

Dear Families,

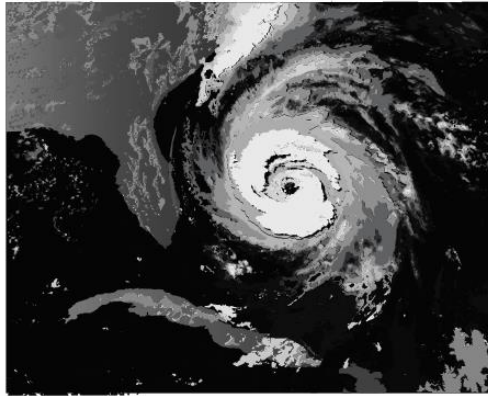
Below you will find four examples of texts and associated questions third grade students encounter on TCAP, our end-of-year state assessment. Each of these text and question sets has previously been used in operational testing and then released by the Tennessee Department of Education to districts. It is important to remember that these items reflect what students should know and be able to do at the end of the school year.

If you would like to see additional examples of texts, questions, and writing prompts from TDOE, you may visit their LiveBinder here: <https://www.livebinders.com/b/2426642>. Then, click any of the "TCAP Item Release" tabs to the left of the screen.

Example 1

Excerpt from *Hurricanes*

By Cari Meister



1 A hurricane is a swirling mass¹ of thunderstorms. Some people think they look like big twisting tops or giant snails. The average hurricane stretches 300 miles (483 km) across. Wind speeds inside hurricanes are usually 100 to 200 miles per hour (163 to 322 kph). A hurricane is full of big, dark clouds. Inside a hurricane thunder crackles and booms. Lightning lights up fierce clouds and rain pours.

2 It's hard to believe, but near the center of the hurricane there is a spot where the winds are calm. The spot is called the eye. Inside the eye, the sky is sunny. A circle of storm clouds, called the eyewall, forms a ring around the eye.

3 Hurricanes form over warm parts of the ocean. Every sea in the tropics can spawn a hurricane. Most hurricanes start over the Atlantic, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico. Hurricanes usually form in August, September, and October. Meteorologists refer to this time as hurricane season. . . .

4 Hurricanes cause a lot of destruction. But they are also an important part of the natural cycle. Hurricanes pick up water from the ocean. They often drop the water back on land.

5 People everywhere depend on rain from hurricanes. Hurricanes and other tropical storms account for 10 to 15 percent of the rain that falls in

¹ **Mass:** a large group of parts or objects

the Southeastern United States. Many farmers depend on hurricane rain. Their crops would die without it.

1. Which details from the passage **best** supports the idea that hurricanes are part of a natural cycle of events? (3.RI.KID.1)
 - A. They take ocean water and drop it on land.
 - B. They move over bodies of water.
 - C. They can form over every sea in the tropics.
 - D. They have sunny spots that form a ring.

2. Based on the passage, which weather condition would **most likely** result in a hurricane? (3.RI.KID.3)
 - A. Fast winds start blowing during a summer storm.
 - B. Thunder and lightning are heard and seen in a storm.
 - C. A storm grows over the Gulf of Mexico.
 - D. A storm moves over a farm in the Southeast.

3. Based on the topic sentence of each paragraph, where is the **best** place to find information about hurricanes that might surprise the reader? (3.RI.CS.5)
 - A. paragraph 1
 - B. paragraph 2
 - C. paragraph 4
 - D. paragraph 5

4. How does the author **best** support the point that people need hurricanes? (3.RI.IKI.8)
 - A. by describing what it is like inside of a hurricane
 - B. by listing the places where hurricanes start
 - C. by explaining what a hurricane season is
 - D. by stating how much rain comes from hurricanes

5. What does the picture of the hurricane help the reader understand? (3.RI.IKI.7)
 - A. how fast the winds of a hurricane are
 - B. how a hurricane drops large amounts of water
 - C. what an eye of a hurricane looks like
 - D. what type of destruction a hurricane causes

6. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B. (3.RI.CS.6)

Part A

Which sentence **best** states the author's point of view about hurricanes?

- A. They are dangerous but necessary.
- B. They are mainly positive forces.
- C. They are fun to watch.
- D. They are wild and unsafe.

