



# Practice FCAT Reading Section



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After you have read each story or article, read the questions in this section and then answer them in the Answer Section.



Read the story “Why the Sky Is Far Away” before answering Numbers 1 through 8 in the Answer Section.

## Why the Sky Is Far Away

**R**amon looked at the food on his tray and made a face. “Macaroni and cheese again,” he said to his friend Brian. “They never serve anything good for lunch.”

Brian gave his own lunch a critical look and frowned. “You think that’s bad,” he said, “I’ve got peanut butter and jelly again. It’s the third time this week!”

They pushed the food aside. “We can get something at the burger place after school,” Ramon said. They concentrated on studying for their English test instead of eating. English was next period, and Mr. Friedman had a reputation for giving difficult tests. When the bell rang, they dropped their uneaten lunches into the garbage. Mr. Friedman was standing nearby. “Not hungry, guys?” he asked. They shook their heads and hurried off to class.

When the test was over, there were still ten minutes left in the period. Mr. Friedman stood at the front of the class.

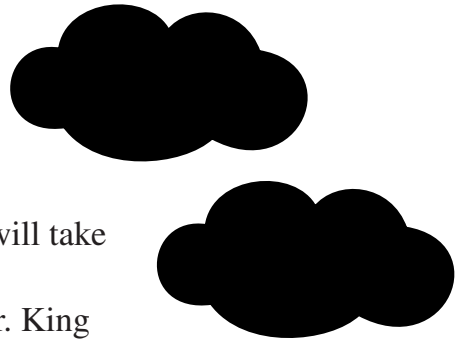
“Before you leave today,” he said, leaning against the desk, “I’d like to share an old African folktale with you. I think you’ll find this one interesting. It’s called ‘Why the Sky Is Far Away.’

Long ago the sky was close to the Earth. Men and women did not have to plant their own food. Instead, when they were hungry, they just reached up and broke off a piece of the sky to eat. Sometimes the sky tasted like ripe bananas. Other times it tasted like roasted potatoes. The sky was always delicious.

People spent their time making beautiful cloth. They painted beautiful pictures and sang songs at night. The grand king, Oba, had a wonderful palace. His servants made beautiful shapes out of pieces of sky.

Many people in the kingdom did not use the gift of the sky wisely. When they took more than they could eat, the sky became angry. Some people threw the extra pieces into the garbage.

Early one morning the angry sky turned dark. Black clouds hung over the land, and a great sky voice said to all the people, ‘You are wasting my gift of food. Do not take more than you can eat. I don’t want to see pieces of me in the garbage anymore or I will take my gift away.’



The king and the people trembled with fear. King Oba said, ‘Let’s be careful about how much food we take.’ For a long time, all the people were careful.

But one man named Adami wasn’t careful. At festival time, he took so many delicious pieces of sky that he couldn’t eat them all. He knew he must not throw them away.

He tried to give the pieces to his wife. ‘Here, wife,’ Adami said. ‘You eat the rest.’

‘I can’t,’ Adami’s wife said. ‘I’m too full.’

Adami asked all his children to help him eat the delicious pieces of sky, but the children couldn’t eat one more bite. So Adami decided to try to hide the pieces at the bottom of the garbage pile.

Suddenly, the sky became angry and the clouds turned black. ‘You have wasted my gift of food again,’ yelled the sky. ‘This time I will go away so you cannot waste me anymore.’

All of the people cried, ‘What will we eat? We might starve!’

The sky said, ‘You will have to learn how to plant crops in the ground and hunt in the forests. If you work hard, you may learn not to waste the gifts of nature.’

Everyone watched as the sky sailed away. From that time on, they worked hard to grow their food and cook their meals. They always tried to remember not to waste the gifts of nature.”

The bell rang for the next period. “That’s the end,” Mr. Friedman said, smiling. He looked at Ramon and Brian.

“What did you think of the story?” he asked. They slouched in their chairs and looked apologetic.

