



# Language Arts: Reading

Free Half-Length Practice Test – FPT9



Language  
English

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# Reading

## Directions

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Time – 35 minutes

20 Questions

This is a test of some of the skills involved in understanding what you read. The passages in this test come from a variety of works, both literary and informational. Each passage is followed by a number of questions.

The passages begin with an introduction presenting information that may be helpful as you read the selection. After you have read a passage, go on to the questions that follow. For each question, choose the best answer and mark your choice on the answer sheet. You may refer to a passage as often as necessary.

Work as quickly as you can without becoming careless. Do not spend too much time on any question that is difficult for you to answer. Instead, skip it and return to it later if you have time. Try to answer every question even if you have to guess.

Mark all your answers on the answer sheet. Give only one answer to each question.

If you decide to change one of your answers, be sure to erase the first mark completely.

Be sure that the number of the question you are answering matches the number of the row of answer choices you are marking on your answer sheet. The answer sheet may contain more rows than you need.

**Questions 1 through 8 refer to the following passage.**

**In the following literary passage, the narrator recalls an encounter on the subway train.**

### **The Subway**

As I waited for my train, I snuck glances at the other commuters in the subway station. Although we shared the communal space, everyone was in their own world. Eyes were fixated on smartphone screens or the day's newspaper. Ear buds blocked out the din of the station. The train car doors opened, and we filed into the car, eyes down, avoiding  
5 each other's gaze.

I was on my way home from a long day at work. I took out my book, and for the first twenty minutes I was so wrapped up in the story that I wouldn't have seen my own mother if she boarded the train and plopped down, right next to me. I was flying through pages, lost in another life.

10 After a while, I looked up and around, and a familiar face snapped into view. I couldn't believe it. His unmistakable jet-black hair was combed across his face like a crow's wing, and he even wore his signature grey wool jacket. I double checked the photo on the back cover of my book. It was K.S. Lee. I had heard he lived in the city but had no  
15 idea famous authors like him took the subway like everyone else. I wondered if I should talk to him or if he would be bothered by the attention.

After a few deep breaths, I resolved to get off at whatever stop K.S. Lee did and ask him to sign my book. The subway car lurched, braking to a stop. As I grabbed my bag to prevent it from falling out of my lap, a purse belonging to an elderly woman sitting next to me fell to the ground. Wallet, keys, cell phone, and lipstick all spilled out onto the  
20 subway floor. I immediately leaned forward to help the woman collect her valuables.

"Oh my goodness, thank you, young lady!" the woman said as she bent down to collect her wallet.

"Please, don't worry. Let me help you with this," I replied, eyeing K.S. Lee as he picked up his briefcase.

25 "You know, after forty years in the city, I've never gotten used to the way the train tosses about," the woman said.

"Me neither," I mumbled as I picked up her keys and hurriedly returned them to her.

Making sure there was nothing left on the floor, I grabbed my bag and made my way over to the nearest exit. The doors had already closed. K.S. Lee was gone. I looked at

30 all the passengers on the train ignoring everyone around them. The woman sat with her purse now safely in her grip. She mouthed “thank you” to me. I smiled back and tucked K.S. Lee back into my bag.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

How is the setting in lines 1-5 related to the theme of the story?

- A. It shows that there are various activities to do in a subway station.
- B. It demonstrates that the narrator is an avid user of technology.
- C. It reveals that the narrator is determined to meet other people.
- D. It emphasizes the lack of interaction between the subway passengers.

2 \_\_\_\_\_

Why does the narrator say, “I couldn’t believe it” (lines 10-11)?

- A. She is surprised by what K.S. Lee is wearing.
- B. She expected to see more than one familiar face.
- C. She did not realize K.S. Lee lived in the city.
- D. She sees a well-known person in an unexpected location.

3 \_\_\_\_\_

What does “signature” mean as it is used in line 12?

- A. Symbolic
- B. Distinctive
- C. Musical
- D. Expensive

4 \_\_\_\_\_

What is the tone of paragraph 3 (lines 10-15)?

