

Assessment Practice

ASSESS

Taking this practice test will help you assess your knowledge of these skills and determine your readiness for the Unit Test.

REVIEW

After you take the practice test, your teacher can help you identify any standards you need to review.

COMMON CORE

RL 1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. **RL 2** Determine a theme or central idea of a text. **RL 4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text. **RI 1** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. **W 5** Strengthen writing by revising and editing.

DIRECTIONS Read the two selections and the viewing and representing piece. Then, answer the questions that follow.

The Pale Mare

by Marian Flandrick Bray

- 1 “But why?” I ask again, even though I know what he’ll say.
- 2 “Because it’s tradition.”
- 3 He always says that. My papa. He’s not a tall man, but he has much height in the soaring ways of our family and *la raza*, too.
- 4 Papa leans against the shiny side of our vendor truck with the black script that announces *Diaz Family Food*. The heavy smell of grease and corn hangs over us like a banner, an invisible proclamation: tradition.
- 5 Our family as always is at the *charreada*, the Mexican-style rodeo, to sell tamales, burritos, refried beans, and sweet bread. The real stuff. Not the Taco Bell version.
- 6 I try a different angle. After all, I’m good in geometry. “Papa, it’s just this one, small weekend. Rafael can help.”
- 7 My cousin. He helped last year when I had my appendix out. I wonder briefly if I have another body part to give out.
- 8 “Consuela,” says Papa, then he bends over a sack of pinto beans. He lifts the fifty pounds as easy as my tiny baby sister and continues, “This is the final *charreada* and it is gonna be huge. I need your help. Not Rafael who goofs around.”
- 9 I sigh. My expertise isn’t what he needs. Any fool can take orders. It’s not complicated to yell, “Four chicken burritos, one green sauce, three red, two large Cokes, two medium 7Ups.” No, it’s not my expertise in serving food that my precious parents want to preserve. It’s that tradition again, our *familia* thing, the one that leads to *la raza*, the bigger picture of our people, who we are as Latin Americans. At least that’s how Papa and Mama see it. But I don’t see things just that way. Not anymore.
- 10 Papa goes into the house with the beans, for Mama to soak, then cook. I see my exit and in the dusk fling myself down the street, fast, furious, flying.
- 11 Kids play on the street, kicking soccer balls and riding bikes, rushing about like wasps from a knocked-down nest. As usual, it’s the boys playing outside, with the rare girl running alongside until she can be gathered back into her house.
- 12 Papa is disgusted with my long walks. For once Mama tells him to let me be. She knows that I will explode like a star going nova if I am to stay home always.

Practice
Test

THINK
central

Take it at thinkcentral.com.

KEYWORD: HML10N-1042

- 13 Each of my strides jars a different, recent memory. Earlier this week at school: my teacher exclaiming over my work in physics, “Excellent work, Consuela. I’ll write a letter of recommendation for you. You should really apply to Cal Tech and MIT. You’re coming to the weekend astronomy camp, right?” My heart sang. The stars. For the last two years, they are all I’ve wanted to do: Study them, chart their fierce light, listen to them, learn what they are saying. Stars do talk—really—with radio waves for words. But when I got home from school, an eclipse was on.
- 14 Parents, on the dark side: “You will not go to any camp. Isn’t school during the week enough? You have to help us with the business.”
- 15 Me, trying to remain calm in the light: “What about Manuel?” My brother, older by a year.
- 16 Parents, astonishment: “He has football practice.”
- 17 “So what! I’m getting top honors in science! He’s just playing junior varsity football!”
- 18 More genuine astonishment: “But he’s the son.” Meaning, of course, I’m only the daughter, only a girl. Maybe they don’t mean to, but they’re banishing me to the dark. I can’t let that happen.
- 19 Later Mama tried to soothe me. “*M’ija*,¹ it’s because we love you. We want you to be happy with a nice boy, to have a family.”
- 20 “Are you saying being an astronomer and being happy with a nice boy are not compatible?”
- 21 She *was* saying that with her hands that touched my hair, with her liquid Spanish murmuring, with her eyes that lingered on my face, imploring me to stop struggling in this foolish manner.
- 22 I cross busy Lincoln Avenue and head up Rio Hondo Road, past the earth dam. The oil hills, scrubby with ugly bushes, prickled with derricks, bunch up on one side, then unfurl into the familiar, sandy, flattened flood plain.
- 23 The night is clear, rare in smoggy L.A. My science class is at this moment zooming away from L.A. for a weekend at Joshua Tree. They will observe the breathtaking stars from the desert floor.
- 24 A sob shakes my lungs. I didn’t even know I was crying, but tears drip down my chin and onto my shirt collar. Why didn’t I just go, like my friend Mia suggested? Because I have these stupid ideals, like honesty.
- 25 I find that, as suddenly as I started, I’ve stopped crying. The wind, fresh and sharp, brings the hot scent of livestock, dirt, and human sweat.

