



NEW MEXICO MEASURES  
OF STUDENT SUCCESS AND  
ACHIEVEMENT



**NM-MSSA**

**English Language  
Arts/Literacy  
Grade 7 • Practice Test**



PLACE STUDENT  
LABEL HERE



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# English Language Arts/Literacy Session 1

**DIRECTIONS**

Today you will take a test in reading. For this test, you will read passages and then answer questions about the passages. Some of the questions may look different from test questions you have seen before, and some may ask about material that is new to you, but it is important to do your best. If you are not sure of the answer to a question, you should still try to answer it.

*You will now read two passages and answer the questions that follow. Some of the questions may ask you to compare the two passages.*

## Passage 1

### Volcanoes: The Science Behind the Eruption

- 1

Lava is like a fingerprint: Each volcano has a different assortment of minerals in its lava. By studying lava, scientists learn more about the makeup of Earth and its geologic history.
- 2

Professor Mike Garcia of the University of Hawaii collects samples of lava from the active Kilauea Volcano in Hawaii. He locates spots where the lava has pushed through Earth’s crust, and he then uses a can attached to a metal chain to gather the lava samples. He has to be very careful. The lava is blistering hot, at over 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Once collected, the samples are sent for analysis. From that analysis, scientists can learn much about the volcano.

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### The Science of Volcanoes

- 3

Technically, volcanoes are vents or ruptures in the crust of Earth. These ruptures allow hot magma (molten rock), gases, and volcanic ash to escape onto Earth’s surface and burst into the atmosphere. Volcanoes usually occur because of the shifting of the tectonic plates that make up Earth’s crust. Pressure builds up between the plates as they move and crash into each other, and a volcano develops.
- 4

Another way a volcano can be formed is when Earth’s crust is pulled and becomes thin. The magma pushes up through the crust to form a volcano.

### Underwater Volcanoes?

- 5

Volcanoes are scattered around the globe, but did you know that not all of them are on land? Underwater volcanoes are called “submarine volcanoes” and, on average, are located 8,500 feet below the surface of the water. To date, geologists have identified more than 5,000 submarine volcanoes.
- 6

When submarine volcanoes erupt, a billowing water vapor cloud is sometimes released above the ocean’s surface. Other times, the force of the ocean is strong enough to cool a volcanic eruption, and no vapor is emitted.

## Hawaii

- 7 Volcanoes have a significant effect on the topography, or landscape, of Earth. Lava output can create islands where none existed before. In fact, the entire Hawaiian island chain was formed by magma that rose upward until it erupted from the seafloor of the Pacific Ocean. The ocean waters cooled the lava quickly and, over the course of thousands of years, the layers of lava became islands.
- 8 Similarly, the Aleutian Islands are a chain of volcanic islands running from Russia to Alaska. Some of these volcanoes are still active. Undersea eruptions continue to occur, and new islands pop up from time to time. Typically, these islands are rocky and cratered. Sometimes, they disappear as quickly as they are formed!

## Famous Volcanoes

- 9 Among the most famous volcanoes in history is one on the Indonesian island of Krakatoa. When it erupted in 1883, the massive blast was heard from thousands of miles away. Outside of the Hawaiian Islands, the best known volcano in the United States is Mount St. Helens in Washington. It erupted in 1980 after being dormant, or inactive, for more than 120 years. Mount Fuji in Japan is also an active volcano, although it has not erupted in more than 300 years.
- 10 The largest known volcano on Earth is underwater. Tamu Massif is located in the northwestern part of the Pacific Ocean. Not discovered until 2013, it is about 1,000 miles from Japan. At first, scientists thought it was made up of more than one volcano, but as they continued to study it, they concluded that it was one gigantic volcano—about the size of New Mexico. It last erupted about 144 million years ago and is now extinct, or permanently inactive.

## Secrets Unlocked?

- 11 In recent years, scientists have made great advances in their ability to predict volcanic eruptions. New technology allows monitoring instruments installed in and around a volcano to send real-time data to observation stations. Early detection of any changes in a volcano's activity can improve the accuracy of eruption predictions and provide valuable data to researchers.
- 12 But there is much left to learn. In his introduction to *Hawaiian Volcanoes: From Source to Surface*, Garcia notes, "After working on Hawaiian volcanism for the past 38 years, it has become apparent to me how little is really known about volcanoes." With purpose and drive, he and his fellow scientists continue to probe Earth's interior in search of new discoveries.

"Volcanoes: The Science Behind the Eruption" © 2017 by Cognia, Inc.



Passage 2

Volcanoes: What’s Left Behind

- 1 Volcanoes are studied by scientists called volcanologists who want to learn how volcanic eruptions affect Earth. They also want to be able to predict when a volcano may erupt. Surprisingly, there is another reason scientists study volcanoes: to understand the benefits that come from volcanic eruptions.

Useful Contents of Lava

- 2 When a volcano erupts, it spreads ash across the landscape. The ash contains nutrients that enrich the soil. The lava from volcanic eruptions also contains helpful minerals, such as iron, magnesium, and potassium. Soil enriched by volcanic ash and lava can become very fertile. For example, Mt. Vesuvius in Italy is surrounded by rich farmland; over many centuries, Mt. Vesuvius deposited vast amounts of volcanic ash and lava across the nearby land.
- 3 Besides enriching the soil, lava also contains materials that have commercial use. Pumice and perlite, also known as volcanic glass, can be used as abrasives in soaps and household cleaners.

Volcanic Islands

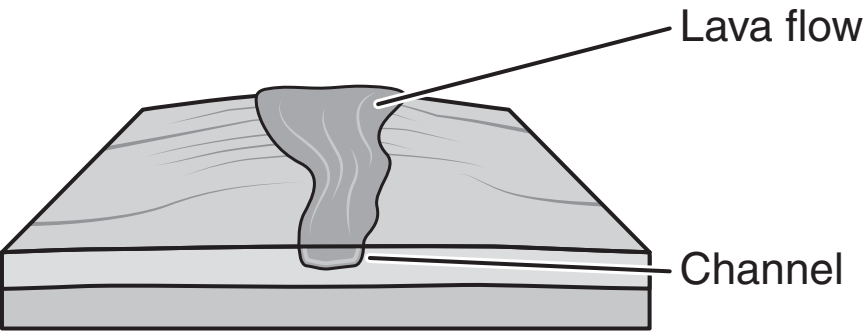
- 4 Hawaii is an area that has reaped the benefits of volcanic activity. In fact, it owes its whole existence to volcanoes! This chain of islands was created by volcanic activity and a buildup of lava over thousands of years. As a result, the islands are very rocky. The activity is ongoing. Kilauea, an active volcano on the biggest of the Hawaiian Islands, spews out lava flows into the ocean, creating spectacular shows for tourists.