Part B

Which detail from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "... stretches 300 miles (483 km) across." (paragraph 1)
- B. "... usually 100 to 200 miles per hour (163 to 322 kph)." (paragraph 1)
- C. "... forms a ring around the eye." (paragraph 2)
- D. "... crops would die without it." (paragraph 5)

7. Which phrase helps the reader understand the meaning of the word swirling as it is used in paragraph 1? (3.RI.CS.4)

- A. "big twisting tops or giant snails"
- B. "big, dark clouds"
- C. "crackles and booms"
- D. "lights up fierce clouds"

8. Based on the suffix **-ist**, what does the word meteorologists mean? (3.FL.PWR.3b)

- A. places for meteorology
- B. books about meteorology
- C. people who study meteorology
- D. tools used to study meteorology

Writing Prompt (3.W.RBPK.8)

You have just read a passage about hurricanes. Write a paragraph describing why hurricanes can be dangerous and what people can do to protect themselves in a hurricane.

You may use information from your own experiences and knowledge about the topic in your response.

Be sure to

- Answer the prompt completely.
- Write at least one paragraph.
- Use correct spelling and grammar.
- Use correct capitalization and punctuation.
- Provide evidence from the passage to support your response.

Take a few minutes to think about the passage and the prompt so you can plan your response before you begin to write. You may read the passage and the writing prompt again to yourself. Do your best to write a clear and complete response.

Assessment Information

Text Type: Informational

Lexile: 610-800

Word Count: 238

Answer Key

Item Number	Answer	Standard
1	A	3.RI.KID.2
2	C	3.RI.KID.3
3	B	3.RI.CS.5
4	D	3.RI.IKI.8
5	C	3.RI.IKI.7
6 Part A	A	3.RI.CS.6
6 Part B	D	3.RI.KID.1
7	A	3.RI.CS.4, 3.FL.VA.7a.i
8	C	3.FL.PWR.3b

Example 2

Excerpt from “Canning Day”

By Pegi Deitz Shea

The passage begins as Angelo and his great-aunt, Zia, are cooking and peeling tomatoes to put them in jars.

1 Angelo watched Zia put a peeled tomato into a jar. “Now you try.”

2 Angelo peeled and cored a tomato the size of a softball. But when he tried to squeeze it into the jar, it squirted all over Zia’s hair.

3 “I’m sor-,” he started to say. He ducked. Zia was shooting seeds back at him. Some landed on his cheek.

4 “Italian freckles, I call ‘em,” Zia declared.

5 Angelo laughed. “Zia, you look like bread sopped with sauce.”

6 “I do love my tomatoes.” Zia sighed. “You can make winter smell like summer just by prying open a jar. *Ffffft!* It even sounds great.”

7 “Is that why you go to all this trouble?”

8 “You call this trouble?” Zia stretched her arms out and twirled around. “I call it joy.”

9 “But you can just buy cans of tomatoes at the store, like Mom does.”

10 “Dust bunnies in ketchup is what *they* taste like!” Zia said.

11 They filled, cleaned, and capped the jars. Zia handed Angelo tongs that looked like a dinosaur’s jaw. She showed him how to place the jar on a rack inside a pot that covered the whole stove.

12 “How long does this cook?” Angelo asked.

13 “About an hour. Then we put more jars in.”

14 “It’ll take all day!”

15 “Isn’t that wonderful?” Zia kissed Angelo’s cheek. “Time to get more tomatoes.”

16 Outside, Angelo plucked a plump tomato and chomped down on it. Juice gushed out. He leaned forward, letting the liquid run off his chin onto the ground. “Well, that one was ready,” he said, after eating the whole thing.

17 Angelo examined a stem of a tomato plant. He wondered how something so fragile could be so strong.

18 Then he looked over at his great-aunt, and he knew.

19 The next morning when Angelo and his parents pulled up in two vehicles, Zia Angelina was ready to go. She pointed to a jar of tomatoes on the sparkling-clean counter.

20 “For me?” Angelo asked.

21 Zia pinched his cheek. “Save it for a snowy day.” She turned to Dad. “Would you please put that canning pot on the curb for the charity pickup?”