1. **M’ija** (mē’ hǎ) *n.*: term of endearment, a contraction of *mi hija*, meaning “my daughter”



- 26 The *charreada*.
- 27 The grounds are quiet. The arena is smooth as flour tortilla. Many of the *charros*² horses are stabled here in tidy, low barns, including the one belonging to *Tío Jesús*, Papa's brother. *Tío Jesús*' horse is an Andalusian, the color of very ripe plums.
- 28 The stock pens are on the far side, closest to the flood control, the citified riverbed that captures the water and hurries it to the sea, thirty miles away. Some of the water rushes from the San Gabriel Mountains, ten miles away, a dark stain in the north sky. The flood control is a hundred miles long, mountains to ocean. I've ridden this nearby stretch a million times, along its sandy path on my uncle's serious but kindly horse. Horses in the city—it sounds funny—the *charros*, they wouldn't have it any other way. Like my family. Life has to be a certain way. Their way.
- 29 Not for me though. Sorry, Papa, Mama. Your world isn't my world. It's not that I'm trying to pretend my Mexican blood doesn't course through my veins, it just means that my blood is calling to different things. That isn't wrong or bad.
- 30 Is it?
- 31 Mama, Papa, they just don't get it.
- 32 Or maybe they do. Perhaps that scares them.
- 33 I climb the sturdy metal pipe corral. I bypass the cattle, lumpy beasts dozing like logs in a stream, dull, empty life, cut off from their roots, and head out to the edge of the corrals.
- 34 I've been going to *charreadas* since I was a baby. The smell of dirt and animals was often overlaid by the stronger scent of greasy bean burritos, but I'd always sniff and sniff until the odor of hot horses and freshly shaken alfalfa flakes overtook me. When I was really little I'd clap my hands and crow, "*Char, char.*" I'd play I was a *charro* and swing astride the nearest fence, imagining I rode the finest horses—a Paso Fino, slate gray with white banners for a mane and tail, or a chestnut Andalusian, lifting his hooves high in the Spanish walk. The horse and I always moved as one—a seamless centaur.
- 35 What happened? Why did I change?
- 36 No moon tonight. My science class is observing stars tonight because a moonless night shows the stars the best. Starlight. I wish I could hold the light of those distant fires in my hands, bright and smooth as a sea stone, or maybe poured into a bowl and drunk.
- 37 The barns glow in the orange fog lights. Inside the stalls darkness swells, with an occasional flash of animal life. I hurry around them.
- 38 Farthest from the main arena is the mares' pen. I lean on the rails. The mares shy nervously, young wiry things, most of them rented for the weekend

2. **charros** (chă' rrōs) *n.*: traditional horsemen or cowboys

from slaughterhouses. By Sunday night, they'll be off to the slaughterhouse stockyards. I never used to think about them. I mean, what was the point?