Lava Tubes

- 5 One of the most impressive byproducts of eruptions are lava tubes. Lava tubes are formed when lava flows down a mountainside. As the lava cools, the top of the tube is formed. The remaining lava flows underground, as if through a drainage pipe. This creates a tube. Lava tubes are found worldwide. Some are large enough for people to walk through and usually include stalactites (icicle-shaped, pointed-tip deposits that hang from the tube’s ceiling) and stalagmites (upward-growing mounds of mineral deposits with a rounded or flattened tip), which are also often seen in limestone caves.

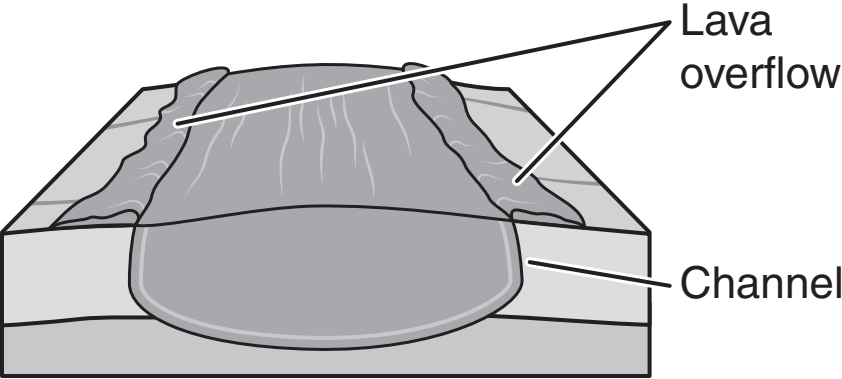
How Lava Tubes Form

1.



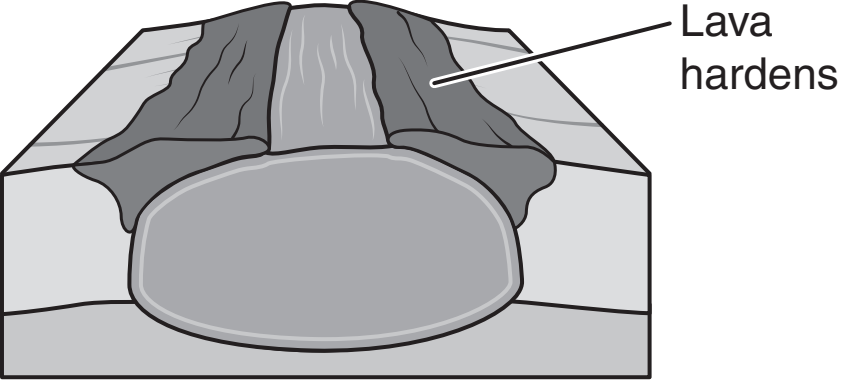
During a volcanic eruption, lava flows into a groove-like channel (like a dried riverbed).

2.



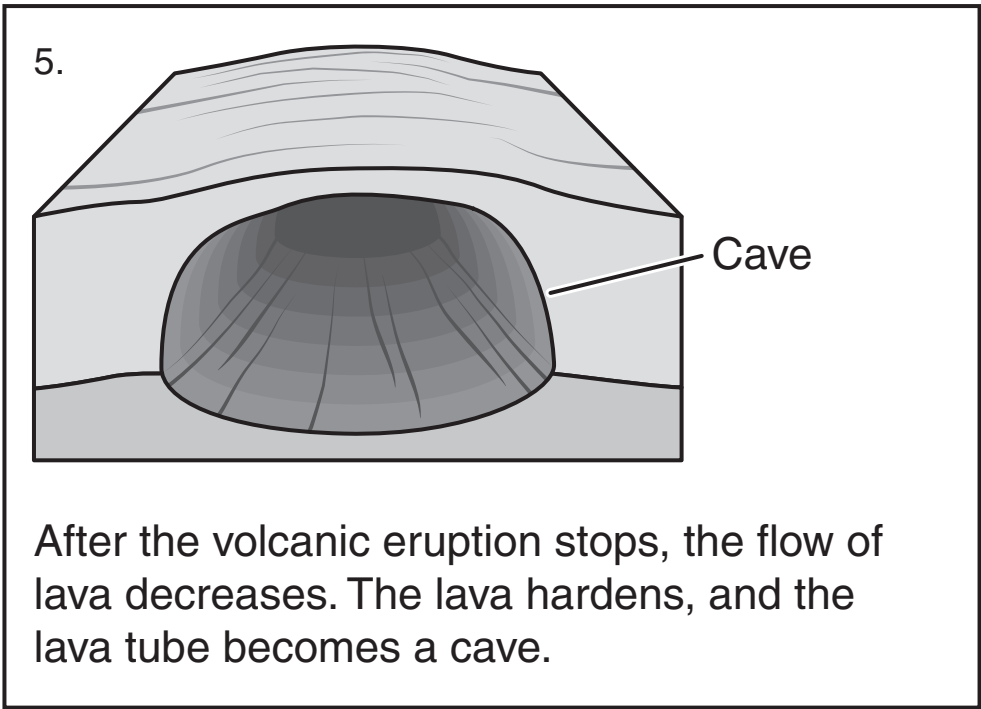
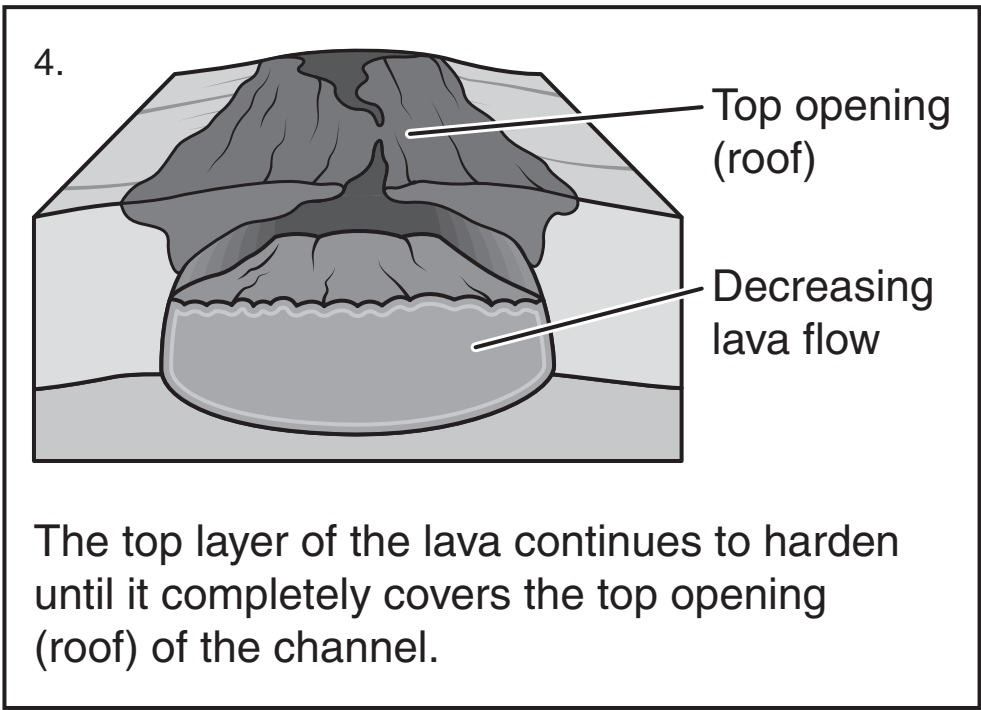
The lava overflows from the sides of the groove-like channel.

