

Missouri Assessment Program – Practice Form

Grade 4 English Language Arts

Transcripts of Listening Passages

The following two pages contain the transcripts of the listening passages in Session 4 of the grade 4 English Language Arts online practice form. The transcripts may be provided to hearing impaired students who need support to access the listening passages. The Test Examiner should read the passages aloud to the student. In circumstances where the student has no hearing, does not sign and cannot read lips, the student may read the passages directly. The passages correspond to the following questions in Session 4:

Passage 1: Questions 1–4

Passage 2: Questions 5–8

The transcripts must remain secure at all times. After testing, the transcripts must be destroyed by the STC or DTC at the building level, and electronic files must be deleted.

The Sea's Prize

One sunny morning, a merchant was traveling to the market to sell his cotton. As he walked, he glanced toward the distant sea. He saw something gliding across its shimmering waves.

It's a trading ship carrying fine silk cloths from far-off lands! the merchant thought. Immediately, he flung his bags of cotton beneath some willows and rushed toward the sea.

Before long, the merchant passed a farmer who was planting wheat in his field.

"What's your hurry, sir?" the farmer called to the merchant.

The merchant just pointed to the sea and continued his frantic dash.

Shading his eyes with one hand, the farmer studied the bright waters. He spied something riding on the waves too.

It's a trading ship filled with strange new fruits and vegetables! the farmer thought. Instantly, he abandoned his sack of seeds and joined the race.

Soon the merchant and the farmer passed an artist painting a picture of flowers.

"Is something wrong?" the artist shouted nervously. She wondered if they were fleeing from an animal.

The men answered by pointing to the sea.

Carefully, the artist examined the waters. She noticed a passenger ship floating not far from shore. Perhaps it held beautiful gold statues. Dropping her bottle of red paint, she chased after the men.

Finally, the three arrived on the sandy beach. Gasping to catch their breath, they stared at their mysterious treasure. It was a gigantic, soggy log!

Suddenly, the artist smiled. "I spilled red paint on my picture to greet a log," she said, laughing at her foolishness.

The farmer and the merchant chuckled too.

The farmer said, "My treasure is waiting for me in my fields."

The merchant added, "Mine is under the willows."

Then the three turned and walked away. They let the sea keep its prize.

How You Learn

Have you ever wondered how you are able to learn new things? How can a person go from knowing nothing about music to playing the piano? Scientists have discovered that our brains are sort of like muscles, which can grow stronger with training. If we practice something over and over again, our brains may make this task easier and easier.

Scientists made this discovery by studying animals. When animals learned to use puzzling toys, their brain cells grew new connections, or links. These links carry information from cell to cell. When brain cells have many links, the brain can better understand an idea.

The scientists think human brains may work much the same way. When you learn, your brain forms new links between brain cells. To gain a new skill, however, you have to be willing to practice the task over and over again. It requires effort.

For instance, if you want to play the piano, you must learn which piano keys play certain notes. At first, you may often forget the correct keys. However, if you keep practicing, the links in your brain may form strong connections. In time, you may be able to easily recall every note and play songs on a piano.

Scientists say that people can also help boost their brain growth by taking care of their bodies. First, exercising causes the brain to operate better. Blood flow to the brain increases, and brain cells may multiply. Eating healthy foods is important too. Food provides the brain with the building blocks it needs to work. Finally, getting enough sleep is necessary. The brain often strengthens its memories during sleep.

Don't give up if something seems difficult at first. Practice and healthy habits will give your brain a chance to create the pathways that will make the task easier.