Student Team Literature
Standardized Reading Practice Test

A Dime a Dozen
(Dial Books for Young Readers, 1998)

Reading Vocabulary

DIRECTIONS
Choose the word that means the same, or about the same, as the underlined word. Circle the letter for the answer you have chosen.

SAMPLE A
Another word for melody is
A picture
B problem
C tune
D odor

1. Another word for hue is
A idea
B color
C noise
D shape

2. Urgently means
F in a calm way
G in an angry way
H in an organized way
J in a hurried way

3. To pierce something is to
A poke a hole in it
B break it in pieces
C crush it
D bend it

4. Vertically means
F up and down
G from side to side
H around in a circle
J underneath

5. Another word for shatters is
A climbs
B sleeps
C breaks
D closes

6. An embrace is
F a slap
G a smile
H a frown
J a hug
DIRECTIONS
Read the excerpt in the box, then choose the answer in which the underlined word is used in the same way. Circle the letter for the answer you have chosen.

SAMPLE B

Sometimes
when he is near
I might even hear
his heart beat...

In which sentence does the word *beat* mean the same thing as in the line above?
A Listening to the drum *beat* helped all the dancers to keep together as they moved.
B Sandra *beat* me again in the 100-yard dash today.
C Momma *beat* the cake batter with an electric mixer.
D The police officer passes my house on his regular *beat* each afternoon.

7.

Some evenings
my father prays before
his music *stand*
and lays hands on
his violin...

In which sentence does the word *stand* mean the same thing as in the line above?
F Every morning we *stand* outside, lined up by homerooms, until the school doors open.
G The initials on my backpack *stand* for my first name, middle name, and last name.
H The civil rights activists of the 50s and 60s believed it was time to take a *stand* against racism and discrimination.
J My Aunt Belinda keeps her telephone on a little *stand* in the corner of her front hallway.

8.

The last verse of my poem *leaves* her silent as a mouse...

In which sentence does the word *leaves* mean the same thing as in the line above?
A I love to see the *leaves* on the trees turn to beautiful fall colors.
B When we run around the gym, it always *leaves* me breathless and dizzy for a few minutes.
C Momma has two wooden *leaves* she can add to the table to make it bigger when company comes.
D The train to Philadelphia *leaves* the station at six-thirty on weekdays.

9.

His too-big feet
fill the chalk *square*
of my hopscotch box...

In which sentence does the word *square* mean the same thing as in the line above?
F We watched the two wrestlers *square* off, each one thinking about how to get the advantage.
G Dad used a carpenter’s *square* to make the bookshelf straight and sturdy.
H My little sister drew a big *square* with a triangle on top for our house, with three stick people standing in front.
J “All that boy needs is a good *square* meal,” my grandma declared, dishing out fried chicken and macaroni and cheese.

10.

... her comforting embrace felt like borrowed love
and I was afraid to *slip* it on like a warm coat in winter...

In which sentence does the word *slip* mean the same thing as in the lines above?
A Dad was afraid someone would *slip* on the icy steps, so he sprinkled them with rough salt.
B The librarian gave me a *slip* of paper showing the date that my books were due to be returned.
C Mom told Sharla to *slip* on a pair of shoes if she wanted to go out in the street.
D My answer was not the one I wanted to give—it was just a *slip* of the tongue.
DIRECTIONS
Read each passage, then read each question about the passage. Decide which is the best answer to the question. Circle the letter for the answer you have chosen.

SAMPLE C

from “On Quiet Feet”

When my dad walks
into a room,
or down
the street,
he inches
up on me
silent
as shadow,
and I don’t know
he’s there
until I feel
his hug
[…]

1  This excerpt is an example of:
   A  onomatopoeia
   B  extended metaphor
   C  free verse
   D  personification

2  The lines “he inches/ up on me/ silent/ as shadow” contain an example of
   F  simile
   G  motif
   H  couplets
   J  understatement
from “Handel”

... my father prays before
his music stand
and lays hands on his violin
as if the wood were holy.