3.



The top layer of the lava hardens as it comes in contact with the cooler air.





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6 Lava tubes often develop their own ecosystems. One example of this is on the Big Island in Hawaii. The Thurston Lava Tube, or Nahuku, is filled with the roots of the trees that grow above it. These roots create a green jungle that is home to many creatures. The roots are also a food source for animals living there.

**Lava Tubes in Space**

7 Lava tubes are not limited to Earth. They are found wherever there is volcanic activity. This means that many other planets and other celestial bodies probably contain lava tubes as well.

- 8 Space.com reported that scientists have recently identified possible lava tubes on the Moon using data gathered by NASA’s GRAIL spacecraft. These tubes would have resulted from volcanic activity millions of years ago. The cave-like tubes could offer astronauts shelter or protect them from the constant radiation of the Sun and cosmic rays. The identified tubes are large, visible from the spacecraft as it flies by.

### Geothermal Energy

- 9 Using lava tubes far from Earth may be a distant goal, but there is one way that people already harness the power of Earth’s heat. Since ancient times, people have used geothermal energy from hot springs for cooking and soaking. However, one advancement occurred in 1904 when Prince Piero Ginori Conti built the first geothermal power generator in Italy. Since then, the use of geothermal energy has continued to grow and expand. Today, the United States is one of the world’s largest producers of geothermal energy. Around the world, some of the most promising areas for geothermal energy use are near volcanoes. However, scientists and engineers continue to develop technology that may allow people to dig deeper and deeper in order to reach new sources.
- 10 Clearly, the study of volcanoes yields exciting information. Scientists can see that the vast power of volcanoes and the heat under Earth’s surface can be a boon to humankind.

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“Volcanoes: What’s Left Behind” © 2017 by Cognia, Inc.





1. Which detail in Passage 1 shows that “lava is like a fingerprint”?
- A Lava is present in various locations on Earth.
  - B Lava samples reveal unique aspects of volcanoes.
  - C Lava rises within Earth’s volcanoes in different ways.
  - D Lava requires special equipment during scientists’ research.

*This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.*

2. Read this sentence from paragraph 7 in Passage 1.

Volcanoes have a significant effect on the topography, or landscape, of Earth.

The author supports this claim **mainly** by

- A giving examples of volcanic formations.
- B suggesting that volcanoes are dangerous.
- C comparing ancient volcanoes to newer ones.
- D emphasizing that people are aware of volcanic activity.

Which choice provides the **best** evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A “From that analysis, scientists can learn much about the volcano.”
- B “Some of these volcanoes are still active.”
- C “Undersea eruptions continue to occur, and new islands pop up from time to time.”
- D “It last erupted about 144 million years ago and is now extinct.”

3. In Passage 1, which choice could **best** replace the word “probe” in paragraph 12?
- A protect
  - B investigate
  - C travel inside
  - D read about
4. Based on Passage 2, how does the movement of lava create lava tubes?
- A Lava flows and then coats the walls of existing caves.
  - B Hot lava gradually burns holes through mountainsides.
  - C Hot lava travels downward and the outer part of the flow becomes solid.
  - D Lava covers new areas and plant roots cut deeply into the hardened soil.
5. According to Passage 2, what are **two** ways volcanoes affect Hawaii? Select **two** answers.
- A They are the main energy source for households on the islands.
  - B They create interest and appeal for visiting tourists.
  - C They provide shelter from environmental hazards.
  - D They allow toxic materials to flow away safely.
  - E They form habitats for living things.

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6. What was the author's **most likely** purpose for writing Passage 2?
- A to present information about the results of volcanic activity
  - B to offer differing opinions on the causes of volcanic eruptions
  - C to show that volcanic activity is not as common as it has been in the past
  - D to describe methods scientists use to study what happens after volcanic eruptions
7. What is one difference between the information presented in Passage 1 and Passage 2?
- A Passage 1 explains one theory about volcanoes, and Passage 2 gives data challenging that theory.
  - B Passage 1 focuses on the causes of eruptions, while Passage 2 focuses on specific details about the role of volcanoes.
  - C Passage 1 explains one scientist's research project in chronological order, while Passage 2 provides descriptive details about one volcanic area.
  - D Passage 1 describes the tasks volcanologists perform, while Passage 2 emphasizes the need to have more people who study volcanic activity.

Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

## The Modest Mule

- 1 A mule is the offspring of a male donkey and a female horse. Mules have been bred since ancient times. Even though mules share some traits with both donkeys and horses, they have unique qualities of their own.

### Special Qualities of Mules

- 2 Mules have gentler personalities than horses or donkeys. They do not startle or jump sideways easily under pressure. Compared to horses, mules are stronger, with better stamina and agility. Mules have an excellent reputation as beasts of burden because they can carry a lot of weight under extreme conditions. For example, for centuries across the world, mules have been used by the military to transport supplies and personnel. Military mule packs served as an important mode of transportation for cavalry and artillery units. The sturdy mule is widely respected by military personnel, which is why the United States Army uses the mule as a mascot.
- 3 Mules are trail-wise, meaning they can memorize their route along trails, a skill especially useful for long distance trips.
- 4 Mules have small, boxy feet. As they walk, they place their rear hooves in the exact spot where they had put their front hooves. This walking pattern decreases the mule's chances of stumbling. Mules pass through trails carefully using steady and sure-footed steps. Their steps may be small and modest, but this important quality makes a mule more suitable than a horse for riding on rough trails.
- 5 A recent research study shows that mules are better problem-solvers and navigators than donkeys and horses. Dr. Britta Osthaus, a senior lecturer in Applied Social Sciences at Canterbury University in Kent, found that mules are more capable of learning new tasks and adjusting to their surroundings. "Mules were faster in their initial learning than both donkeys and horses, and they were also more flexible in their unlearning than dogs and horses," said Dr. Osthaus.
- 6 Dr. Osthaus's early findings also suggest that mules have better judgment than horses and donkeys. For example, the mules she studied did not take any unnecessary chances. They would not proceed onto a path if they believed it was unsafe. They were more skilled at adapting to their surroundings, making them a more reliable mode of transportation on rugged terrain.

### Hiking Along the Grand Canyon: Choosing the Right Mules

- 7 Hikers and visitors are often fascinated by the breathtaking scenery of the Grand Canyon. Despite its rough, elevated trails, travelers are excited to go on tours to experience firsthand the brilliance of the Western desert. These travelers may encounter packs of mules marching slowly along the popular Kaibab Trail, carrying passengers, goods, and packages.



- 8

Mules that work in the Grand Canyon are carefully selected for their personality and ability. John Berry, a manager at the Grand Canyon Mule Barn, says that mules selected for the Canyon “have to have a good attitude.” As passenger carriers, mules must be able to interact peacefully with riders and hikers in the Canyon.
- 9

Mules of the Grand Canyon must be physically fit enough to withstand the tough conditions of the desert, often with little food and a lack of water for a long period of time. “They have to endure the heat, the cold, they have to be a good stout mule,” Berry added.
- 10

In one study, Dr. Faith Burden, a British researcher, concluded that mules require an extensive period of training before they can work with humans. Typically, trainers work with mules for more than a month before taking them to the trails. This is necessary to ensure the safety of future riders. During this time, the trainer must quickly gain the trust of the mule. “It is extremely difficult to get a mule to do something that it does not want to do,” Burden said. “If you are happy to spend ample time building the trust of the mule in you, then you’ll have a partnership like no other.” Simmon Ashley, a mule wrangler who leads tours through the Grand Canyon, agreed with this finding, saying, “They know the trail by heart. That’s how they are. . . . That’s why they say, ‘trust your mule.’”
- 11

Horses may rule in the open country, but the modest mule rules the trails in the Canyon.

Fun Facts

- Recognizing the mule’s value in agriculture, President George Washington was one of the earliest mule breeders in the United States. Aside from his political accomplishments, he is also known as “The Father of the American Mule.”
- Dating back to 1899, the mule has been used as a mascot for the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York.
- NASA used mules to haul its first jet engine to the summit of Pike’s Peak for testing, which helped launch the start of the U.S. space program.

“The Modest Mule” © 2017 by Cognia, Inc.

8. In paragraph 2, what is the impact of the word “stamina”?
- A It helps the reader visualize the awkward movements of mules.
  - B It helps the reader understand the natural instincts of mules.
  - C It emphasizes the remarkable endurance of mules.
  - D It emphasizes the stubborn personality of mules.
9. Which detail from the passage **best** shows that mules are good navigators?
- A They have a natural ability to memorize routes.
  - B They are often used to carry people on long trips.
  - C They are usually able to move quickly along rocky trails.
  - D They have the unique ability to stay calm under pressure.
10. What is the **most likely** reason the author places the section **Special Qualities of Mules** before the section **Hiking Along the Grand Canyon: Choosing the Right Mules**?
- A to introduce the historical role of mules before explaining that they have become less significant
  - B to provide general pieces of information about mules before describing a specific use for them
  - C to compare mules to other animals to support an argument of mules’ superiority
  - D to establish one theory about mules that will be disproved in a later section



**11.** Based on paragraph 10, which sentence describes the **most** important role of the wrangler?

- A** to train mules so they can engage with people safely and peacefully
- B** to examine how skilled mules are at walking across canyon terrain
- C** to make sure mules have enough food and water for the trail tours
- D** to guide the mules carrying the tourists along the canyon trails

*This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.*

**12.** Which sentence **best** states a central idea of the passage?

- A** Mules have been part of many cultures for centuries.
- B** Mules are more intelligent and agile than most people realize.
- C** Many people generally find trail mules stubborn and difficult to control.
- D** Some political leaders became famous for breeding mules to use on farms.

Which choice provides the **best** evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A** "Mules have been bred since ancient times."
- B** "Mules are more capable of learning new tasks and adjusting to their surroundings."
- C** "It is extremely difficult to get a mule to do something that it does not want to do."
- D** "He is also known as 'The Father of the American Mule.'"