- A. Anxious
- B. Excited
- C. Critical
- D. Solemn

5 \_\_\_\_\_

What is the narrator doing when K.S. Lee leaves the subway car?

- A. She is trying to decide how to meet him.
- B. She is reading a book that he wrote.
- C. She is trying to reach the train’s exit.
- D. She is assisting another passenger.

6 \_\_\_\_\_

What is the most likely reason the narrator puts her book away at the end of the passage?

- A. She is disappointed she did not have a chance to talk to the author of the book.
- B. She does not have enough time to finish her book because the subway is nearing her stop.
- C. She no longer wants to isolate herself from other people after her encounter with the woman.
- D. She wants to make sure the woman does not need additional help finding her belongings.

7 \_\_\_\_\_

What is the main idea of this passage?

- A. Human connection is still important in the modern age.
- B. Reading is important regardless of one's location.
- C. It is best not to miss an opportunity to talk to a hero.
- D. Public transportation is valuable to society.

8 \_\_\_\_\_

From which point of view is the story told?

- A. First-person narration by a main character in the story
- B. First-person narration by a supporting character in the story
- C. Third-person narration that reports on only one character's thoughts
- D. Third-person narration that reports on all characters' thoughts

Questions 9 through 20 refer to the following passage.

The following passage is an informational essay on the history of American quilts.

### Stitching Stories into History

In America, the memoirs of various families and towns have been preserved through quilts. At first, quilts were used as bedcovers to keep warm during cold winters, but they eventually evolved into magnificent works of fabric art commemorating American life and traditions. Quilts consist of three layers of fabric that are stitched together. The top layer is decorated with patchwork designs; the middle layer is a filler, mostly cotton or wool; and the bottom layer is usually plain cotton fabric. Patchwork tops are pieces of fabric, usually simple geometric shapes of different colors, that are cut and sewn together to form a design.

#### A Practical Solution

The tradition of patchwork quilts can be traced back to the early colonial era. Fabrics were a precious commodity, so the early settlers used small, functional pieces of cloth to create quilts. When a piece of clothing wore out, rather than throw it away, women reused the scraps as the top layer of a quilt. Block-styled patchwork, a series of square-shaped pieces of fabric, proved to be an effective way to reuse cloth and make quilts needed for the freezing winters. Individual blocks were pieced together first, and then a series of blocks were combined into quilts.

#### Cherished Heirlooms

As the 1800s progressed, American women began to create quilt patterns of great complexity and beauty. In time, patchwork quilts were made from fabrics purchased specifically for quilting. These quilts continued to be used as bedcovers; however, now the quilt designs at times memorialized special moments or events. The handiwork of the women became heirlooms, treasured artifacts of the family history. For example, work on an appliqué quilt for a bride often began before the engagement. By the time the wedding arrived, the finished quilt made a beautiful gift for the couple.

There are families who have quilts dating back to the mid-1800s, like the Yount family. Approximately sixty quilts made by generations of Yount women were recently featured as an exhibit in Staunton, Virginia. A board member of a historical society noted, in reference to the quilts, "They [...] tell America's story, with the changes of types of fabric, the styles of the time, how the household is set up, without any written words."

Another group with generations of archived quilts are the women of Gee's Bend, Alabama. Like the quilters during the Depression, the African American women of Gee's Bend had to do more with less. They gathered strips of cloth in order to keep

35 themselves, their children, and their families warm. Perhaps inspired by the vibrant  
patterns of fabrics found in Africa, one quilt by Annie Mae Young was made of strips of  
red and orange corduroy. When Young saw that the finished quilt was too small, she  
used shabby old jeans as a border to enlarge it. Arlonzia Pettway is another Gee's Bend  
quilter. When Pettway's father died in 1941, she recalls helping her mother make a quilt  
40 out of his work clothes in shades of faded gray, white, red, and blue. Both of these quilts,  
as well as many others from Gee's Bend, have hung in museum exhibits across the  
country.

