

OPPORTUNITY TO SHINE

Your child has an opportunity to shine in April as we will be taking the Math and Reading STAAR Assessments.

- Please make sure that your child gets a good nights rest.
- Please make sure that your child brings a healthy snack of pretzels (due to food allergies, pretzels are the preferred snack) and a water bottle. Peppermints are also yummy!
- We will be eating our lunch in the classroom on test days. Bringing a sack lunch is preferable, but the cafeteria will be open.
- Please remind your child of the following reading test strategies/expectations:
 - **Preview the passage (survey)** to get a feel for the organization and content of the text.

Choose the passage you want to work on first. **REMEMBER**: If you complete the passages out of order, make sure that you are filling in the bubble sheet correctly. When you do the 4 point check before turning it in, you should catch any errors made in bubbling--including missing answers.

DON'T FORGET TO READ THE *BLURB* AT THE TOP OF THE PASSAGE!!!!

Write down if the passage is...

Is it **poetry** (Poetry, written by a poet, is a kind of writing, usually in verse. Poetry verse is set out in short lines with words put together in rhythm or rhyme or both. Poetry is about a writer sharing with the reader an experience or strong feelings. Poems are written with words chosen for their sounds and beauty as well as their meaning. Determine the theme. Does it contain poetic devices such as alliteration, onomatopoeia, rhythm, rhyme, repetition, similes, metaphors etc. What is the tone and mood? Does the poet have an

opinion about the topic?

Is it a **play** (Written by a playwright, it has characters (played by actors, setting(s), a problem/situation, plot, conclusion and a theme (the playwright's message). Actors take the stage and perform parts in acts/scenes while the narrator, the person who states what is happening in the play, helps the story along throughout the play.

Is it **fiction** (story/narrative with BME/sequence of events)? Think about The author's purpose for writing this type of piece (to entertain).

Examples: Historical Fiction (Sarah Plain and Tall)

Realistic Fiction (Donovan's Word Jar)

Mystery (Case of Pueblo's Nose)

Adventure

Humorous Fiction

Science Fiction

Fantasy – Magic, Animal characters...

Folktale/Fairytale/Myth/Legend/Tall Tale/Fable

(Three Little Pigs, Cinderella—lesson learned)

Is it **nonfiction** (main idea and details)? Think about the author's purpose for writing this type of piece (to inform).

<u>Ex:</u> Biography (Lou Gehrig)	Instructions/Proced,
Autobiography	Reports
Encyclopedic/Dictionary Excerpt	Journals
News Article	Diariies
Magazine Article	Internet Article
Textbooks	Interview
Advertisement (to persuade)	Travel Brochures
Directories	Catalogs
Essays	

Determine how the text is organized:

Poetry

Determine the form: free verse, concrete, stanzas/lines.

Plays

Scripts written by a playwright – Written in Acts/Scenes

Characters are played by actors who have parts in the play

Stage Directions are given

Plays are similar to prose in that they have characters, setting(s), plot (with a climax) and a theme.

Fiction:

Story Elements (fictional stories have plots)

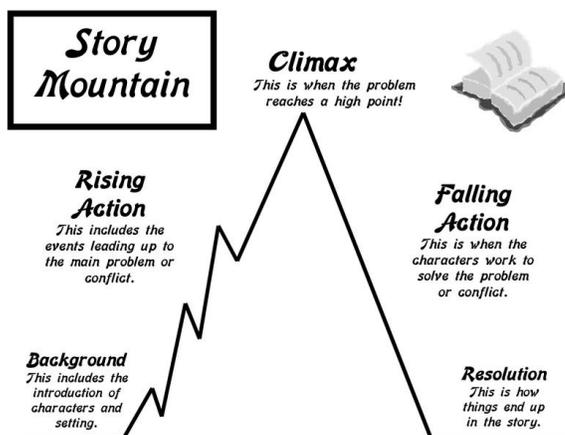
Exposition (Characters and setting are introduced)

Rising Action (Characters are faced with a problem or situation)

Climax (The story reaches a critical turning point. Tension is at the highest point.)

Falling Action (Tension eases and things start to get worked out.)

Resolution (Everything gets worked out and the story ends.)



Fiction Features:

Title

Chapter Index (for Chapter Books)

Illustrations

Bold Print/*Italics*

Continuous Text

Paragraphing
Dialogue

Non-fiction/Expository:

Cause and effect presents how an event or fact brings about another event or result.

Comparison and contrast analyzes similarities and differences among concepts and events.

Description explains an idea or concept.

Sequential

Descriptive Pattern

Categorized

Date Order

Question and answer presents a problem with a solution.

Simple listing arranges a group of facts, concepts, or events.

Time order organizes information into a chronological sequence.

Nonfiction Features:

Diagrams/Labels help the reader understand the small parts of a picture.

Photographs help the reader see what the real topic looks like.

Captions help the reader understand what they are looking at in a picture.

Comparisons help the reader compare the item to something they are already familiar with.

Cross Sections help the reader see what something looks like from the inside.

Maps help the reader know where something is located in the world.

Types of Print help the reader know that the word or words are important (bold/italic/underlined/highlighted).

Close-Ups help the reader see what something looks like from up close.

Tables of Contents help the reader know how the book is organized.

Indexes help the reader find specific information in a book.

Glossaries help the reader understand the definitions of important words in the book.