**13.** What was the author's **most likely** purpose for writing the passage?

- A** to inform the reader about the characteristics and uses of mules
- B** to urge the reader to support efforts to protect and defend mules
- C** to convince the reader of the need for further research on mules
- D** to entertain the reader with amusing incidents involving mules

*You will now read two passages and answer the questions that follow. Some of the questions may ask you to compare the two passages.*

*This passage tells about Otter, who came to America in 1867 to join his father and other Chinese Americans building the Transcontinental Railroad.*

**Passage 1**  
**from *Dragon's Gate***  
*by Laurence Yep*

- 1 Shadowy men worked in the dim light, breath steaming from their mouths as they used hammers and chisels to smooth the walls. At the point where the tunnel began to narrow, men swung pickaxes to widen it chip by chip.
- 2 The crew lifted the big pickaxes over their heads in a slow, ragged rhythm and smashed at the rock, each at his own pace. Their lean bodies contorted with the effort as they threw all their weight into their blows. Despite the padding in their coats, I could see muscles rippling beneath the cloth. Even the muscles of their throats strained as they tried to crack the walls.
- 3 The dim light glittered off the sharp tips of the pickaxes; and as they dove toward the stone, they seemed more like weapons than tools.
- 4 "This is like a battlefield," I said to Father.
- 5 "It's war," he grunted. "Because the mountain can kill you in a dozen different ways before you can blink an eye. And victory is twenty centimeters a shift."
- 6 As we passed, men turned to stare at me curiously and stopped what they were doing. Father signed to a middle-aged man with a sour face like a pickled cucumber. "Bright Star."
- 7 Bright Star gave him a sour look. "Why do I have to work at the point all the time?"
- 8 "Do you have to argue every time? It's your turn."
- 9 Then Father nodded to a fellow as thin as the shaft of his pickax. "Noodles."
- 10 Setting down their tools, the two men reluctantly stepped in behind us.
- 11 The tunnel grew narrower the farther in we went. Pretty soon we were picking our way over mounds of rubble. The walls were rougher here and marked by black blast marks. When I looked closer at the rubble scattered around, I noticed that it too was sooty.
- 12 Curious, I worked my way slowly down the tunnel, mound of rubble by mound, meter by meter, toward the source of that strange song. As we passed a lantern, its light shimmered in broken waves along the dark, cold walls of the tunnel until it was just a distant glow.

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- 13** With each meter the walls grew rougher and the air more and more stifling. And with each step, the metallic music grew louder and louder until I was at the end of the tunnel before a blackened, jagged wall. Pitting its face were lines of holes, as if giant bullets had been shot at the rock.
- 14** Before that wall was a man with a drill to match Father's. He was standing with his legs braced, holding the tip of the drill against the wall. As he worked, he sucked at something that hung on a gold chain around his neck and his head wagged from side to side as if he were some mechanical toy.
- 15** In front of him was a man swathed from head to toe in scarves. Only his eyes showed through the mask made of the scarves. He wore so many coats it was a wonder he could swing his big sledgehammer; but swing he did, and with such violence that if he missed the butt end of the drill: he was sure to smash the skull of the man holding it.
- 16** The only light came from a kerosene lantern on the floor, so their shadows reared behind them, almost appearing to belong to two giants rather than to ordinary men. The air was so bad at the end of the tunnel that I didn't see how they could breathe, let alone work.

*Dragon's Gate*, copyright © 1993 by Laurence Yep.

*This passage is taken from a speech made in the U.S. House of Representatives to honor Chinese railroad workers of the 1800s.*

## Passage 2

### Chinese-American Contribution to the Transcontinental Railroad

*Hon. John T. Doolittle of California in the U.S. House of Representatives  
Thursday, April 29, 1999*

- 1 Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the Chinese-American community and pay tribute to its ancestors' contribution to the building of the American transcontinental railroad.
- 2 On May 8th, the Colfax Area Historical Society in my Congressional District will place a monument along Highway 174 at Cape Horn, near Colfax, California to recognize the efforts of the Chinese in laying the tracks that linked the east and west coasts for the first time.
- 3 With the California Gold Rush and the opening of the West came an increased interest in building a transcontinental railroad. To this end, the Central Pacific Railroad Company was established, and construction of the route East from Sacramento began in 1863. Although the beginning of the effort took place on relatively flat land, labor and financial problems were persistent, resulting in only 50 miles of track being laid in the first two years. Although the company needed over 5,000 workers, it only had 600 on the payroll by 1864.
- 4 Chinese labor was suggested, as they had already helped build the California Central Railroad, the railroad from Sacramento to Marysville and the San Jose Railway. Originally thought to be too small to complete such a momentous task, Charles Crocker of Central Pacific pointed out, "the Chinese made the Great Wall, didn't they?"
- 5 The first Chinese were hired in 1865 at approximately \$28 per month to do the very dangerous work of blasting and laying ties over the treacherous terrain of the high Sierras. They lived in simple dwellings and cooked their own meals, often consisting of fish, dried oysters and fruit, mushrooms and seaweed.
- 6 Work in the beginning was slow and difficult. After the first 23 miles, Central Pacific faced the daunting task of laying tracks over terrain that rose 7,000 feet in 100 miles. To conquer the many sheer embankments, the Chinese workers used techniques they had learned in China to complete similar tasks. They were lowered by ropes from the top of cliffs in baskets, and while suspended, they chipped away at the granite and planted explosives that were used to blast tunnels. Many workers risked their lives and perished in the harsh winters and dangerous conditions.

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- 7 By the summer of 1868, 4,000 workers, two thirds of which were Chinese, had built the transcontinental railroad over the Sierras and into the interior plains. On May 10, 1869, the two railroads were to meet at Promontory, Utah in front of a cheering crowd and a band. A Chinese [and Irish] crew was chosen to lay the final ten miles of track, and it was completed in only twelve hours.
- 8 Without the efforts of the Chinese workers in the building of America’s railroads, our development and progress as a nation would have been delayed by years. Their toil in severe weather, cruel working conditions and for meager wages cannot be under appreciated. My sentiments and thanks go out to the entire Chinese-American community for its ancestors’ contribution to the building of this great Nation.

“Chinese-American Contribution to the Transcontinental Railroad,” by Hon. John T. Doolittle of California in the U.S. House of Representatives, Thursday, April 29, 1999. In the public domain.

- 14.** In Passage 1, what does the narrator mean when he describes Bright Star as having “a sour face like a pickled cucumber”?
- A** Bright Star looks weak and sick.
  - B** Bright Star looks mean and evil.
  - C** Bright Star looks old and wrinkled.
  - D** Bright Star looks miserable and resentful.
- 15.** In Passage 1, how does the narrator’s point of view change as he walks deeper into the tunnel?
- A** He grows even fonder of his father.
  - B** His fears threaten to overcome him.
  - C** His mind wanders to more pleasant things.
  - D** He becomes more keenly aware of his surroundings.