22 “But, Zia,” Angelo said, “aren’t you bringing it?”

23 Zia shook her head. “Got no room to grow tomatoes at the apartments. Everything’s set up there so you don’t have to lift a finger.”

24 Angelo thought Zia didn’t look so strong all of a sudden. He wondered if they’d ever can tomatoes again.

25 Outside, Dad helped Zia into the pickup truck. He started the engine.

26 Angelo walked to the curb and nudged the canning pot with his toe. “Think there’s room?” he asked Mom.

27 “Zia said she didn’t want it,” Mom reminded him.

28 “No, I mean at *our* house,” Angelo said.

1. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B. (3.RL.KID.3)

Part A

Which word **best** describes Zia in paragraphs 1 through 8?

- A. serious
- B. lively
- C. curious
- D. careful

Part B

Which detail from the passage supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "'Now you try.'" (paragraph 1)
 - B. "'I do love my tomatoes.' Zia sighed." (paragraph 6)
 - C. "'Is that why you go to all this trouble?'" (paragraph 7)
 - D. "Zia stretched her arms out and twirled around. 'I call it joy.'" (paragraph 8)
2. Why are paragraphs 11 through 15 important to the passage? (3.RL.CS.5)
- A. The paragraphs show how much Zia likes the long process of canning tomatoes.
 - B. The paragraphs suggest that Angelo would rather be doing something else.
 - C. The paragraphs show that Zia needs Angelo's help to can tomatoes.
 - D. The paragraphs suggest that Angelo has a hard time learning from Zia.
3. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

Which sentence **best** describes Zia's point of view in the passage?

- A. Canning is the only way to use up tomatoes in the garden.
- B. Canning is a good hobby because it creates something useful.

- C. Canned tomatoes made at home have a special taste and scent.
- D. Canned tomatoes from a store are sweeter and fresher than hers.

Part B

Which detail from the passage supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "“You can make winter smell like summer just by prying open a jar.”” (paragraph 6)
 - B. "“But you can just buy cans of tomatoes at the store, like Mom does.”” (paragraph 9)
 - C. "“Outside, Angelo plucked a plump tomato and chomped down on it.”” (paragraph 16)
 - D. "“She pointed to a jar of tomatoes on a sparkling-clean counter.”” (paragraph 19)
4. What do paragraphs 26 through 28 show about Angelo?
- A. He believes that Zia is making a mistake and will want her canning pot back.
 - B. He thinks that the pot can be used for things other than canning.
 - C. He enjoys canning tomatoes and wants to continue doing it in the future.
 - D. He wants to make sure Zia has the chance to can tomatoes in her new home.
5. Which sentence **best** states the central message of the passage?
- A. Unused objects should be given to others to enjoy.
 - B. Spending time with and learning from older family members is important.
 - C. Working hard and doing difficult tasks can be fun when family is there.
 - D. Food preparation skills can be interesting to learn.
6. Which phrase from paragraph 16 **best** shows the meaning of the word gushed?
- A. “. . . plump tomato . . .”
 - B. “. . . leaned forward. . .”
 - C. “. . . the liquid run off his chin . . .”
 - D. “. . . eating the whole thing.”

7. Read this sentence about the passage.

After twenty minutes, the tomatoes were uncooked.

Based on the prefix **un-**, what is the meaning of the word uncooked?

- A. not cooked
- B. cooked again
- C. cooked slowly
- D. well cooked

8. Read this sentence from paragraph 10.

“Dust bunnies in ketchup is what *they* taste like!”

What does Zia mean when she describes canned tomatoes in this sentence?

- A. They taste like sugar.
- B. They taste spicy.
- C. They taste like soil.
- D. They taste terrible.

Assessment Information

Text Type: Literary

Lexile: 410-600

Word Count: 496

Answer Key

Item Number	Answer	Standards
1 Part A	B	3.RL.KID.3
1 Part B	D	3.RL.KID.1, 3.RL.KID.3
2	A	3.RL.CS.5
3 Part A	C	3.RL.CS.6
3 Part B	A	3.RL.KID.1, 3.RL.CS.6
4	C	3.RL.KID.3
5	B	3.RL.KID.2
6	C	3.FL.VA.7a.i
7	A	3.FL.PWR.3.a
8	D	3.FL.VA.7b.i

Example 3

“The Snowman’s Gift”

By Marcia Wuest

1 When a snowman melts, it leaves us a gift that lasts all year. To find out what this gift is, let’s take a closer look at what happens to the snowman.

