

Missouri Assessment Program – Practice Form

Grade 7 English Language Arts

Transcripts of Listening Passages

The following two pages contain the transcripts of the listening passages in Session 3 of the grade 7 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 3:

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.

Is Studying the Only Way to Improve Academic Performance?

Characters in science-fiction novels sometimes just plug themselves into a computer to transfer new information, such as a new language, into their brains. Wouldn't that be wonderful? Unfortunately, learning new information will likely never be that easy. While there is nothing that can replace studying, there are some things you can do to study more effectively. This could lead to an increase in your academic performance.

Get up and get moving! While scientists are still working on researching this connection, they do believe that there is a link between physical activity and academics. It is thought that exercise can help you focus better and improve understanding. Scientists are interested in finding out whether there is a specific amount of time spent exercising that leads to optimal academic performance.

Put your headphones on! There are some studies that have shown listening to music before performing a task can help concentration and focus. It may also reduce anxiety and depression. Some scientists think the relaxation effects of music may allow the mind to focus.

Wake up and smell the rosemary! Rosemary is an herb. It is a woody plant with needle-like leaves. It has a very distinct aroma. The scent of rosemary essential oil has long been connected to improving memory in adults. Recent studies have shown that when children are exposed to the scent of rosemary essential oil, their working memory can improve. More research is necessary, but preliminary results show that diffusing essential oil in the room where children are working can help to improve academic performance.

There is no substitution for studying, but doing a few simple things can help your brain to function more efficiently. And having a more efficient brain can help to improve your academic performance.

The Rain Forests of the Sea

Coral reefs are sometimes called the rain forests of the sea. Full of color and life, they are the most diverse of all of Earth’s ecosystems and are home to tens of thousands of marine species. Though corals look like underwater plants, they are actually colonies of individual animals that join together and make the foundation of the reef. With so many plants and animals dependent on coral reefs, protecting and preserving coral reefs has become a significant concern.

Coral reefs cover only about 1 percent of the planet’s surface, yet their existence is extremely important for a vast number of organisms. For example, reefs provide nutrients and shelter for about a quarter of the ocean’s fish. Up to one billion people depend on coral reefs for food as well as for income from tourism and commercial fishing. Additionally, coral reefs act as a barrier against powerful waves and help protect coastal communities from flooding and land erosion. In places where reefs have been harmed, the damaging effects of storms can increase. Another benefit of coral reefs is in finding new medicines. Scientists are studying how chemicals produced by reef organisms can help fight many human diseases.

Coral reefs face both natural and human threats. Storms and volcanic eruptions, for example, can damage reefs. Harmful fishing practices, coastal development, pollution, and unsustainable tourism also threaten reefs. Coral bleaching happens when rising ocean temperatures become too warm for the survival of algae, which the corals depend on for nutrients.

There are simple things everyone can do to help protect coral reefs. Conserve water and choose only sustainable seafood. If you live near a beach, volunteer to clean up the trash and never leave garbage behind when you visit. Divers and snorkelers should never touch corals. Remember that corals are alive! Saving coral reefs for future generations depends on us as much as we depend on the reefs.