I'm pretty good. Before I really got into my skating, a year and a half ago, I was merely the middle kid in my family—a shy nobody in a family of athletes and class presidents.

3 We live in this little town called George, Washington. Real original, huh? It's small enough that almost everybody knows everybody else. When we are uptown shopping or at the grocery store, people are always calling out to my brother, Steve, about how great he did in whatever game he just played or teasing my older sister, Becky, about all of her boyfriends. But most of them don't even know my name. They probably think I'm some poor relative vis-

iting the family. I hate it when someone I don't know very well talks to me because I can't ever think of anything to say back. So I'd rather let Steve and Becky be the celebrities.

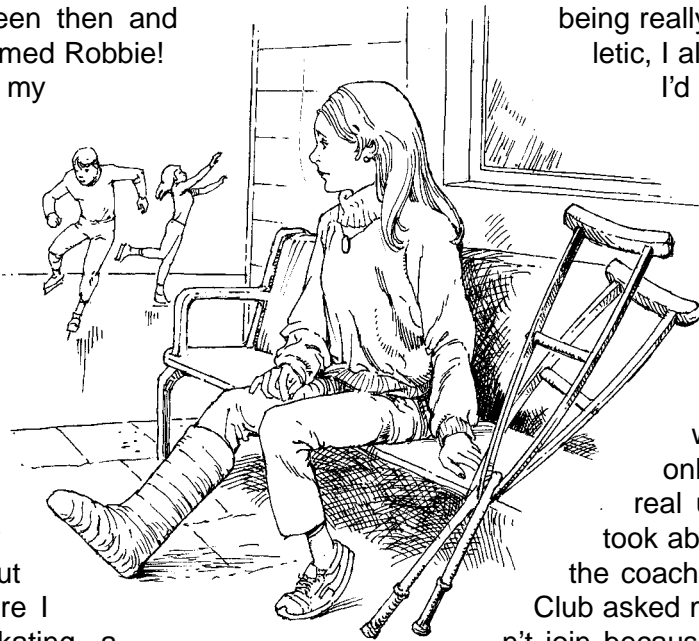
Anyway, Mom and Dad tried to get me involved in something, but being really shy and not very athletic, I always hung back.

I'd taken skating lessons for a few years, then given up on them.

But one day, I'd gone to a public skating session and asked my mom if I could start lessons again.

I picked up easily what I'd learned before, only now skating held a real urgency for me. I only took about five lessons before the coach of the Artistic Skating Club asked me to join. I almost didn't join because I don't make friends easily. The other members were a huge faceless group of happy kids that totally intimidated me. The first day, I mumbled hi, then pretty much looked down at my skates from then on.

We usually started by working on figures for the first hour. Some of the kids don't like figures because it takes so much discipline to do them well. One guy seemed to come late to practice a lot. I think it was so he didn't have to do the figures. I don't really mind them at all. I just close my mind to everyone and everything and concentrate like crazy. You trace a



pattern on one foot, pushing off at different points, depending on which figure you are doing. There are over 100 kinds of figures—frontward, backward, with different types of turns and edges. They really take a lot of work, but I love them.

After we do figures, the music starts for ice dancing. Some of the girls had partners to dance pairs, but there weren't enough boys, so most of us skate solo.

I think skating is the most important thing to me right now. I feel so good knowing that my parents can say, "This is our daughter, Lisa. She's an ice skater." And I am. I'm a good skater, which is why a broken leg was such a blow.

I'll never forget the moment it happened. I was walking home from the library at 4 on a Thursday afternoon. The sun was shining and, as usual, I was daydreaming about skating when this kid on a bike came speeding around the corner. Before I ever hit the ground I knew my leg was broken. I heard it snap.

11 I had to spend the night in the hospital, and I remember managing to be really brave until my parents left. Then it hit me—my leg was broken! And, to make matters worse, my cast was pink—bright pink! I guess at some point someone decided plain white was too boring, so they started coloring the mesh in Day-Glo shades so people can see you coming from a mile away! For a person who likes to fade into the woodwork—waking up to find myself practically glowing in the dark was not fun.

Finally, I couldn't keep it in any longer. I cried so hard my sobs caused a nurse to show up. She came and patted my hand.

Oh, the doctor assured me that I'd be skating again in a couple of months. But I wanted to skate now.

I spent the next two weeks sitting home feeling sorry for myself. I couldn't even look at my skates without crying. Finally, I asked Mom to drop me off down at the rink. I thought maybe I'd just watch the others for a while. I hadn't used my crutches much, so I was pretty wobbly, but I managed to get inside. The club members were practicing, so I hobbled over to a rinkside bench and sat down. My leg was hurting from moving it around and the music was bringing me close to tears. I was asking

myself why I'd even come when the coach, Mr. Trent, saw me and came over.

"Lisa, how are you doing?" He gave me a hug, which really made me want to cry. Then Karen, another skater, came over. She asked about me too. Before long, several of the kids were gathered around. I didn't even know they knew my name, and here they were wishing me well. That was nice. I even forgot about my leg for a minute.

