



# **Nebraska State Accountability**

**Grade 8  
Reading  
Practice Test**

Name:

**Directions:**

On the following pages are passages and multiple-choice questions for Grade 8 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.

Remember only one of the choices provided is the correct answer.

## Oversleeping

*So Jake spread his arms, leaped skyward from the sidewalk, and began to fly, rocketing up over the neighborhood. Suddenly he heard the distant voice of his father calling, as if from another universe, and Jake pried open sleep-heavy eyes . . .*

“Get up, pal,” said Jake’s father, “or you’ll miss the school bus.”

“Just let me sleep a little longer,” Jake mumbled. Then he groaned and turned over, pulling the covers up over his head like a tent, as if to somehow recapture his dream. Jake loved to sleep. It wasn’t that he was lazy or lacked energy. Jake was a normal fourteen-year-old kid in every way. But he loved to curl up under a soft white cloud of sheets, rest his head on a marshmallow pillow, and luxuriate in the twilight world of slumber where life is exciting and dreams always come true.

*So Jake was sitting at a table at Chez Maurice’s in Hollywood, having lunch with his buddy, Tom Cruise. Tom was offering Jake a role in his next movie when . . .*

“Get up,” said Jake’s father, gently shaking his son’s shoulders. Jake yawned and hauled his legs over the side of the mattress, where he sat for a few moments to reconcile himself with the shocking reality of upright existence. He dragged himself into the shower, where he briefly dreamed of tropical rain forests, and at last shuffled downstairs to breakfast.

“Jake’s going to sleep his life away!” teased Taylor, his nine-year-old sister, as she sat at the table, kicking her dangling legs excitedly as if to show by comparison how wide awake she was.

“He’s just a growing boy,” said Jake’s father, washing dishes at the kitchen sink. “Right?” Jake nodded sleepily and finished his breakfast. He trudged out the front door with Taylor, still half-sleepwalking, and they waited on the curb for their school bus, as usual.

At school, finally fully awake, Jake cycled through the pleasant routine of another typical day. He greeted his buddy Benjamin at the locker they shared. They discussed hockey games and books. Then there was science with Mr. Albert, math with Ms. Freed, and lunch with Benjamin, who always told great jokes. After school, there was homework, dinner with his dad and Taylor, maybe a little TV, and then off to dreamland. And so went week after week, and month after month.

*So Jake swung the bat, sending the ball out of Dodger Stadium and into the Baseball Hall of Fame . . .*

“Come on, get up,” giggled Taylor, holding a ringing alarm clock only inches from her brother’s face. “You’ll be late for school!” Jake shook his head in disbelief and ducked under the covers.

Moments later Jake awakened to an empty, quiet room. He noted with puzzlement that all the buttons on his pajama top had popped off in the night. Then he pulled himself from bed and padded sleepily to the shower. The bathroom mirror reflected a face that was oddly unfamiliar—one with heavier eyebrows and new creases in its brow. Jake rubbed a hand over his face and felt the unexpected sandpaper abrasion of whiskers. Mystified and dazed, he staggered downstairs to the kitchen, where he was shocked to discover a teenaged Taylor sitting at the breakfast table beside his father, who was grayer and heavier.

“So you finally woke up,” commented Jake’s father, casually sipping his coffee. “We thought you’d sleep forever.”

“You certainly overslept!” added Taylor in a surprisingly mature voice.

Jake shook his head as if to disperse the fog of dreams. “What are you talking about?”

“You’ve been asleep for four years,” Jake’s father replied calmly. “Better get dressed, or you’ll be late for your last day of school.” This statement set Jake’s mind reeling. His last day of school? Had he really slept so long? Was he now *eighteen* years old?

Lost in a whirl of confusion, Jake went to his room to dress for school and discovered that none of his clothes fit him. He borrowed a shirt, pants, and shoes from his father—and they made him look and feel even older.

Taylor led zombie-like Jake out the front door to the curb. Boarding his bus, Jake stared in bewilderment at the aged faces of his friends. “Hey, it’s Jake!” shouted someone from the back of the bus. “He’s back!” One by one, his schoolmates began to recognize him.

“Buddy, you sure look older!” said someone sitting near where Jake stood. Jake looked down to discover his friend Benjamin smiling heartily and looking startlingly like his older brother. Jake sat beside Benjamin, who eagerly told what had happened during Jake’s years of slumber—how Mr. Albert had retired from teaching science, and how Ms. Freed had married. Benjamin spoke excitedly of hockey games won and lost; of books read and remembered; of school plays, classes, pep rallies, and car washes. They were small, ordinary events, but to Jake they seemed extraordinary because they had happened without him. He had missed grades nine through twelve. And now there would be no more school days with Benjamin, his teachers, or his other friends. Jake had slept them all away.