2 It has to be warm outside for a snowman to melt. As the sun shines, it makes heat. We can’t see heat, but we know it’s there because we feel the warmth on our hands and faces.

3 The snowman gets smaller and smaller as it melts, until we can’t see it at all. Where did it go?

4 As the snowman melts, it turns into water. If you look carefully at snow, you’ll see that it’s actually small pieces of ice (called crystals) that are stuck together. When they get warm, the crystals change from ice into water.

5 But where does the water from the snowman go? The ground acts like a sponge and soaks up the water. As the water seeps into the ground, it finds lots of things that are thirsty. The water might find grass roots, flower bulbs, or tree roots.

6 So that’s the snowman’s year-round gift – water!

7 Without water, we wouldn’t have colorful flowers to look at in the spring. Without water, we wouldn’t have soft, green grass to run barefoot on in the summer. Without water, we wouldn’t have strong, tall trees to climb in the fall. Water helps all of these things grow. The snowman’s gift lasts all year.

“The Snowman’s Gift,” by Marcia Wuest. Published in *Ladybug*, January 2015, Vol. 25, No. 4, © 2015 by Marcia Wuest/Carus Publishing Company/Cricket Media. Used by permission of the publisher via Copyright Clearance Center.

1. How do the details in paragraph 4 support the main idea of the passage?
 - E. by telling how ice and water are different
 - F. by telling how heat causes crystals to form
 - G. by telling how ice and crystals are alike
 - H. by telling how heat causes snow to become water

2. Which sentence **best** states the main idea of the passage?
 - E. Snow is made up of crystals.
 - F. Snow disappears in the heat.
 - G. Melted snow gives water to plants.
 - H. Melted snow helps flowers become colorful.

3. Which sentence **best** explains the relationship between the sun and the ice?
 - E. The sun turns the ice into crystals.
 - F. The sun turns the ice into water.
 - G. The sun makes the ice seem colder.
 - H. The sun makes the ice go into the ground.

4. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

How does the author support the point that the snowman's gift lasts all year?

- E. The author tells how the snowman's gift helps plants grow.
- F. The author tells how the snowman's gift keeps the ground dry.
- G. The author suggests that the snowman's gift makes people happy.
- H. The author suggests that the snowman's gift causes ice to form.

Part B

Which sentence from the passage supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "We can't see heat, but we know it's there because we feel the warmth on our hands and faces." (paragraph 2)

- B. "If you look carefully at snow, you'll see that it's actually small pieces of ice (called crystals) that are stuck together."
(paragraph 4)
 - C. "When they get warm, the crystals change from ice into water."
(paragraph 4)
 - D. "The water might find grass roots, flower bulbs, or tree roots."
(paragraph 5)
5. According to the process described in the passage, what happens after the ice crystals change into water?
- E. The sun heats up the water.
 - F. The water lasts all year long.
 - G. The sun makes the snowman melt.
 - H. The ground soaks up the water.

6. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

Which sentence would the author **most likely** agree with?

- E. Building a snowman makes the winter more fun.
- F. A melting snowman is bad for plants.
- G. A snowman is useful even after it melts.
- H. Warmth from the sun changes a snowman into ice crystals.

Part B

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- A. "It has to be warm outside for a snowman to melt." (paragraph 2)
- B. "As the sun shines, it makes heat." (paragraph 2)
- C. "The snowman gets smaller and smaller as it melts, until we can't see it at all." (paragraph 3)
- D. "As the water seeps into the ground, it finds lots of things that are thirsty." (paragraph 5)

7. Read this sentence from the passage.

To find out what this gift is, let's take a closer look at what happens to the snowman.

Which word **best** replaces the phrase take a closer look at in the sentence?