- 39 The last few months, though, I found I couldn't watch the horse-tripping. I'd busy myself in our truck, chopping chilis, slicing onions, refilling the Coke machine, anything. But even when I'd turn away from watching the *piales en el lienzo* and *mangana a caballo*,³ *charros* performing their artistic ropework with the mares their targets, my stomach would still be tightened up because I knew how the mares would look when snared. If the *charro* does it right, the mare rolls on her shoulder, landing hard, but gets up, shaken, bruised, but walking. If he doesn't throw her correctly, she falls very hard and sometimes can't get up.
- 40 Don't get me wrong. Working the magic of the rope is hard, clever work. *Charros* are artists, as much as any writer, painter, singer, or astronomer. *Tío Jesús* trains and trains and he still screws up, snaring a mare wrong, crashing her spectacularly in a wild somersault, so she lands on her head. Sometimes the mares are so injured that the men who rented the mares started a "you broke 'em, you keep 'em" policy. If the horse is so damaged that she can't be loaded and trailered to the slaughterhouse, then they make you keep her.
- 41 I swing my leg over the top pipe and perch on the cold metal. One mare, pale as eggshells, whirls, ears up, like antennae, watching me. If she were a girl, she'd look like Fai, the Chinese girl in my class, also in the science club. Fai works long hours in her parents' Chinese takeout. Some nights, she's told me, she doesn't go to bed until two A.M. and then she has to get up at six to make it to school. Fai has deep smudges under her eyes and this little mare would, too, I bet, if horses got bags under their eyes.
- 42 I slip off the corral. Every head flings up, wild forelocks toss between pointed ears, and tension bolts up every leg. All senses lock on me, the intruder.
- 43 "Sorry," I whisper. Several mares whirl at my words and spin away across the pen to the far side. My little Chinese mare is brave. She continues to stare at me. She blinks her large, dark eyes. She shakes her neck and paws the ground with a dainty oval hoof, her gaze never shifting from my face.
- 44 Tomorrow will be different. She will burst, terrified, out of the chute. A *charro* will spur his pampered, well-groomed horse after his waif. He will snare her. He will throw her to the ground. Yes, artistically. But the ground is hard whether the rope is tossed prettily or not. In all fairness, I have to ask, is it any worse than roping calves, or goats? No. But it clutches at me with a tightness I can't ignore. I just know that I don't want to see her tomorrow frantically scrambling on her hind legs, trying to scale the arena's smooth walls, then spinning around the arena for any escape only to be slammed into the ground.

3. *piales en el lienzo* (pē əl' es en el lē en' sō) *n.*: "roping of the feet"; and *mangana a caballo* (mān gā'nă ă kă bī' yō) *n.*: "forefooting on horseback"; two Mexican rodeo events

- 45 I edge away along the fence line. The wind is cooler, tinged with sage and damp dirt. If I was at Joshua Tree I'd train my telescope near the Hercules constellation and study M-13, a cluster of stars so dense that if you lived on a planet nearby, night would never fall. There the sky would always be filled with brilliant starlight, clusters of stars like bunches of heavy grapes, plump, white, shining.
- 46 Never would there be night. How would that change a human's life? Change a mare's life?
- 47 I unlatch the gate. A packed dirt path leads one way to the arena. Another path, softer, less used, flickers up to the riverbed. I shove the gate wide.
- 48 I think the pale mare will realize she'll need to keep going north on the riverbed to the mountains beyond the city, to a place where there is no night for her.
- 49 The mares skitter from me like bugs over a pond as I walk toward them. The starlit mare is farthest away from me, but she locks onto my gaze, telescoping the distance between us, until we are closer than any binary star system. I close in. With a quiet dignity, she suddenly folds, turns, and walks calmly out of the open gate. The other mares see her outside and trot in circles, confused. Silly things. I raise my arms, shooing them out after the pale mare.
- 50 The remaining horses rush for the gate like the tail of a comet, fine, fiery. In the lead, the pale mare trots, her tail streaming ribbons. She passes under a fog light, an alien creature, then under another and another, until she is herself again, galloping away from the grounds, traveling light.
- 51 "That's right," I say admiringly. "Don't even look back." I turn and fade away into the night as shouts from security erupt from a nearby barn. The image of the starlit mare glows before me. Maybe I won't mind as much working tomorrow because in this darkness I'm beginning to see the path the stars have laid down for me. I hurry back home, my step lighter than it has been in a long time.