“We get the message,” they said, smiling. “No more lunches in the garbage!”

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Go On →



Turn to page 6-10 in the Answer Section. Answer Numbers 1 through 8. Base your answers on the story “Why the Sky Is Far Away.”

1 According to the folktale, Adami is

- A. thankful.
- B. honest.
- C. obedient.
- D. greedy.

2 **Read**  
**Think**  
**Explain** According to the folktale, why does the sky become angry with the villagers? What lesson does he want them to learn? Use details from the story to support your answer.

3 Read this sentence from the story.

**Brian gave his own lunch a critical look and frowned.**

What does *critical* mean?

- F. judgmental
- G. funny
- H. quick
- I. hungry

4 According to the folktale, what happens when Adami cannot finish all of the food he has taken?

- A. He asks King Oba to help him finish eating the food.
- B. He saves some of the pieces of food for his meal the next day.
- C. He tries to hide the pieces of food at the bottom of the garbage pile.
- D. His wife and children offer to eat the rest of the pieces for him.



- 5 The beginning of the story takes place
- F. in Mr. Friedman’s class.
  - G. in the school cafeteria.
  - H. in Africa.
  - I. in the school library.

- 6 Read this sentence from the story.

**They slouched in their chairs and looked apologetic.**

What is an antonym for the word *slouched*?

- A. drooped
  - B. leaned
  - C. ran
  - D. straightened
- 7 Based on the end of the story, what do you think Ramon and Brian will do next?
- F. stop bringing their lunches to school
  - G. be more careful not to waste food
  - H. eat lunch at the burger place more often
  - I. share their food with the other students

- 8 **Read** Why do you think Mr. Friedman tells the class the African folktale?  
**Think** Use details from the story to support your answer.  
**Explain**


Read the article "Popular Sports Around the World" before answering Numbers 9 through 16 in the Answer Section.

# Popular Sports Around the World

by Kathy Mormile

For centuries, people have been playing kicking games with a ball. The game of soccer developed from some of these early games. The English probably gave soccer its name and its first set of rules. In European countries, soccer is called football or association football. Some people believe that the name "soccer" came from "assoc.," an abbreviation for the word association. Others believe that the name came from the high socks that the players wear.

Organized soccer games began in 1863. In soccer, two teams of eleven players try to kick or head the ball into their opponents' goal. The goalie, who tries to keep the ball out of the goal, is the only player on the field who is

allowed to touch the ball with his or her hands. The other players must use their feet, heads, and bodies to control the ball.

Every four years, soccer teams around the world compete for the World Cup. The World Cup competition started in 1930.

Brazil is the home of many great soccer players, including the most famous player of all, Pelé. With his fast footwork, dazzling speed, and great scoring ability, Pelé played for many years in Brazil and then later in New York. During his 22 years in soccer, he scored 1,281 goals and held every major record for the sport.

People in more than 140 countries around the world play soccer. It is the national sport of most European and Latin American countries. Soccer is definitely the world's most popular sport!

James Naismith, a physical education teacher in Massachusetts, invented basketball in 1891. Naismith's boss asked him to invent a game that students could play indoors during bad weather. He wanted to find a game that wasn't as physically rough as soccer, football, or wrestling.

Naismith attached peach baskets to a railing ten feet above the floor at either end of





the gym. The players used a soccer ball. A person sat on a ladder next to each basket at either end of the gym, and threw out the balls that landed in the baskets. Naismith decided that having only five players on each team would keep the game from getting too rough.

Two years later, metal hoops with net bags replaced the peach baskets. Officials pulled a string on the nets to release the balls that went in. In 1894, Naismith added the backboard behind each net and changed to a larger ball. In 1913, people began using the bottomless nets that are used today.

During a basketball game, two teams of five players each throw the ball into two baskets at opposite ends of a court. Players bounce, or dribble, the ball to the basket or pass the ball to teammates. A team scores points by getting the ball into their team's basket. The team with the highest score wins.

