PSSA English Language Arts (ELA) – Grade 7 Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide

Everything you need from our exam experts!

Questions

1. **Which term refers to making a judgment based on personal opinions?**

    A. Bias

    B. Autobiography

    C. Irony

    D. Allusion

2. **What is the main idea of a text?**

    A. The central point or concept the author wants to convey

    B. The summary of all characters in the text

    C. The conclusion reached by the reader

    D. The historical context of the text

3. **What is the term for understandings gained by interpreting beyond the literal text?**

    A. Inference

    B. Insight

    C. Analysis

    D. Summary

4. **Which of the following actions best represents predicting in a narrative?**

    A. Interpreting the plot events

    B. Outlining the character's background

    C. Estimating what might happen next based on clues

    D. Explaining the author's purpose

5. **Which of the following is an example of a simile?**

    A. "He is the fastest sprinter in the world"

    B. "Her smile was as bright as the sun"

    C. "The wind howled like a wolf"

    D. "She runs faster than anyone else"

6. **What is a synonym for tone in writing?**
   A. Emotion
   B. Attitude
   C. Style
   D. Message

7. **What is the purpose of an introduction in an essay?**
   A. To set the stage for the essay and state the thesis
   B. To present the conclusion and references
   C. To provide background information only
   D. To include supporting details for each point

8. **A conclusion that does not reflect any personal opinions is known as what?**
   A. Biased summary
   B. Objective summary
   C. Influenced conclusion
   D. Subjective analysis

9. **What type of propaganda persuades through the endorsement of a famous person?**
   A. Red herring propaganda
   B. Testimonial propaganda
   C. Bandwagon propaganda
   D. Emotional appeal propaganda

10. **What characterizes the purpose of an expository essay?**
   A. To entertain the audience with fictional stories
   B. To inform or explain a topic through factual analysis
   C. To argue against a popular opinion
   D. To narrate personal experiences

Answers

1. A
2. A
3. A
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. B
9. B
10. B

Explanations

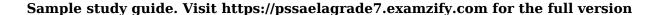# 1. Which term refers to making a judgment based on personal opinions?

A. Bias

B. Autobiography

C. Irony

D. Allusion

The term that refers to making a judgment based on personal opinions is bias. Bias is defined as a tendency to favor one perspective, group, or idea over others, which often leads to subjective conclusions rather than objective ones. In contexts such as writing, decision-making, or analyzing information, bias can result in distorted interpretations because it is influenced by personal feelings or opinions rather than facts. In contrast, an autobiography is a self-written account of one's life and does not inherently involve judgments based on opinion. Irony refers to a situation where there is a discrepancy between expectation and reality, often highlighting a deeper meaning or sense of humor. Allusion is a reference to another work, event, or person that enriches the content but does not involve personal judgment. Bias specifically addresses the influence of personal beliefs on judgment, making it the correct choice in this context.

2. What is the main idea of a text?

A. The central point or concept the author wants to convey

B. The summary of all characters in the text

C. The conclusion reached by the reader

D. The historical context of the text

The main idea of a text refers to the central point or concept that the author aims to communicate to the audience. It encapsulates the primary theme or argument that is developed throughout the piece, serving as the foundation for the text's message. Understanding the main idea is crucial for grasping the overall purpose and direction of the text, allowing readers to engage with the material more effectively. In contrast, summarizing all characters in the text focuses on specific details rather than the overarching concept. The conclusion reached by the reader may vary depending on individual interpretations and does not necessarily reflect the author's intent. The historical context provides background information that can enhance understanding but does not define the main idea itself.

3. What is the term for understandings gained by interpreting beyond the literal text?

A. Inference

B. Insight

C. Analysis

D. Summary

The term referring to understandings gained by interpreting beyond the literal text is inference. Inference involves drawing conclusions or making interpretations based on evidence and reasoning presented in the text, rather than just taking the words at face value. This process requires readers to apply their own knowledge, experiences, and critical thinking skills in order to connect ideas, derive meanings, and fill in gaps that are not explicitly stated. Reading for inference allows deeper engagement with the material, helping to uncover themes, motives, emotions, and implications that the author might have intended but did not explicitly detail. It enhances comprehension and enriches the reading experience, making it an essential skill in literary analysis and interpretation. The other choices, while related concepts, do not specifically capture the idea of deriving meaning beyond the literal text in the same way that inference does.

4. Which of the following actions best represents predicting in a narrative?

A. Interpreting the plot events

B. Outlining the character's background

C. Estimating what might happen next based on clues

D. Explaining the author's purpose

The action that best represents predicting in a narrative is estimating what might happen next based on clues. This process involves analyzing the text for hints or foreshadowing provided by the author that suggest future events or outcomes in the story. By looking carefully at details in the plot, character behaviors, or dialogue, readers can form educated guesses about how the story may unfold, which is a key aspect of engaging with a narrative. This practice enhances comprehension and enjoyment of the story, allowing readers to connect the dots and anticipate developments.