Breaking Down Barriers

**A Vietnamese-American Football Star Brings
a Racially Divided Town Together**

by Adam Piore | NEWSWEEK

- 1 If any other group of kids had won the Rockport-Fulton youth soccer championship in Texas, the parents of their opponents would surely have applauded. But most of the members of Dat Nguyen’s team were the children of Vietnamese refugees. So when the proud victors rose to accept their trophies, the crowd showered them with boos. It was the 1980s, and back then tensions were so high in the small south Texas coastal community that white shrimpers and their Vietnamese competitors sometimes carried rifles into the bay and took potshots at one another from their boats. Dat Nguyen’s domination on the soccer field (he scored as many as 10 goals a game) didn’t make his team any more popular with the locals. “We weren’t wanted in that community,” Nguyen recalled. “They wanted to kick us out. There was so much hatred between the two cultures. My parents told me we couldn’t trust anybody outside our family.”
- 2 Nobody in Rockport would dare boo Dat Nguyen now. The hard-headed kid who brawled on the field to defend himself against racist taunts grew up to become the closest thing Texans have to royalty. Nguyen became a 5-foot, 11-inch, 231-pound football star. After leading Rockport-Fulton High School to statewide renown, Nguyen went on to play at Texas A&M where he broke the school record for tackles and in 1998 was named the best defensive player in the country. Last week Nguyen, now 25, finished his second season as a middle linebacker for “America’s Team,” the Dallas Cowboys. The easygoing, quick-to-smile athlete has broken a lot of barriers. He is the first Vietnamese-American ever to play pro football. He was the first Vietnamese-American to start at linebacker for a major university in Texas.
- 3 But equally remarkable are the barriers Nguyen has broken down in this tiny, racially divided corner of the United States. Thousands of Vietnamese refugees moved to the gulf coast of Texas in the 1970s, many drawn by the opportunity to make a living doing what they once did in Vietnam: shrimping. According to the U.S. Census, 1,112 Asian-Americans, the vast majority Vietnamese, live among a population of 23,129 in Nguyen’s home county. At last count well over 70,000 Vietnamese lived in Texas. Dat Nguyen is the first to have a day named after him in his hometown, and the first to have his picture plastered on a billboard displayed on the way into city limits. “That boy never backed down for nobody,” recalls Jimmy Hattenbach, Nguyen’s old soccer coach and mentor. “He has helped to mend this community—everybody in this town believes that. When the football team started winning, it really brought the town together. He became a role model.”



- 4 Nobody would have believed that was possible just a few years ago. Dat Nguyen's family fled Ben Da, a fishing village on South Vietnam's Vung Tau Peninsula, in a fishing boat, the night shells began to rain down on their village in April, 1975. Ho Nguyen, Dat's brother, remembers soldiers firing artillery at their boat from the shore. After brief stops at an Arkansas refugee camp, where Nguyen was born, and in Michigan, the family landed in another war zone. Thousands of Vietnamese shrimpers had already begun new lives in the bays of south Texas. When they began pulling around-the-clock shifts, the locals felt their livelihoods were threatened. . . .
- 5 Nguyen broke down the barriers on the sports field. In eighth grade, he began to play football. Just as he had on the soccer field, he always seemed to know where the ball was. He was exceptionally quick, and soon learned to tackle hard. In an area where two thirds of the population have been known to caravan to championship high-school games, people took notice. Attitudes began to change. "He was a celebrity in high school," said Trish Wilson, who worked in the school district's central office for 18 years. "He was just one of those kids you don't see too often. If he was out there on the field, he was going to do something. He'd always get the extra yards, make the tackle, save the day." In college, he was one of the most popular Aggies ever. And when the Dallas Cowboys drafted him in 1999, he became a fan favorite. Critics who always said he was too small, and that an Asian would never make it (only four people of Asian ancestry had done so) had been proved wrong.
- 6 Now the town that once booed Dat Nguyen has claimed him as their own. Last year Rockport held a Dat Nguyen Day to honor him. Three hundred people showed up. (When a campaigning governor named George W. Bush came to town a few years earlier, only 200 people turned out.) At the local Wal-Mart, store managers have created a consumer shrine to the football star, with Dat Nguyen T shirts hanging off a rack and hats bearing his name. This year his neighbors chipped in \$15,000 to erect the billboard on the road into town. . . .
- 7 Some residents actively opposed erecting the celebratory billboard. But they are in the minority. When Nguyen returns to his hometown he is mobbed for autographs. "There's always going to be people who are going to have some tension against us," Nguyen says. "But I think the tension died down. I opened a lot of doors for people to see that whatever background you come from, everybody can have an opportunity. I dreamed of being here all my life. And now I'm a Vietnamese boy living in America, playing the American sport, living the American dream, playing for America's Team. It doesn't get any better than that."