[Stanza 1]

[... ] Handel preaches
a sermon-song
through piccolo,
cello and bass,
trombone and kettledrum.

I fold my hands
and hum [...]
Then Daddy gently
lifts his bow
and plays
a violin solo.

He shatters
heaven's crystal floor
with melody
that rings so pure
the angels pause
to listen while
I whisper,
That’s my daddy!

3. Which word best describes the mood or feeling of this poem?
   A playful
   B thoughtful
   C angry
   D gloomy

4. Which of the following best describes the speaker’s feelings about her father as expressed in this poem?
   F admiring
   G embarrassed
   H concerned
   J confused

5. Stanza 4 contains an example of
   A verbal irony
   B simile
   C onomatopoeia
   D extended metaphor

1. The motif of comparing music to religion appears in every stanza except—
   A stanza 1
   B stanza 2
   C stanza 3
   D stanza 4

2. Which of the following accurately describes the use of rhyme in this poem?
   F Rhyme is not used in this poem.
   G This poem is composed of rhyming couplets.
   H *Internal rhyme* is an important feature of this poem.
   J The rhymes in this poem do not follow a regular pattern.
from “Genius”

“Sis! Wake up!” I whisper in the middle of the night. Urgently I shake her till she switches on the light [...] “Okay,” she says, then props herself up vertically in bed. She nods for me to read my work. I cough, then forge ahead. The last verse of my poem leaves her silent as a mouse. I worry till she says, “We have a genius in the house.”

6. **This selection is an example of**
   F figurative language
   G narrative poetry
   H parallel structure
   J extended metaphor

7. **We can infer from reading this poem that**
   A the speaker doesn’t usually share her poems with her sister.
   B the speaker often shares her poems with her sister.
   C the speaker doesn’t care about her sister’s opinion of her work.
   D the sister is tired of the speaker reading poems to her all the time.

8. **Which of the following words best describes the structure of this selection?**
   F free verse
   G rhyming couplets
   H extended metaphor
   J internal rhyme

9. **After the poem is read, the sister is probably quiet because**
   A she dislikes the poem.
   B she feels jealous of the speaker’s talent for writing poetry.
   C she is taking time to think about the poem before responding.
   D she fell asleep.

10. **The first, third, and fifth couplets in this excerpt are placed at the left-hand margin, while the second, fourth, and last couplets are indented. This back-and-forth pattern most probably represents**
    F the back-and-forth conversation between the speaker and her sister.
    G the pattern of the poem the speaker is reading to her sister.
    H the back-and-forth between sleep and alertness.
    J the back-and-forth in the sister’s mind about whether to praise the poem.
from “A Dime a Dozen”

Writers are a dime a dozen
a dime a dozen
a dime—

I heard those words one time too many

from my own mother who
worried I would fail [..]

But my heart scripted one phrase truer:

“Someday she’ll be proud to say
be proud to say
be proud—

To shout out loud My daughter the Writer.”

11. In saying that writers are “a dime a dozen,” the mother probably meant that
   A it would be hard to succeed in the writing field because there were already too many other writers to compete with.
   B becoming a successful writer would be very easy because writing doesn’t take much skill.
   C both A and B
   D neither A nor B

12. This excerpt includes all of the following devices except
   F internal rhyme
   G repetition
   H visual effects
   J rhyming couplets

13. We can infer from this excerpt that the mother discouraged her daughter’s dream of becoming a writer because
   A she didn’t want her daughter to find happiness.
   B she wanted her daughter to pursue a career where she would have a better chance of success.

14. The lines “… she’ll be proud [..]/ To shout out loud My daughter the Writer” provide an example of
   C she wanted her daughter to pursue a career where she would make a lot of money.
   D she was afraid her daughter would write things that would embarrass the family.

15. The theme of this poem could be stated as follows:
   A Parents and relatives don’t really care about what’s best for their children.
   B You should pursue your dreams and not let other people’s fears discourage you.
   C The best career choice is the one in which you can make the most money.
   D You can succeed at anything if you really try.