The music started up, and they went back out on the ice. I couldn't believe how my body ached to be out there. It was like being allergic to your favorite food. There it was, sitting right in front of you, but you knew you couldn't take even one bite! I just couldn't stand it any more. I decided to go outside and wait until my mom showed up. 16

When I reached for my crutches which were leaning against the wall, one fell over. I reached for it but was stopped by a deep voice yelling, "Look out!"

I pulled my hand back just as this body, a blur of blond hair and blue jeans, got his skates tangled up in my crutch and went flying past. The sound of him hitting the floor—banging head first into the rink barrier and skidding to a stop face down on the floor—could've been heard a block away. Then, for a few seconds, there was total silence. I thought he was dead.

When the guy raised his face up off the floor and turned his head my way, I found myself looking into the most intense pair of blue eyes I'd ever seen.

"I can't believe I did that," he mumbled, shaking his head as if to clear it. He rubbed his forehead.

At that moment, I decided I should just die on the spot! At the very least, I knew I should get up and clomp on my crutches out of the rink and never come back. One problem: A gorgeous guy was lying on one of them.

Just as I'm deciding how fast I can clomp out of sight without that stupid crutch, he rolls over, sits up and asks, "You okay?"

I'd nearly killed the guy, and he asks me if I'm okay!

"I'm fine," I managed to mumble, the sound of my voice so low that even I could barely hear it. I was now even more embarrassed, realizing that if it had been me being tripped by

a crutch, I'd have been too busy feeling sorry for myself to ask about the other person.

"Good." Handing me the crutch, he said, "By the way, I'm Robbie."

I think by then my face had faded to a shade slightly less pink than my cast, and I was able to remember my name.

"Lisa. Lisa Baldwin," I said.

"I know. I've watched you skate. You're pretty good."

I noticed that in addition to those eyes, he also had gorgeous, blond, curly hair. I couldn't make a total fool of myself in front of some nerd—no. I have to do it in front of a future movie star!

"Thanks," I managed. "I guess I'd better go."

"Are you coming here tomorrow?" He smiled, and my stomach felt like overcooked oatmeal.

Without even hesitating, I answered, "Yeah."

"Great! I'll see you then." With that, he skated back out onto the ice.

When Mom arrived, I was sitting out front. She got out and came over to help me into the car.

"How'd it go, honey?" she asked on the way home.

"Okay." I shrugged, then rushed on, "Could you bring me back tomorrow?"

"Sure," she said, giving me a surprised look.

I didn't mention Robbie. I mean, after all, it wasn't anything big yet. But he did ask me if I was coming back. That must have meant something, right?

I returned the next day, but Robbie wasn't there. I was just sinking back into my depression when he popped up beside me.

"Hey, you. How's the leg?"

Normally, I would have blurted out my standard-issue answer to that question, but the way he asked it really made me smile.

"It's doing okay," I told him. "How come you're late?"

Robbie sat down beside me to put on his skates. "I had to work a little overtime."

"You work?" I asked.

"Sure. I have to pay for my skating somehow. That's why the coach is kind of lenient when I'm late." He stood up and flashed me a smile. "Want to do me a favor?"

"Okay," I said. But I really meant, "Anything in the world!"

"Watch me on my figures. I'm having a tough time. I've watched you, and you make it look so easy. Maybe you can tell me what I'm doing wrong."

I thought I was going to faint. I mean, first of all he said he'd watched me! There I'd been all those weeks, in my own little world out on the ice, and this gorgeous guy had been watching me? To top it off, he thought I was good and wanted me to help him! I couldn't hobble over to the rink barrier fast enough!

I did watch him skate and gutsed up enough to even make a couple of suggestions. He said he admired the way I was committed to what I was doing and worked hard to do it well. He really used the suggestions I made, and we could both see the improvement. **49**

When the music started for ice dancing, he came off the floor and bought me a soda. Sitting there with Robbie, sipping the soda, I kept wondering if the music hadn't taken over my mind again, and I was just dreaming!

When it was time for me to go, Robbie walked me to the door and waved after I got in the car. My mom kept quiet. I was so full of newfound feelings toward Robbie, I was bursting. But I still wasn't ready to talk about it to anyone.

I kept going to watch the skating as often as my mom would take me. She was really cool about it, probably because she was so glad I'd gotten over my "gloom and doom" about my leg.

The day that will stay in my mind forever, though, was a beautiful sunny Tuesday, three weeks ago today. It was the biggest day of my life, so far. **53**

Coach Trent had asked me to bring my skates down so he could sharpen the blades for me. So when Robbie got there for practice, late again, I was sitting beside the rink—my crutches on one side of me, and my skates on the other. Suddenly, I heard Robbie's voice next to my ear.

"Hi. Sorry I'm late." He apologized almost like this was a date or something!

"Working overtime again?" I asked.

"Yeah," he answered, bending to lace his skates. He noticed my skates sitting there. "You going to do a little one-foot skating today?"

"I wish," I told him. Then I explained why I'd brought them.

"The blades just got sharpened? Well, don't you think you'd better try them out?"

"Ha, ha," I remarked dryly. Just looking at my skates brought back yearning to be floating to the music again.