*This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.*

- 16.** According to Passage 2, which detail **best** explains why it was difficult for the workers to build the railroad through “the high Sierras”?
- A** The workers tired too quickly because the weather shifted from extreme cold to extreme heat.
  - B** The section of the railroad that the workers had to lay tracks extended over 100 miles.
  - C** The workers were weak because their diet mainly consisted of dried fish and fruit.
  - D** The terrain was steep and the workers had to dig tunnels through mountains.

Which choice from Passage 1 provides the **best** evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A** “At the point where the tunnel began to narrow, men swung pickaxes to widen it chip by chip.”
- B** “Their lean bodies contorted with the effort.”
- C** “I worked my way slowly down the tunnel, mound of rubble by mound, meter by meter.”
- D** “In front of him was a man swathed from head to toe in scarves.”

- 17.** Which words from Passage 2 **most clearly** reveal the speaker’s point of view on the treatment of Chinese American railroad workers?
- A** efforts, workers, building
  - B** development, progress
  - C** severe, cruel, meager
  - D** sentiments, thanks

- 18.** Which of the following statements reflects the **main** idea of Passage 2?
- A** Chinese workers were needed to help build railroads because the Central Pacific Railroad Company had only 600 workers in 1864 and needed over 5,000.
  - B** Chinese workers faced a range of dangers while building railroads, including the explosives used to blast tunnels and exposure to freezing cold in winter.
  - C** Chinese workers worked for low pay under terrible conditions and should be honored for making a valuable contribution to the development of the United States.
  - D** Chinese workers used a variety of clever techniques, such as lowering themselves in baskets over steep embankments, to get to places they could not otherwise have reached.
- 19.** Which historical detail in Passage 2 is expanded upon in Passage 1?
- A** Chinese railroad workers lived simply and cooked their own meals.
  - B** Chinese railroad workers often endured cruel and dangerous conditions.
  - C** Chinese railroad workers were hired after the project was delayed by years.
  - D** Chinese railroad workers suspended themselves from the tops of cliffs to blast tunnel holes.
- 20.** How is Passage 1 related to John T. Doolittle’s speech in Passage 2?
- A** Passage 1 puts human faces on the events described in Passage 2.
  - B** Passage 1 shows exceptions to events that are described in Passage 2.
  - C** Passage 1 explains what happened after the events described in Passage 2.
  - D** Passage 1 is a romanticized version of the real-life events described in Passage 2.



**DO NOT  
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# English Language Arts/Literacy Session 2

## DIRECTIONS

Today you will take a test in writing and language. For this test, you will read passages and answer questions. Some questions might ask about how to improve the passage. Other questions might ask you to correct errors in the passage. Some of the questions may look different from test questions you have seen before, and some may ask about material that is new to you, but it is important to do your best. If you are not sure of the answer to a question, you should still try to answer it.

*Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.*

### A Dramatic Difference

**1.** Many of us can agree that there is nothing quite like a good movie; through the magic of special effects, we can be transported deep within a volcano or to the outer reaches of the universe. **2.** In the same way, with all that movies can do, why should we ever go to a play? **3.** Though movies have their merits, a recent study shows that watching live theater can benefit us by increasing our knowledge and allowing us to witness the characters' experiences in a powerful way. **4.** For these reasons, people, particularly students, should have opportunities to attend live theater performances.

**5.** Jay Greene of the University of Arkansas points out that plays "are meant to be seen performed live. . . . **6.** The story can be conveyed in a movie, but it doesn't engage the viewer in the same way." **7.** It is this engagement that allows students to develop a deeper understanding of literature. **8.** Greene and a team of researchers looked at two different groups: students who had only read or seen a movie of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and students who attended a live performance. **9.** The researchers found that students who went to the play better understood the plot and the challenging vocabulary. **10.** The researchers also assessed the students on their acceptance of other people and ideas, as well as their recognition of human emotions. **11.** Students who saw the live performance scored higher on both assessments.

**12.** A super play equals a super realistic experience for those studying literature. **13.** There are reasons that theater has existed since the ancient Greeks first stepped onto a stage around 700 B.C.E.

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*This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.*

**21.** What is one way the writer effectively introduces the main argument of the passage?

- A** by providing a definition
- B** by giving historical background
- C** by recalling personal memories
- D** by acknowledging an alternate claim

Which choice provides the **best** evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A** “movies have their merits,”
- B** “a recent study shows that watching live theater can benefit us”
- C** “witness the characters’ experiences in a powerful way.”
- D** “should have opportunities to attend live theater”

**22.** How should the underlined words in sentence 2 be changed to provide the **best** transition to the ideas that follow?

- A** NO CHANGE
- B** In fact,
- C** In addition,
- D** In contrast,

**23.** How should the underlined words in sentence 4 be changed to provide the **best** transition to the ideas that follow?

- A** NO CHANGE
- B** In the meantime,
- C** As an illustration,
- D** In the same way,

- 24.** How should the underlined word in sentence 10 be changed?
- A** NO CHANGE
  - B** acceptance
  - C** acceptanse
  - D** acceptince
- 25.** How should sentence 12 be changed to maintain the style of the passage?
- A** NO CHANGE
  - B** A high-quality play brings literature to life.
  - C** A first-rate play can make literature seem real in a way.
  - D** A terrific play means that literature is right in front of your face.
- 26.** The writer would like to add a concluding statement that restates the main points in the passage. Which sentence would be **best** to add after sentence 13?
- A** Many students would be grateful for the chance to audition at a local theater.
  - B** It truly is an excellent way for people to come together and get to know their neighbors.
  - C** Not only is live theater a compelling way to tell a story, it also gives audience members glimpses into other points of view.
  - D** If theaters distributed surveys regarding the interests of their audience members, they would achieve greater success.



Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

Building the Brooklyn Bridge



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1. The Brooklyn Bridge is one of the most recognizable structures in the world. 2. The bridge connects the East River to link Manhattan and Brooklyn in New York City. 3. The beauty and usability of the bridge are evidence of the inventiveness of those who designed it more than 125 years ago.