Editor's Note: In three of his five seasons with the Cowboys, Dat Nguyen led the team in tackles. In 2005, neck and knee injuries led him to retire. Then, less than two years later, the Cowboys hired him back as an assistant linebackers coach.

Diversity

“We become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic.
Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings,
different hopes, different dreams.”

—Jimmy Carter



Reading Comprehension

Use “The Pale Mare” (pp. 1042–1046) to answer questions 1–10.

- One theme of “The Pale Mare” is that —
 - traditions should never be broken
 - it is important to obey one’s parents
 - sometimes you have to break traditions to be true to yourself
 - no tradition is good
- The author writes the story in the first person so that readers —
 - know what everyone is doing and thinking
 - can understand how Consuela feels
 - sympathize with Mama
 - will trust the family’s perspective
- The pale mare that Consuela frees is a symbol for —
 - nothing, it’s just a horse
 - her friend Fai
 - tradition
 - Consuela
- The *charreada* is —
 - the family’s taco stand
 - the family’s hometown
 - the local fairgrounds
 - a rodeo
- In paragraph 6, when Consuela jokes, “I try a different angle. After all, I’m good in geometry,” she means that —
 - she is going to sneak out
 - she will try another way to convince her father
 - she is giving up on her dream
 - she enjoys math
- In paragraph 9, Consuela explains that *la raza* is —
 - tradition
 - her grandfather
 - the sense of who the family is as Latin Americans
 - the sense of who each individual family member is
- On this particular weekend, Consuela wants to —
 - go to the mall with her friends
 - learn more about her family’s traditions
 - go to astronomy camp
 - work at the *charreada*
- In paragraph 18, *banishing* means —
 - allowing
 - considering an idea
 - rewarding
 - sending away
- In paragraphs 25–28 Consuela reaches the *charreada*, and the first thing she notices are the —
 - horses
 - people
 - smells
 - sounds
- Consuela frees the mares —
 - so that there will be no rodeo the next day
 - because she is angry with her parents and her cultural traditions
 - because she trips and opens the gate accidentally
 - because she doesn’t want to see the horses trapped the way she is

Use “**Breaking Down Barriers**”
(pp. 1047–1048) to answer questions 11–17.

11. One theme of “Breaking Down Barriers” is —
- A. there are no racial tensions in football
 - B. many Vietnamese-Americans play professional football
 - C. racial divides can sometimes be overcome
 - D. the history of Vietnamese in the United States of America
12. Dat Nguyen’s soccer team is booed mainly because —
- A. the other team thinks they cheated
 - B. the players are children of Vietnamese refugees
 - C. his team plays a poor game
 - D. the other team wins the championship
13. According to the article, many Vietnamese settled in the Texas Gulf area because —
- A. they were shrimpers, like many of the people already living there
 - B. they had family there
 - C. they liked the weather because it reminded them of Vietnam
 - D. there were good schools, and schooling was important to them
14. Dat’s brother, Ho Nguyen, remembers —
- A. wishing he were more athletic himself
 - B. working on the shrimp boats
 - C. their parents pushing Dat to play football
 - D. escaping as soldiers fired at the family’s boat
15. According to the article, when the Vietnamese started shrimping in Texas, some of the local shrimpers —
- A. gave up shrimping
 - B. felt threatened
 - C. did nothing
 - D. helped the Vietnamese
16. What happened when Dat was in eighth grade?
- A. He didn’t back down, and people started to see him as an individual.
 - B. His family went into politics, and people started to see him as an individual.
 - C. He began playing football, and people started to see him as an individual.
 - D. He faced the same problems as all the other students.
17. Critics thought that Dat could not play professional football because —
- A. he was a good soccer player and soccer players can’t play football
 - B. no good football players come from Texas
 - C. he was not a good player in college
 - D. he was small and of Asian descent

Use “**The Pale Mare**” and “**Breaking Down Barriers**” to answer questions 18–19.

