



# **Nebraska State Accountability**

**Grade 5  
Reading  
Practice Test**

Name:

**Directions:**

On the following pages are passages and multiple-choice questions for Grade 5 Reading Practice Test, a practice opportunity for the *Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA)*.

Each question will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For all questions:

- Read each passage. Then answer each question carefully by choosing the best answer.
- Mark your answers for ALL of the questions.

Only one of the choices provided is the correct answer.

## Mockingbird Neighbors

1 Alma had watched the mockingbirds from her window all spring. The birds loved the little neighborhood park next door, and several of them had made their nests there. She enjoyed their cheerful bustle and regular visits to the birdbath in her family’s yard. Most of all, she loved to listen to them **mimic** the calls of other birds, bright-eyed and pleased with themselves. One of them, whom she had named Chip, was a particular favorite. When Alma was out weeding the flower beds, Chip would hop close beside her, watching hopefully for worms and pecking at occasional, interesting tidbits.

She had just arrived home when she heard her little sister Ruthie calling her.

“Look, Alma, that girl is back again! She is doing the same thing!”

Yesterday Alma and Ruthie had noticed a tall, dark-haired girl in the park. She had been carrying a notebook, pausing frequently to write in it. The rest of the time, she walked slowly and studied the thick bushes. Then she had moved to a dogwood, standing close to its low branches.

5 “She is right beside Chip’s nest again!” Ruthie started toward the girl as she spoke. “I’m going to tell her to stop!” Ruthie was a firm believer in the direct approach.

“I don’t think you will have to.” Alma grinned at Ruthie and pointed to a small gray-and-white jet zipping toward the girl’s head, fussing angrily. Behind him, a chorus of birds sounded the alarm.

As they watched, the girl covered her head with her arms and ran toward the little red car parked at the curb, with Chip in hot pursuit.

“Good for Chip!” Ruthie said with satisfaction. “He protected his nest.”

Both girls had watched with interest as Chip and his mate painstakingly had constructed their nest, a deep cup of dried twigs and grasses, its lining made of yarn, hair, and leaves.

That night Alma stared out her window thoughtfully, watching the birds taking their last twilight drinks at the birdbath. Tomorrow she and Ruthie would take turns keeping watch over Chip’s nest. The girl had not looked like someone who would bother birds, but Alma couldn’t imagine what she was doing.

She found out the very next morning. The bird alarm rang out in advance this time, and a mockingbird that Alma was sure was Chip led an attack on the intruder. This time the girl didn’t even have the opportunity to get more than a few feet from her car when the lead bird swooped down toward her. She turned and raced back toward her car, clutching her notebook.

Alma hurriedly told her mother what had happened, and they ran to the curb before the girl could leave.

“Are you all right?” asked Alma’s mom, looking at the girl anxiously.

The girl nodded. “I’m okay,” she said. “Do they chase everyone else like this?”

Alma shook her head firmly. “Only people who bother them,” she replied indignantly.

“I can’t imagine how those birds realized so quickly that I was back,” said the girl.

Alma stared at her in disbelief. “Why, they recognized you, of course. They knew your car, too.”

The girl chuckled. “I think you may be right. I’ve been collecting information about nesting habits for my biology class project. I didn’t realize that the mockingbirds would be clever enough to figure out who I was and what I was doing. I think I should study their intelligence instead.”

“Of course they are clever,” replied Alma proudly. “And if you study their intelligence, I already know what you will find. They will receive an A+ for being extraordinarily bright birds.”

1. In paragraph 1, what is the meaning of the word **mimic**?
  - A. avoid
  - B. regard
  - C. ignore
  - D. imitate
  
2. Why is the girl in the park taking notes?
  - A. She is writing an entry in her diary.
  - B. She is collecting information about birds.
  - C. She is writing a poem about mockingbirds.
  - D. She is collecting information about trees.
  
3. In paragraph 5, the author states that Ruthie is “a firm believer in the direct approach.” What might the reader infer about Ruthie?
  - A. Ruthie is shy and avoids strangers.
  - B. Ruthie is protective of her older sister.
  - C. Ruthie is bold and says what she thinks.
  - D. Ruthie is sensitive to the feelings of others.

4. Which detail supports Alma's conclusion that mockingbirds are smart?
- A. Chip visits the birdbath.
  - B. Chip builds a nest in a tree.
  - C. Chip recognizes the girl and her car.
  - D. Chip pecks at worms in the flower bed.
5. The conflict in the story is between which characters?
- A. the girl and Chip
  - B. Alma and Ruthie
  - C. Chip and Ruthie
  - D. Mom and the girl

## Seeing the Invisible

The Romans first discovered glass in about AD 100. They experimented with different shapes and sizes of glass. They discovered that a piece of glass that was thick in the middle and thin at the edges could make objects appear larger. These special pieces of glass were useful for studying insects and therefore were called “flea glasses.” They were also called “magnifiers” and “burning glasses”—because the glass could focus the rays of the Sun and start a fire. Eventually, this specially shaped glass was called a lens because the glass was roughly the same shape as a lentil bean.