The reader should then adjust their reading rate accordingly.

Analyze the Questions for the Passage

- Then, **read and analyze the questions**, so that the reader sets a purpose for their reading and builds schema.
- **REMEMBER: DO NOT** read the answers to the questions as it may create bad schema.
- Underline or circle key information in the question to ensure you understand it. For example:

Circle or underline key words in the question such as:
NOT, EXCEPT, OPPOSITE, SAME AS, and SEQUENCE WORDS

(first, then, next, following, after, before, etc.), **PARAGRAPH REFERENCES**

READING THE PASSAGE

Gist/baby GIST OR Illustrate (main idea) the reading passages at the margin as you read, so that you can easily locate information to answer the questions. If the passage is nonfiction, look for a topic sentences and supporting details to help you identify the main idea of the paragraph. If the passage is fictional (narrative), write notes in the margin that help you identify the BME.

Also, remember to underline supporting details/important information as you go as well.

- As you read, determine the **author's purpose** for writing the piece?

PIE = Persuade – Inform (Describe/Explain) – Entertain

- Next, determine the **author's perspective/point of view?** Does the author seem sympathetic to the topic? Does he/she feel strongly about the topic (happy/sad/nervous/mad)?

- Then, determine **how the text is organized if nonfiction**. For example:
Sequence of Events, Compare and Contrast,
Time Order, Description, etc.
- When you come across **an underlined word**, use context clues (sentence sandwich) to help determine the meaning, and write a synonym above the underlined word. Use the replacement test to see if your answer was correct. Did it make sense?
REMEMBER: Sometimes, the definition is given in the sentence so watch for clue words such as:
OR ... CALLED MEANS SUCH AS ARE KNOWN AS COMMAS CAN ALSO SET OFF MEANING

ANSWERING QUESTIONS

- **“X” out the answers you know are not supported** in the text and evaluate the remaining answers. Choose the one that more closely matches the evidence given in the text and the one that ANSWERS THE QUESTION. Remember, you MUST provide evidence for an answer by underlining the evidence in the text and writing the test question by it for later review.

If you have time, indicate why the other 3 choices are incorrect: misinformation, not in the text, nonsensical, etc. (If the question is a timeline question, show the math as evidence for the answer if applicable.)

- **Summary questions:** The answer must include information about the beginning, middle, and end of the text given. If one of the elements is missing, it cannot be the correct answer. In this case, more is better than less information.

Summary questions can also include a summary of a particular paragraph or scene. Remember to focus only on the paragraph or scene referred to in the question.

- Use the “**Sequence Box**” strategy to answer sequence of events questions.
- **TOPIC** questions relate to what the reading was all about.
- **THEME** questions are asking the reader what the author’s message is.
- **Conflict Resolution** is asking how the problem got resolved.
- **Drawing conclusions** – These questions will ask what “you can conclude from the” paragraph, event, author’s message, character’s actions, etc.
- **Compare (how alike) and contrast (how different)** questions are asking how things are either alike or different. This could be the text organization, the topic, the genre, two scenes, an element of fiction, etc.
- **Main idea questions** can relate to the entire passage or one particular section or paragraph. Be careful to note which one they are asking for in the question. Be careful not to choose a detail but choose the big idea.

Figurative Language – Remember that similes/metaphors compare one object to something else; idioms do not have a literal meaning,

- **Fill-in graphic organizer questions with your answer.** Evaluate your response and make sure that it makes sense and can be supported by the text.

Types of graphics:

Venn Diagrams (Compare and Contrast)

Webs (Main idea and details—underline the details given in the passage)

Sequence Boxes

Story Maps (character, setting, problem, plot-sequence of events/resolution/conclusion)

Pictures with captions

Timelines

Maps

○ **Paired Passages:**

Remember that **paired passages** will be among the passages given. It can be a poem vs. short story, fiction vs. nonfiction, advertisement vs. nonfiction, poem and play, etc The **PAIRED PASSAGES** will have a common thread between the them (theme/idea/topic/character/setting). It can be any combination!

- Step 1 First, survey both passages and determine the genre structure
- Step 2 Then, “star” the title and questions for the 1st passage
- Step 3 Next, put a “check” next to the title and questions for 2nd passage
- Step 4 Following that, put a circle in front of the questions having to do with both passages
- Step 5 Read and analyze the questions (circle key words) for the 1st passage only
- Step 6 After that, read and gist the 1st passage
- Step 7 Answer the questions for the 1st passage only

Repeat Steps 5 through 7 for the 2nd passage

- Step 8 Remember, the questions for both passages take a great deal of time and detective work.

You must make sure that the answer is true for both passages if that is what it is asking you.

- **Finally, review, review, and review!** Read the passages several times, and recheck your evidence in the passage.
- Remember to complete the **4-Point Check** before turning in the test. This is especially important if you decided to complete the passages out of order. You need to make sure that you filled in the correct letter on the correct number of the answer document.
 - Point to the question in the test booklet.
 - Point to the evidence for the answer.
 - Point to the answer in the test booklet.

- Point to the answer on the bubbled answer document and compare it to the one chosen in the test booklet.

MAKE SURE IT MATCHES!!!!!!

Most importantly, remind your child that they have worked hard all year, and this is their opportunity to

shine as the very bright students that they are. If they use the skills and strategies that all GREAT READERS USE, this assessment should prove to be “EASY SNEAZY!”