4. First among these men was John Augustus Roebling. 5. Roebling was an engineer who became known for designing suspension bridges. 6. Suspension bridges are held up by a series of wires hung from a cord between two towers. 7. Roebling improved upon existing designs to make them stronger and steadier. 8. This enabled Roebling to increase the span of roadway between the two towers. 9. Because the Brooklyn Bridge’s span was a length of 1,600 feet, the Brooklyn Bridge’s span was the longest ever used in a suspension bridge.

10. Roebling had worked with his son, Washington, on several engineering and construction projects. 11. Washington took over as chief engineer soon after construction of the Brooklyn Bridge began and oversaw the project to the end. 12. Washington Roebling worked with construction crews to ensure that each change made during construction was carried out according to his instructions.

13. While the Brooklyn Bridge was finished in 1883, New Yorkers hailed the design. 14. Lots of people came to the dedication ceremony to show how awesome they thought it was. 15. Although John Augustus Roebling did not get to see the finished bridge, people throughout America showed pride in the Brooklyn Bridge, which some have called the “eighth wonder of the world.”

SESSION  
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**27.** How should the underlined word in sentence 2 be changed to be **most** exact?

- A** measures
- B** reaches
- C** spans
- D** stretches

*This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.*

**28.** The writer wants to add a sentence after sentence 6 to describe one challenge Roebling had to overcome when designing the suspension bridge. Which detail does that **best**?

- A** This type of bridge had been built all over the world, but the one in Brooklyn was special.
- B** Many engineers tried to design better bridges.
- C** One of the problems of the early designs was that the bridges swayed in heavy winds.
- D** Initially, people were afraid to drive over suspension bridges because they were held up by wires.

Which sentence from the article best supports the answer to the previous question?

- A** "The Brooklyn Bridge is one of the most recognizable structures in the world."
- B** "Roebling was an engineer who became known for designing suspension bridges."
- C** "Roebling improved upon existing designs to make them stronger and steadier."
- D** "This enabled Roebling to increase the span of roadway between the two towers."

- 29.** How should the underlined portion of sentence 9 be changed to avoid repeating ideas?
- A** NO CHANGE
  - B** At 1,600 feet
  - C** With a span of 1,600 feet
  - D** Because the Brooklyn Bridge was 1,600 feet
- 30.** What is the purpose of the underlined clause in sentence 11?
- A** to show a specific feeling
  - B** to add a piece of evidence
  - C** to describe the order of events
  - D** to make a connection between ideas
- 31.** How should the underlined word in sentence 13 be changed to make the relationship between ideas clear?
- A** NO CHANGE
  - B** Although
  - C** Because
  - D** When
- 32.** How should sentence 14 be changed to maintain the formal style of the article?
- A** Crowds popped in to the dedication ceremony to give a round of applause.
  - B** Thousands attended the dedication ceremony to show their appreciation.
  - C** Many came to the dedication ceremony to say they thought the new bridge was cool.
  - D** Tons of people showed up at the dedication ceremony to say thanks for the new bridge.

You are now going to read two brief passages and respond to a writing task. First, read the following passages about Chaco Culture National Historical Park.

**Passage 1**

**Mystery at Chaco Canyon  
A Blog Post**

*By Emily Filmore—journalist and photographer*

- 1 On my way home from a camping trip, I stopped at a restaurant in Albuquerque. Someone had left a newspaper on the table; inside was a leaflet with a picture of some stone walls and a caption that read:
- 2 “In a high-desert canyon of New Mexico lies one of North America’s greatest archeological achievements. It is as close as the United States gets to the Egyptian Pyramids. These ancient structures were built nearly 500 years before Europeans reached the Americas. Like many other ancient ruins throughout the world, both the structures and the ancient people who constructed them are shrouded in mystery.”
- 3 Mystery? Ancient people? I couldn’t resist.
- 4 I phoned the number on the leaflet, and the place happened to be Chaco Culture National Historical Park. I reserved a campsite and then stocked up on food and water for one more night of camping.

**Chaco Canyon by Day**

- 5 My campsite was just a level, bare patch of ground for a tent, a grill for cooking, and a picnic table for eating meals and resting. What made the campsite spectacular, however, were the surrounding sandstone cliffs.
- 6 Knowing that daytime temperatures can get high in the desert, I dressed lightly and made sure to put some sunscreen and a few bottles of water in my backpack. Then I set off exploring this mysterious place.
- 7 And I learned a lot.
- 8 Between 800 and 1100 AD, the Ancestral Pueblo built large structures called Great Houses. More than 150 Great Houses lie scattered throughout the region, the largest and most significant of the Chacoan Great Houses being Pueblo Bonito. At the height of Chacoan culture, it contained over 600 rooms and had multiple stories. Historians think that the Great Houses were used as public places for people in the surrounding areas to gather. Evidence suggests that they were part of a vast trade network that reached all the way into Central America. One thing is unmistakable: they certainly required sophisticated engineering.
- 9 I walked along a path leading to the remains of this ancient great house where partial walls rose out of a barren ground. Considering they are about a thousand years old, they are well preserved. No longer covered with the original mud plastering, the bare walls reveal careful brickwork. The ancestral Pueblo used stone tools to cut away and shape sandstone into rectangular-shaped bricks.



- 10 Eventually, I reached an open area where the Kivas are located. The Ancestral Pueblo used ladders to climb down into these round, and partially underground, rooms positioned throughout Pueblo Bonito. Kivas were most likely used for special political meetings and ceremonies.
- 11 Exiting Pueblo Bonito for the main road, I wondered about the people who had once inhabited this desert environment. How did they build a center like this in such a harsh environment? And what eventually happened to them? At some point, they abandoned this location. Some say a great drought hit the region; others say that political conflicts brought it to an end. Today’s Hopi, Pueblo, and Navajo claim to be their descendants.