5. Which of the following is an example of a simile?

A. "He is the fastest sprinter in the world"

B. "Her smile was as bright as the sun"

C. "The wind howled like a wolf"

D. "She runs faster than anyone else"

The statement "Her smile was as bright as the sun" is a simile because it uses the word "as" to make a comparison between her smile and the brightness of the sun. Similes are literary devices that explicitly compare two different things, typically using "like" or "as," to highlight a particular quality or characteristic. In this example, the comparison emphasizes the brightness of her smile, allowing readers to visualize it more vividly. The other choices may contain comparisons or descriptive language, but they do not meet the criteria of a simile. For instance, while "He is the fastest sprinter in the world" presents a superlative statement, it doesn't employ a figurative comparison using "like" or "as." Similarly, "The wind howled like a wolf" employs the word "like" and is indeed a simile, but it is not the best example in contrast to the clarity and imagery provided by the smile comparison. Finally, "She runs faster than anyone else" uses a comparative form rather than an explicit figurative comparison.

6. What is a synonym for tone in writing?

A. Emotion

B. Attitude

C. Style

D. Message

The word "tone" in writing refers to the author's attitude toward the subject or the audience. It encompasses the feelings conveyed through word choice and style, establishing an emotional connection or setting the overall mood of the piece. Since "attitude" directly captures this essence, it is the best synonym to describe tone. In writing, the tone can affect how readers perceive the narrative and the author's perspective, making "attitude" an accurate representation of what tone conveys in literary works.

7. What is the purpose of an introduction in an essay?

A. To set the stage for the essay and state the thesis

B. To present the conclusion and references

C. To provide background information only

D. To include supporting details for each point

The purpose of an introduction in an essay is to set the stage for the reader and to present the main argument or thesis statement that will be discussed throughout the text. This section serves to engage the audience's interest, provide context for the topic, and outline the main points that will be explored. By stating the thesis upfront, the introduction informs the reader what to expect and establishes the focus of the discussion. This strategic placement encourages the reader to consider the subsequent arguments and evidence in relation to the thesis. Other options, while they touch on elements related to essays, do not fulfill the primary role of an introduction. Presenting the conclusion and references occurs at the end, and providing background information alone does not encompass the full range of tasks an introduction performs. Including supporting details pertains to the body of the essay where arguments are developed, not the introductory section.

8. A conclusion that does not reflect any personal opinions is known as what?

   A. Biased summary

   B. Objective summary

   C. Influenced conclusion

   D. Subjective analysis

An objective summary is a conclusion that presents information without incorporating personal opinions or biases. It focuses solely on the facts and the main ideas of the text, allowing the reader to understand the content based on what has been presented rather than the personal views of the person summarizing. This type of summary is crucial in academic and professional contexts, as it ensures that the conclusions drawn are based on credible information rather than subjective feelings. By maintaining objectivity, it helps create a clearer understanding of the material being discussed, making it a more reliable source for others.

9. What type of propaganda persuades through the endorsement of a famous person?

   A. Red herring propaganda

   B. Testimonial propaganda

   C. Bandwagon propaganda

   D. Emotional appeal propaganda

Testimonial propaganda is a persuasive technique that leverages the endorsement of a well-known figure to promote a product, idea, or viewpoint. This type of propaganda works because people often admire and trust celebrities or influential personalities, leading them to believe that if a respected individual supports something, it must hold merit or value. For instance, when a famous athlete endorses a sports drink, fans may be more inclined to purchase that drink based on the athlete's credibility and popularity, regardless of the drink's actual effectiveness. This method is effective because it capitalizes on the emotional connection that the audience has with the endorser, which can overshadow critical thinking about the product or idea itself.

10. What characterizes the purpose of an expository essay?

   A. To entertain the audience with fictional stories

   B. To inform or explain a topic through factual analysis

   C. To argue against a popular opinion

   D. To narrate personal experiences

The purpose of an expository essay is fundamentally rooted in its goal to inform or explain a particular topic through the use of factual analysis. In this type of writing, the author conveys information clearly and logically, allowing the reader to gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Unlike narrative essays, which focus on storytelling or personal experiences, or persuasive essays, which aim to convince readers of a particular viewpoint, an expository essay relies on facts, statistics, and evidence to elucidate its topic. This establishes the foundation of knowledge and clarity necessary for readers to comprehend complex issues without the influence of bias or personal opinion. Thus, the essence of an expository essay is its informative nature, which is why the selection highlighting this characteristic is the most accurate representation of its purpose.