“Come on, buddy, get up,” called Jake’s father. Jake pried open leaden eyelids to see his father standing at the foot of his bed, looking younger and leaner. Beside him was a nine-year-old Taylor, seemingly more girlish and bubbly than ever before.

20 “Come on, sleepyhead!” she giggled. Her laughter seemed as bright as the yellow sunshine splashing about the room. “You don’t want to miss school, do you?”

Jake beamed and looked at his family. “No, I wouldn’t want to do that,” he said as he threw back the covers and leaped out of bed.

1. What conclusion can be made based on the fact that Jake’s pajamas do not fit?
  - A. He has cheap pajamas that came apart while he slept.
  - B. He has grown lots in the four years he was asleep.
  - C. He ate too much the night before and gained weight.
  - D. He had a growth spurt that happened overnight.

## READING

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2. In paragraph 20, the phrase “as bright as the yellow sunshine” is an example of which term?
- A. simile
  - B. metaphor
  - C. personification
  - D. onomatopoeia
3. Which event happens first?
- A. Jake dreams about having lunch with Tom Cruise.
  - B. Jake dreams about flying over the neighborhood.
  - C. Jake dreams about playing baseball for the Dodgers.
  - D. Jake dreams about sleeping for four years.
4. Why does Jake leap out of bed at the end of the story?
- A. He does not want his dad bugging him.
  - B. He does not want his sister laughing at him.
  - C. He does not want to sleep his life away.
  - D. He does not want to grow anymore.
5. What do the italicized sentences represent in the story?
- A. dreams
  - B. conversations
  - C. opinions
  - D. titles

6. After reading the passage, what could be the belief of the author?
- A. Teenagers should not listen to their friends.
  - B. Teenagers should not listen to their parents.
  - C. Teenagers should not let opportunities pass them by.
  - D. Teenagers should not sleep more than ten hours a night.
7. What could be another title for the story?
- A. Life is Full of Important Things to Do
  - B. Annoying Sisters Keep You Awake
  - C. He is Just a Growing Boy
  - D. Alarm Clock Jitters

## From Sandals to Sneakers—Shoes Step Forward

Shoes—we wear them nearly every day. We walk, run, jump, climb, and stand in them for hours on end. Yet we hardly think about them because they are such an ordinary part of our daily lives. Shoes were not always an important part of people’s wardrobes. The ancient Greeks, Egyptians, and Persians made and wore sandals, but actually went barefoot most of the time. These people lived in regions where the weather was temperate, and shoes were not needed to keep their feet warm. Archaeologists have found shoes in the ruins of these civilizations, but they seem to have been worn mainly by royalty, who could afford to employ tailors and shoemakers.

### Shoes in Early Civilizations

As shoes became more common in ancient Egypt, the first ones were simple sandals created mainly to protect the soles of the feet from rough surfaces. The easiest way to make shoes in these ancient times was to use materials that were readily available, including tree bark, leaves, and grasses. In ancient Egypt, sandals were made of rushes, which are grassy plants with hollow stalks. Rushes are the same plants used today to make chair bottoms, mats, and baskets.

Among the ancient Greeks, sandals were woven of similar plant materials, but the Greeks also varied the process by tying small pieces of wood together with dried grass. In later years, they made sandals with leather from the hides of animals. The first Greek shoes were purely functional, but over time most were dyed and decorated to make fashion statements. Women began to wear soft, enclosed leather shoes, and these grew increasingly fancy in the later years of the Greek civilization.

The Romans wore sandals much like the Greeks did, but used more pieces of leather to make them. Some Roman sandals had straps that wrapped around the ankles. Shoemakers often dyed these sandals in bright colors that represented the different jobs held by the people wearing them. The patricians, or privileged classes, wore red sandals with moon-shaped ornaments on the back. Senators wore brown shoes with four black leather straps wound around the lower leg. Consuls, or legal officers, wore white shoes, and soldiers wore heavy leather sandals that were more like boots—but with bare toes!

Meanwhile, people who lived in cold northern climates were making their shoes from the hides of furry animals, such as polar bears and yaks. The soles and tops of these shoes were made from pieces of soft leather sewn together. This type of shoe—whether or not it used fur—was called a moccasin. Some Native American groups made and wore moccasins for thousands of years. Some moccasins were plain, and others were **adorned** with beadwork.