### **Strengthening the Community**

During World War II, women made "signature" quilts as fundraisers. Businesses and  
citizens paid a small fee for their names to be embroidered on quilt squares.  
45 Communities raffled the finished quilts and donated the proceeds to the Red Cross, a  
humanitarian organization that provided relief to those affected by war. These treasured  
quilts now hang in museums as community records. A variation of the signature quilt, the  
album quilt, was a popular keepsake. Its name comes from the tradition of different quilt  
makers signing the blocks in the patchwork.

50 Quilting was also a community affair. Women would gather with family, friends, and  
neighbors for quilting bees where a quilt could be completed in a day, rather than the  
weeks or months an individual might take. Such events were a perfect time for  
camaraderie with friends and relatives, as well as a time to laugh and relieve stress.  
Quilting bees often took place outside, under a large shady tree, or indoors, like in a  
school gymnasium.

55 The history of America is documented through these women's quilts and the women  
before them. Within the fabric and thread are the anecdotes of immigrants, workers, and  
pioneers. What was once a simple bedcover is now an artistic archive of the American  
experience.

9 \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the word choice in the first paragraph (lines 1-8), the author’s tone can best be described as

- A. objective and instructional.
- B. reflective and hopeful.
- C. whimsical and humorous.
- D. admiring and informative.

10 \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the details in the passage, colonial-era quilts were

- A. constructed fairly easily.
- B. inexpensive craft projects.
- C. repurposed with leftover fabric.
- D. supplemental income for families.

11 \_\_\_\_\_

Most early quilt patterns featured square-shaped pieces of cloth because they

- A. made more comfortable bedspreads.
- B. were smaller and more traditional.
- C. made more interesting figures.
- D. were convenient and more economical.

12 \_\_\_\_\_

What can the reader infer based on the information in lines 18-24?

- A. American manufacturers increased fabric production in the 1800s.
- B. American quilt makers of the 1800s were known by trademark craftsmanship.
- C. By the 1800s, quilts were designed for functional and decorative purposes.
- D. By the 1800s, some Americans had achieved success and prosperity.

13 \_\_\_\_\_

Which object can best be compared to quilts as “heirlooms, treasured artifacts of the family history” as they are described in line 22?

- A. A photograph of family posted on social media
- B. A teenager’s first used car purchased from a neighbor
- C. Great-grandmother’s recipe prepared for every holiday meal
- D. Children’s clothing passed down from one sibling to another

14 \_\_\_\_\_

Which generalization can best be supported by the idea in line 23 that “work on an applique quilt for a bride often began before the engagement”?

- A. Most marriage engagements lasted over a year.
- B. Most gifts for the bride and groom were crafted by hand.
- C. Making a quilt requires several people working together.
- D. Making a quilt is a complex process that takes time.

15 \_\_\_\_\_

Arlonzia Pettway and her mother most likely made a quilt out of a sense of

- A. devotion.
- B. despair.
- C. ownership.
- D. obligation.

16 \_\_\_\_\_

The following list is missing a detail:

Significance of Quilt Fundraisers

- Fostered community participation
- Supported charitable groups
- (missing detail)

Based on the passage, which detail best completes the list?

- A. Aided soldiers and their families during wartime
- B. Generated interest in museums
- C. Progressed into a patriotic custom
- D. Featured the skills of famous artisans

17 \_\_\_\_\_

Which conclusion can best be supported by the details in paragraph 7 (lines 49-54)?

- A. Quilting bees were entertaining yet crowded events.
- B. Quilting bees served a useful and relaxing purpose.
- C. Quilting bees allowed women to learn advanced sewing skills.
- D. Quilting bees encouraged women to pursue careers outside the home.

18 \_\_\_\_\_

What does the word “camaraderie” in line 52 most nearly mean?

- A. Production
- B. Facilitation
- C. Partnership
- D. Companionship

19 \_\_\_\_\_

What is the main idea of the passage?