Robbie looked at me for a minute. Then he skated off toward Coach Trent.

"Don't move, Lisa. I'll be right back."

As if I were going anywhere, I thought. Once again I felt tears building up in my eyes.

Robbie and the coach talked for a minute. I saw Coach Trent look my way and shake his head, and then Robbie began gesturing with his hands. Obviously, they were discussing me, and I could feel my cheeks heating up. Robbie turned and glided back over, a grin on his face.

"Come one, Lisa. Give me your foot." He knelt in front of me.

"What?" But he was already slipping off my shoe. "Robbie, what are you doing?"

"I'm helping you get your skate on, worrywart breath." By then he was already lacing the skate!

"You're crazy! I can't skate on one foot!"

"No," he replied, standing up and reaching for my hand. "But we can skate on three feet."

Suddenly, I was propelled onto the ice. Robbie got in front of me, and put his hands on my waist. He pushed off and my own hands flew to grab his shoulders for balance. Standing on my good foot, my cast clearing the floor, we started moving slowly around the rink. Robbie went forward, which pushed me backward. At first, I was terrified, and kept looking down. But something made me look up. Okay—maybe it was those blue eyes. Then it was okay, and I wasn't nervous anymore.

Unfortunately, I got tired pretty fast and had to sit down, but I didn't care. I had managed to skate—sort of—and the feel of Robbie's hands around my waist was still there after he let go.

After that, I took my skates each time I went to the rink. At first, Mom and Dad were worried about me falling. That's when I finally told them about Robbie. Reluctantly, they decided it

would be all right, as long as I was careful. I learned to rest the bottom of my cast on the top of Robbie's foot. That took the strain off my leg, and we could skate for longer periods of time.

And then, yesterday, just as Robbie and I left the ice, Coach Trent came over to us.

"When does the cast come off, Lisa?" He leaned over the rink barrier while Robbie knelt to unlace my skate.

"Tomorrow!" I answered, my voice getting all weird.

"Great!" He paused, then added, "You know, you and Robbie seem to work well together. What would you think of ice dancing as a pair once that leg is back in shape?"

I couldn't even reply! Ice dancing with Robbie every day! Pairs! Robbie and me! I thought I'd freak! I looked at Robbie. He was grinning.

"That okay with you? Think we can do as well without our little friend here?' He tapped my cast.

The most I could manage was to nod my head. But Robbie didn't expect me to say anything. I think he just kind of knew.

When he walked me to the door to meet my mom, I had the feeling that if I'd had one hand free, he would have been holding it. Unfortunately, my crutches prevented that.

So, here I sit, outside Dr. Bradford's office, waiting for my name to be called. While I wait, I'm thinking about this cast and how much it brought me. Oh, maybe Robbie and I would have gotten together anyway, even if I hadn't broken my leg. But I'd hate to have taken that chance.

Throw it away? Nope! Every couple has their special something that signifies the start of their relationship—and this chunk of Day-Glo pink is mine. I've already cleared a spot for it on my shelf. It will be the first thing I see every morning when I wake.

Isn't it funny how you can start out hating something so much and end up feeling like it's your best friend?

And isn't it funny how you can think your whole life is over, when really, it's just beginning?

1. Paragraph 3 discusses Lisa's brother and sister. The author's MAIN purpose in this paragraph is to
  - A. introduce Steve and Becky.
  - B. describe the town where Lisa lives.
  - C. show Lisa's sense of humor.
  - D. help explain Lisa's character.
  
2. In paragraph 6, Lisa says, "The other members were a huge faceless group of happy kids that totally intimidated me." What is the meaning of intimidated?
  - A. scared
  - B. teased
  - C. welcomed
  - D. annoyed
  
3. Breaking her leg is especially hard for Lisa because
  - A. she had broken it before.
  - B. she can't ice skate.
  - C. other kids make fun of her.
  - D. it was Robbie's fault.
  
4. In paragraph 11, Lisa says that she's "a person who likes to fade into the woodwork." This means that Lisa
  - A. wants people to notice her.
  - B. enjoys ice skating.
  - C. wants to be part of a large group.
  - D. prefers not to stand out.
  
5. In paragraph 16, the author writes: "It was like being allergic to your favorite food. There it was, sitting right in front of you, but you knew you couldn't take even one bite!" This is an example of
  - A. a metaphor.
  - B. cause and effect
  - C. a simile.
  - D. exaggeration.
  
6. What causes Robbie to begin speaking with Lisa?
  - A. Coach Trent introduces them.
  - B. They become ice dancing partners.
  - C. Robbie trips over Lisa's crutch while skating.
  - D. Robbie crashes into Lisa with his bike.
  
7. In paragraph 49, Lisa says that she "did watch him skate and gutsed up enough to even make a couple of suggestions." What does gutsed up mean?
  - A. concentrated
  - B. found the courage
  - C. became frightened
  - D. reacted
  
8. In paragraph 53, Lisa refers to the "day that will stay in my mind forever." That was the day she
  - A. met Robbie.
  - B. joined the skating club.
  - C. broke her leg.
  - D. first skated with Robbie.