By the 1900s, basketball was the most popular indoor sport. Athletes in approximately 130 countries play the game.

Basketball is especially popular in the United States, China, and Puerto Rico.

Baseball began in the United States in the early 1800s. Some people believe that Abner Doubleday invented the game. Others think that baseball came from an old British sport called rounders. Baseball and rounders are very similar. However, in rounders the field players throw the ball right at the runner. If the ball hits the runner, he or she is out. In baseball, a field player just touches the ball to the base or the running player to get the player out.

Today's baseball players use special equipment to help prevent injuries. Field players wear baseball gloves to protect their hands. The catcher wears a metal mask, a chest protector, and shin guards. Batters wear plastic helmets to protect their heads.

Every spring in the United States, people of all ages play baseball at local baseball fields. It's no wonder that baseball is called the national pastime of the United States. ■



## Popular Sports Around the World

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Turn to page 6-12 in the Answer Section. Answer Numbers 9 through 16. Base your answers on the article "Popular Sports Around the World."

- 9 Which of the following events happened first?
- A. basketball was invented
  - B. World Cup competition was invented
  - C. baseball began in the U.S.
  - D. organized soccer games began

- 10 Pelé is a famous
- F. soccer player.
  - G. baseball coach.
  - H. basketball player.
  - I. baseball player.

- 11 **Read**  
**Think**  
**Explain** Read this sentence from the article.

**With his fast footwork, dazzling speed, and great scoring ability, Pelé played for many years in Brazil, and then later in New York.**

What does *dazzling* mean?

- A. amazing
  - B. funny
  - C. light
  - D. difficult
- 12 What conclusion can you draw from this article?
- F. Sports are more popular in Brazil than in the U.S.
  - G. Most sports involve kicking a ball.
  - H. Sports can be very dangerous.
  - I. Sports are popular in many different countries.



- 13** **Read**  
**Think**  
**Explain** Write a brief summary of the article, using only the most important details.

- 14** Read this sentence from the article.

**Field players wear baseball gloves to protect their hands.**

What is an antonym for the word *protect*?

- A. save
  - B. harm
  - C. cover
  - D. fit
- 15** Which of the following is an opinion?
- F. The rules of soccer state that goalies are allowed to touch the ball with their hands.
  - G. Basketball was first played with peach baskets attached to railings.
  - H. Because it is popular in so many countries, soccer is the sport that is the most fun to play.
  - I. In baseball, a player can touch the ball to the base or to the runner to get the runner out.

- 16** **Read**  
**Think**  
**Explain** Is the author's purpose in writing this article to entertain the reader, inform the reader, or both? Use details from the article to support your answer.

**This is the end of the Practice Test.**  
*Go back and check your work until time is called. Turn your answers over when you are finished.*



\_\_\_\_\_ Name



# Practice FCAT Reading Answer Section



Answer all the questions that appear in the Practice FCAT Reading Section in this Answer Section. Answer multiple-choice questions by filling in the bubble for the answer you select. Write your answers to "Read, Think, and Explain" questions on the lines provided.

1 (A) (B) (C) (D)

2

Read  
Think  
Explain

Blank area for writing answers to "Read, Think, and Explain" questions, containing several horizontal lines.

3 (F) (G) (H) (I)

4 (A) (B) (C) (D)

5 (F) (G) (H) (I)

6 (A) (B) (C) (D)

7 (F) (G) (H) (I)

Go On →



# Answer Section



9 A B C D

10 F G H I

11 A B C D

12 F G H I

13

Read  
Think  
Explain

Blank writing area with horizontal lines for response.

14 A B C D

15 F G H I



16

Read  
Think  
Explain

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**This is the end of the Answer Section.**

Until time is called, go back and check your answers or answer questions you did not complete. Turn your answers over when you are finished.