- A. American quilts began as basic necessities and evolved into artistic keepsakes of tradition.
- B. The artistry of quilt-making was developed by pioneers and perfected during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- C. American quilts were initially inventive solutions that eventually became community moneymakers.
- D. The tradition of quilt-making started in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and progressed until antique quilts became art museum exhibits.

20 \_\_\_\_\_

Which statement summarizes a key detail of the passage?

- A. Quilting bees normally took place outdoors.
- B. Family members were customarily bestowed with quilts.
- C. Designers frequently placed their signatures within quilts.
- D. Quilts were typically donated to non-profit groups.

## HiSET Answer Key and Rationales

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
1	D	I. Literary	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p><b>Option D is correct</b> because the passage is about a missed opportunity for interaction, and lines 1 to 5 emphasize the lack of human interaction between passengers on the subway.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
2	D	I. Literary	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p><b>Option D is correct</b> because the narrator did not expect to see anyone she knew on the subway, and furthermore, she had been so engrossed in her book that she was not paying attention to the other passengers.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
3	B	I. Literary	Medium
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p><b>Option B is correct.</b> The word “signature” is used in the passage to refer to a very distinctive and distinguishing jacket that K.S. Lee is wearing, one that they are known for wearing and could be easily identified.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
4	B	I. Literary	Medium
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p><b>Option B is correct</b> because the narrator “couldn’t believe” that a famous author like K.S. Lee would take the subway like everyone else and contemplates trying to talk to him.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
5	D	I. Literary	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option D is correct</b> because when the subway stops to let the passengers out, including K.S. Lee, the narrator is busy helping an elderly lady whose purse has fallen to the ground.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
6	C	I. Literary	Hard
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because the narrator missed the opportunity to meet K.S. Lee and no longer wants to feel isolated, reading her book.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
7	A	I. Literary	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option A is correct</b> because the passage is about the lack of connection between passengers on the subway and how a human connection, like helping another passenger, is still important.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
8	A	I. Literary	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because the narrator is recounting an incident that happened to her.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
9	D	II. Informational	Medium
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option D is correct</b> because the author expresses admiration for the “magnificent works of fabric art,” while providing a brief description of quilts.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
10	C	II. Informational	Medium
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because paragraph 2 highlights how worn-out clothing was repurposed into scraps used to make quilts.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
11	D	II. Informational	Medium
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option D is correct</b> because it was easy to make squares out of old pieces of fabric. Square pieces were easy to cut out and sew together, creating a larger quilt.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
12	C	II. Informational	Medium
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because lines 18-24 highlight the beauty of the quilts and their function as bedcovers.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
13	C	II. Informational	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p><b>Option C is correct</b> because just as a family recipe prepared for certain holidays is a cherished part of one's history, a family quilt is a treasured artifact of the family's history.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
14	D	II. Informational	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p><b>Option D is correct</b> because the complexity and time required to make a quilt is supported by the example of beginning a quilt for a bride before the engagement.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
15	A	II. Informational	Medium
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p><b>Option A is correct</b> because love and honor are part of devotion. Arlonzia (and her mother) honored her deceased father by lovingly creating a quilt from his work clothes.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
16	A	II. Informational	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<p><b>Option A is correct</b> because the proceeds from the sale of quilts went to the Red Cross which provided relief to those affected by war.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
17	B	II. Informational	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option B is correct</b> because many women working together could complete a quilt in a day, instead of working alone for months. These relaxing gatherings were full of laughter, resulting in stress relief.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
18	D	II. Informational	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option D is correct</b> because “camaraderie” describes relationships between friends who spend a lot of time together. In this context, the word describes the companionship of quilters, who spent time together, relaxed and happy, gaining relief from daily stress.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
19	A	II. Informational	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option A is correct</b> because overall, the passage provides strong evidence that quilts began as a necessity, as protection against harsh winters. They later evolved into treasured artistic heirlooms and masterpieces.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
20	B	II. Informational	Easy
<b>Rationale</b>			
<b>Option B is correct</b> because lines 21-24 explain how quilts became treasured heirlooms: for example, given to a bride and groom for their wedding.			