18. The main barrier that Consuela and Dat must overcome is —
- A. problems associated with poverty
 - B. difficulties with the English language
 - C. strict rules from their parents
 - D. stereotypes that might limit opportunities

19. One message taught by “The Pale Mare” and “Breaking Down Barriers” is that —
- A. people change their ideas easily
 - B. people do not have to accept cultural limitations
 - C. hard work is always rewarded
 - D. doing well in school is important to everyone

Use the visual representation on page 1049 to answer questions 20–21.

20. The quotation underscores the message of the poster that —
- A. appearances can be deceiving
 - B. students should try and build bridges
 - C. many differences are impossible to bridge
 - D. diversity should be celebrated
21. The designer probably chose the photo to illustrate “not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic” because the image is of —
- A. very attractive students
 - B. artistic students
 - C. students of a wide range of ages
 - D. students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds

SHORT CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE

Write a short response to each question, using text evidence to support your response.

22. Why do Consuela’s parents think that she should be content with their plans for her? Support your response with evidence from the selection.
23. Why is “Breaking Down Barriers” a good title for this selection? Support your response with evidence from the selection.

Write a short response to the following question, using text evidence from both selections to support your response.

24. How does the idea of cultural stereotypes apply to both selections? Support your response with evidence from **both** selections.

Revising and Editing

DIRECTIONS Read this passage, and answer the questions that follow.

(1) In the 1950s, the United States investigated citizens. (2) They were considered Communist sympathizers. (3) U.S. senator Joseph McCarthy led the charge. (4) McCarthy who was known for his reckless accusations. (5) Under suspicion were even people who read foreign magazines. (6) As a result of these accusations, many people lost they're jobs. (7) Today, the term still describes the use of unfounded accusations. (8) This accusatory technique was known as McCarthyism.

1. What is the most effective way to improve the organization of the paragraph?
 - A. Move sentence 3 to follow sentence 4.
 - B. Move sentence 5 to follow sentence 7.
 - C. Move sentence 6 to follow sentence 2.
 - D. Move sentence 7 to follow sentence 8.

2. What is the most effective way to combine sentences 1 and 2?
 - A. In the 1950s, the United States investigated citizens who were considered Communist sympathizers.
 - B. In the 1950s, the United States investigated citizens, by thinking they were Communist sympathizers.
 - C. In the 1950s, the United States investigated citizens; they were considered Communist sympathizers.
 - D. In the 1950s, the United States investigated citizens and considered them Communist sympathizers.

3. What change, if any, should be made to sentence 3?
 - A. Change *senator* to **Senator**
 - B. Change *McCarthy* to **Mccarthy**
 - C. Change *led* to **lead**
 - D. Make no change

4. What change, if any, should be made in sentence 4?
 - A. Insert a comma after *McCarthy*
 - B. Delete *who*
 - C. Change *was known* to **knew**
 - D. Make no change

5. What would be the most effective way to rewrite sentence 5?
 - A. Even reading foreign magazines was cause for suspicion.
 - B. McCarthy was even suspicious of foreign magazine readers.
 - C. To read a foreign magazine was enough cause for suspicion of people.
 - D. To be considered suspicious, people read foreign magazines.

6. What change, if any, should be made to sentence 6?
 - A. Change *lost* to **loosed**
 - B. Insert a comma after *result*
 - C. Change *they're* to **their**
 - D. Make no change

7. What change, if any, should be made in sentence 8?
 - A. Insert a comma after *technique*
 - B. Change *technique* to **technical**
 - C. Insert a colon after *as*
 - D. Make no change