**Chaco Canyon by Night**

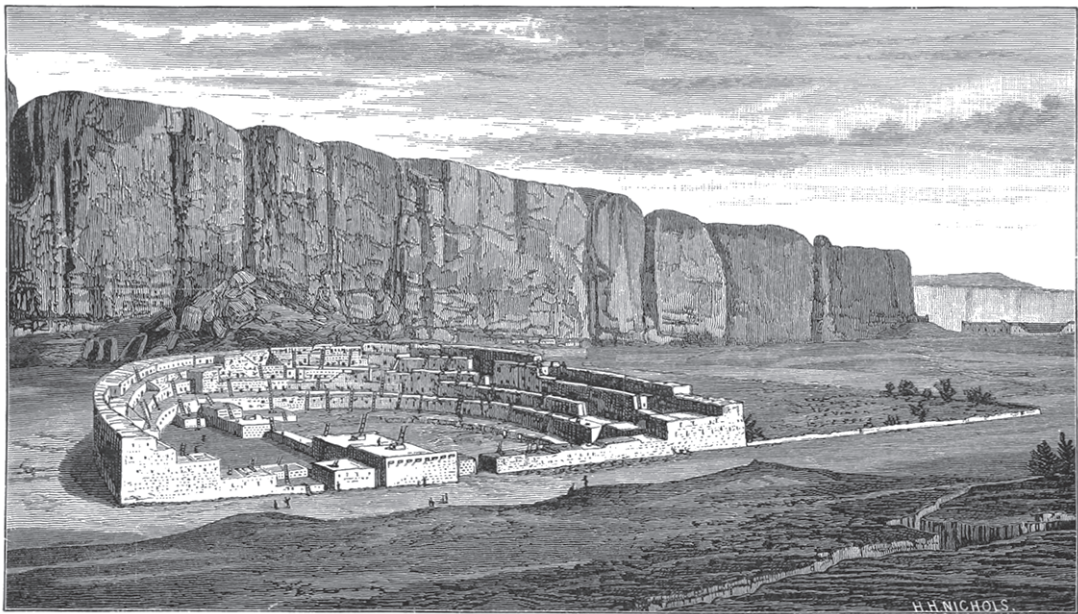
- 12 Before sunset, I hiked to the Visitor Center for the Night Sky Program. Historians know that the ancestral Pueblo were “Master Astronomers.” Much of their daily life was based on the position of stars and planets, including the construction of their buildings. Several petroglyphs<sup>1</sup> scattered throughout the park are records of important astronomical events. One tour guide mentioned that some petroglyphs in Chaco Canyon might be a record of a total solar eclipse that occurred in 1097 AD.
- 13 As darkness fell, the sky was transformed into a vast starry glow. Living in a city with a lot of light at night, I had never witnessed the clarity of such a night sky. For the first time in my life, I was able to see the Milky Way—a long, glowing tail stretching across the sky. This location has been a place for stargazing for thousands of years. I was looking at the same sky that the Ancestral Pueblo would have watched so long ago!
- 14 The next morning, my tent and supplies packed in my car, I sat in the cool morning air. I watched the silent sandstone bluffs in the distance, thinking that if they could only speak, what stories they would tell.

<sup>1</sup>**petroglyphs:** drawings or carvings on rock

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Passage 2

Chaco Culture National Historical Park  
North America’s First Natural Wonder



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General Information

- SESSION  
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- 1 Located just a few hours from Albuquerque, New Mexico, Chaco Culture National Historical Park offers visitors an outdoor experience like no other. Visitors can walk among the ancient ruins of the Pueblo people who inhabited this region for over 2,000 years. The park’s numerous petroglyphs offer visitors a closer view into the daily lives of the ancient people. The Great Houses of Chaco Canyon represent an architectural achievement unrivaled in North America.
  - 2 The park is open all year round, closed only on Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day, and New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day.
  - 3 Park passes can be purchased at the Visitor Center for \$15 per person and are valid for 7 days.
  - 4 Guided tours of the Great Houses and Night Sky Program are offered through the Visitor Center.

Camping and Lodging

- 5 Visitors can enjoy camping in a high desert landscape only a mile from the Visitor Center. Water and bathrooms are available at the Visitor Center. Guests are expected to bring their own food and supplies, including charcoal and firewood. Visitors can make reservations anytime. Pets are allowed but must be on a leash. The campground offers RV, tent, and car camping.



**Hiking and Biking**

- 6 The park contains numerous trails linking visitors to the park’s many sites. Prior to hiking the trails, visitors must acquire a hiking permit (free of charge) from the Visitor Center. The trails range from 3 to 7 miles.
- 7 Visitors can hike The Petroglyph Trail to view dozens of ancient rock carvings. Binoculars are recommended for better viewing.
- 8 The park also contains a 9-mile loop of paved road that is ideal for biking. The loop closes at sunset.

**Night Sky Program**

- 9 Chaco Culture Park has been a place for stargazing for thousands of years. In 2013 it was officially named an International Dark Sky Park. Visitors can get a one-of-a-kind view into a night sky free of light pollution. At various times of the year, special programs take place at some of the ancient sites. Small telescopes are available for visitors to gaze at the night sky. Evening Night Sky Programs are held on Friday at sunset at the park’s observatory.

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**33.** Now read the writing task and draft a response. As you write, think about what makes writing successful.

**Features of Successful Writing**

Clearly addresses the topic and purpose identified in the prompt
Includes relevant and specific details and examples in support of ideas
Has a clear focus and an organizational plan
Uses language that is engaging and contributes to a style and tone appropriate to the task
Shows attention to sentence structure, sentence variety, and conventions (grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation)

**Writing Task**

SESSION  
2

You have read two passages about Chaco Culture National Historical Park. The two passages include information about what visitors to the park might see, experience, and learn during a visit to the park. Think about what makes Chaco Culture National Historical Park a place worth visiting.

Write an article that could be printed in your school newspaper to inform readers what makes Chaco Culture National Historical Park a good place for visitors to go on an overnight camping trip. Use details and examples from what you read, along with your own ideas and experience, to support your explanation.

- Today you will be writing an informative text. When you write to inform, you
- share what you know about a topic or subject with another person.
  - think about what the audience may already know or may want to learn about the topic or subject.
  - put your information in a logical order.
  - use examples, definitions, and specific details to make the information clear and interesting to your audience.

After you have read the passages, and before you begin writing, think about

- what you already know about what might make a camping trip fun and interesting.
- why Chaco Culture National Historical Park would be a good place for a camping trip.
- important things you learned by reading the passages.

Now write your response in the space provided.





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