### The Shoemaking Process

As the centuries passed, the primary material for shoes continued to be leather, and the process of making shoes did not change quickly. A wood and metal framework called a “last” was wrapped with pieces of leather that were then sewn together. As late as the mid-1800s, lasts were straight on both sides; this meant that there was no difference in shape between left and right shoes. It also meant that shoes were uncomfortable and that breaking them in was not easy. The lasts were made in different sizes, but for a long time only two widths were available—thin and stout.

For centuries, shoes were sewn by hand, just as they had been by the ancient Egyptians. Machines to assist shoemakers were not used until the rolling machine was invented in 1845. This device was used to pound pieces of leather into thin strips. About the same time, Elias Howe invented the sewing machine, and pieces of shoe leather could now be sewn together more quickly. Another inventor, Lyman Reed Blake, created a machine for sewing the soles of shoes to the upper parts. Because shoes could be made faster and more cheaply, people who had never owned shoes before could now afford to buy and wear them.

### **New Trends, Materials, and Designs**

In Europe and North America during the seventeenth century, most people wore boots because they were practical. Even in many large cities, dirt roads were common, and people had to walk along muddy pathways and across streams. By the eighteenth century, however, more city streets were paved with cobblestones, and it was easier to keep shoes clean. Shoes became more decorative, and fancy buckles of gold and silver were often used. Most shoes worn in the United States throughout the nineteenth century were patterned after European styles.

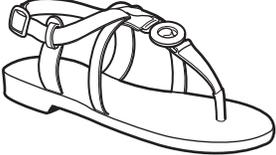
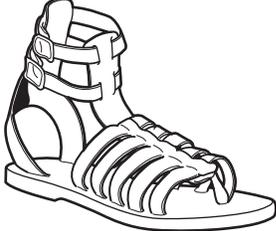
The major change in shoes over the last century has been the use of materials other than leather. Humphrey O'Sullivan invented the first rubber heel for shoes in 1898. Rubber heels were popular because they lasted much longer than heels made of leather. The use of rubber soles came next. The first rubber-soled shoes were called plimsolls, and they were manufactured in the United States in the late 1800s.

The first American shoes made without leather were invented in 1917. The upper material was made of a flexible canvas. Those were the original "sneakers," a word that was used because the rubber sole made the shoe very quiet, unlike most leather shoes, which often squeaked when people walked.

Many people today choose athletic shoes for casual wear, but not until the late 1970s were shoes designed with amateur athletes in mind. Shoes made of rubber and canvas were worn by tennis, volleyball, and basketball players. By the 1980s, companies began to design athletic shoes for specific sports, helping athletes perform better while protecting their feet and providing comfort.

Shoes have come a long way since the ancient Egyptians created their first sandals. Many more types of materials are used, and shoes have never been more comfortable or supportive for feet. Even so, it is interesting that the basic sandal, crafted by people more than four thousand years ago, still has many similarities to shoes we wear today.

The History of Shoes

 <p>Ancient Egyptian sandal</p>	 <p>Greek woman's sandal</p>	 <p>Roman soldier's sandal</p>
 <p>Native American moccasin</p>	 <p>Nineteenth century boots</p>	 <p>Early sneakers</p>

8. What was the purpose of the first shoe?
- A. comfortable
  - B. fashionable
  - C. functional
  - D. popularity
9. Which event happened first in the history of shoes?
- A. the making and wearing of moccasins
  - B. the making and wearing of sandals
  - C. the making and wearing of boots
  - D. the making and wearing of sneakers

10. Which civilization was the first to wear shoes to make a fashion statement?
- A. Greek
  - B. Roman
  - C. Egyptian
  - D. Persian
11. What is the correct hyphenated word?
- A. moon-shaped
  - B. fur-was
  - C. shoe-whether
  - D. available-thin
12. “Some moccasins were plain, and others were **adorned** with beadwork.” What type of context clue is used to help you define the word **adorned**?
- A. antonym
  - B. synonym
  - C. example
  - D. explanation
13. Which is the correct analogy?
- A. Thin is to stout as skinny is to long.
  - B. Thin is to stout as narrow is to wide.
  - C. Thin is to stout as short is to thin.
  - D. Thin is to stout as tall is to fat.

## READING

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14. What is the author's purpose in writing the passage?
- A. to inform about the first sneaker
  - B. to inform about the history of moccasins
  - C. to inform about ancient Greeks
  - D. to inform about the history of shoes
15. An example of personification would be
- A. nonleather shoes.
  - B. fancy buckles of gold.
  - C. paved with cobblestones.
  - D. squeaked when people walked.

## **Grade 8 Practice Test Answers**

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