### Invention of the Microscope

Lenses were not used much until the 1300s. Then people started wearing them to improve their vision. In the 1590s, two spectacle makers named Zacharias and Hans Janssen experimented with lenses. They put several lenses in a tube and looked through them at an ant. The ant appeared much larger than it would have with only one lens. The Janssens had invented the compound microscope.

News of the invention spread. Robert Hooke heard about the microscope and used it to study plants. One day he wanted to understand why a cork floated upon the water. With the microscope, he discovered little chambers that he called “cells” because they resembled the kind of room a monk used in a monastery. We know today that cells are the building blocks of life. In 1665, Hooke wrote a book about his discoveries titled *Micrographia*.

### Discoveries with the Microscope

Another person who became very excited about the microscope was Anton van Leeuwenhoek. He used the microscope to look at everything. Then he wrote careful descriptions of what he observed. Leeuwenhoek also did experiments with lenses. He learned how to grind and polish them. His lenses had such great curvature they could magnify an object up to 270 times its normal size! Other microscopes at that time could only magnify 6 to 10 times normal size.

- 5 Leeuwenhoek had an **insatiable** curiosity. He looked at pond scum and saw tiny “animalcules” flitting about. He looked at scrapings from his own teeth and saw tiny, wriggling creatures. He looked at a drop of blood and saw thousands of tiny “corpuscles.” Leeuwenhoek had discovered protozoa, bacteria, and blood cells.

### How a Microscope Works

The simplest compound microscope has two concave lenses and a tube. The lens placed near the object is called the objective lens. The lens placed near a person’s eye is called the eyepiece. The objective lens sends a magnified image of the object to the eyepiece, which in turn directs the image to the eye.

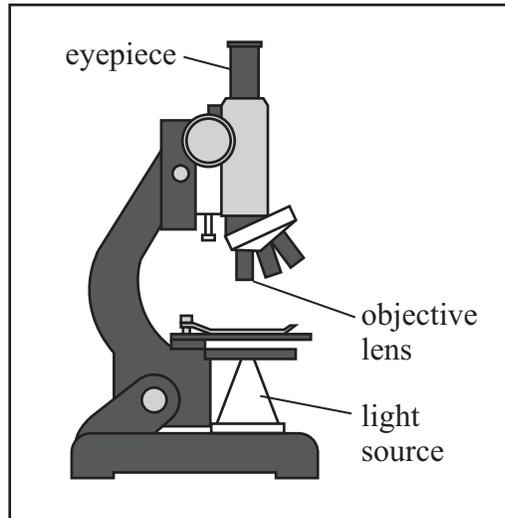
### Improvements in the Microscope

During the 1800s, major improvements were made to the microscope. Carl Zeiss, Ernst Abbe, and Otto Schott studied optical design. Soon Zeiss lenses and microscopes were considered the best in the world.

In 1933, Ernst Ruska invented the electron microscope. It used a beam of electrons instead of light to view an image. An object viewed with this microscope could be magnified up to one million times.

Lenses and microscopes have enabled people to see things that are invisible with just our eyes.

### A Compound Microscope



6. What is the meaning of the prefix **micro-** in **microscope**?
- A. eye
  - B. lens
  - C. small
  - D. magnify
7. In paragraph 5, what is the meaning of **insatiable**?
- A. meets expectations
  - B. impossible to satisfy
  - C. willing to put on hold
  - D. not wanted or desired

8. Which statement is an opinion?
- A. Zeiss lenses and microscopes were the best in the world.
  - B. The Janssens invented the first compound microscope.
  - C. The Romans created special pieces of glass called “flea glasses.”
  - D. Leeuwenhoek created a lens that could magnify up to 270 times.
9. Under which heading can the reader find which microscopes were the best in the 1800s?
- A. Invention of the Microscope
  - B. Discoveries with the Microscope
  - C. How a Microscope Works
  - D. Improvements in the Microscope
10. Where is the light source located on a compound microscope?
- A. below the eyepiece and next to the objective lens
  - B. above the eyepiece and objective lens
  - C. between the eyepiece and objective lens
  - D. below the eyepiece and objective lens

11. Read the events below.

1. Ernst Ruska invented the electron microscope.
2. Romans discovered that a special glass magnified objects.
3. Leeuwenhoek discovered bacteria.
4. The compound microscope was invented.

What is the correct sequence of events from the passage?

- A. 3, 2, 1, 4
- B. 2, 4, 3, 1
- C. 4, 2, 3, 1
- D. 2, 1, 3, 4

12. What makes this passage nonfiction?

- A. It contains directions on how to make a microscope.
- B. It contains factual information in chronological order.
- C. It contains stories about inventors who worked with telescopes.
- D. It contains predictions of what future microscopes will be like.

13. What could be another title for the passage?

- A. Microscopes Improve over Time
- B. Microscopes Help Us Learn about Blood
- C. Anton van Leeuwenhoek's Contribution
- D. The Parts of a Microscope

**Grade 5  
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Answer Key**

1	D
2	B
3	C
4	C
5	A
6	C
7	B
8	A
9	D
10	D
11	B
12	B
13	A