- E. observe
- F. compare
- G. explain
- H. guess

8. What is the correct way to divide the word together into syllables?

- E. tog/eth/er
- F. to/gether
- G. to/geth/er
- H. tog/ether

9. Based on the suffix **-ly**, what does the word carefully mean in paragraph 4?

- A. one who is careful
- B. being careful again
- C. in a careful way
- D. being the most careful

Assessment Information

Text Type: Informational

Lexile: 410-600

Word Count: 242

Answer Key

Item Number	Answer	Standards
1	D	3.RI.KID.2
2	C	3.RI.KID.2
3	B	3.RI.KID.3
4 Part A	A	3.RI.IKI.8
4 Part B	D	3.RI.KID.1, 3.RI.IKI.8
5	D	3.RI.KID.3
6 Part A	C	3.RI.CS.6
6 Part B	D	3.RI.KID.1, 3.RI.CS.6
7	A	3.FL.VA.7b.i
8	C	3.FL.PWR.3c
9	C	3.FL.VA.7a.ii

Example 4

Excerpt from *Hike*

By Susan Yoder Ackerman

1 We have the best kid job in the world, my brother Axel and I – playing with puppies. All through the sunny Alaska summer, that's what we do.

2 Our family raises sled dogs. In the winter Mom and Dad take people mushing. That's driving over the snow in a dog sled, and it's super fun! But I like the summer even more. That's when Bella has her pups.

3 Sled dogs are a mix of different breeds. Before the puppies are born, we never know exactly how they will look. But we do know they will grow up to be strong dogs who love to run. That's what it means to be a sled dog.

4 When the pups were born, I was so excited. Axel was nice; he said, "Zoey, you pick first."

5 That's when I saw my favorite – little Jip. His tiny nose was black in a white face. His ears and head were black too. It looked like he was wearing a hood to keep him warm in the snow – a perfect dog for northern winters!

6 Axel chose one that was light brown all over. He called her Sunshine. Bella didn't mind that we picked up her puppies and played with them. After all, the dogs and the people in this family are all part of the same pack. We see it that way, and so do the dogs.

7 Every chance I had, I cuddled little Jip in my arms. I kissed his nose and scratched his ears. I wrapped him in a T-shirt and carried him around. I rubbed his back and played with the little pads on his feet. I let his warm, wet tongue lick my fingers.

8 Axel did the same with Sunshine – and not just because it's fun to play with puppies. Getting them used to human touch makes a good sled dog, Dad says.

9 When Jip was eight weeks old and still just a roly-poly ball of fur, he got his first collar and his first job. It wasn't much of a job. All he had to do was toddle around for a few minutes every day with a light leash dragging behind him. Of course, he wanted to turn around and bit it and

play with it! That's a puppy for you! But he was getting used to the feel of something behind him.

10 When he was ten weeks old, I started teaching Jip to come when he was called. It was also time to try out a puppy-sized harness around his body. The harness can be a little heavy, so we left it on for just a short time each day to let him get used to it. Jip didn't mind. It seemed like another game to him.

11 Later, I put Jip's harness on him at mealtime. I tied it to a heavy chair. I placed his food bowl just far enough away that when he ate, he pulled the line tight.

12 Even though it would be so many months before he pulled a sled, Jip was getting the feel of a harness tight across the chest.

13 The pups grew fast! When they were four months old, we tied our old shoes to their harnesses. They ran ahead of us, dragging the light weights. Sunshine was a little afraid, so Axel had to take it slow. But Jip loved it.

14 Axel and I worked together. Some days he'd run ahead of Jip, while I ran behind. When I yelled "Whoa!" Axel would stop and I'd jump on the shoe Jip was dragging. Then I'd praise my puppy for stopping. After we caught our breath, I'd yell "Hike," and we'd all start running again. Other days I'd run ahead, with Axel following Sunshine, teaching her the commands for stop and go.

15 Like wolves, sled dogs have a strong instinct to chase anything that's moving. And that includes chipmunks, mice, and squirrels! We started teaching the command "On by!" That means leave the rabbit alone! A sled dog must ignore distractions and stay on the trail.

16 Soon the short summer was over. The first snowstorm buried the world in white. The pups were so happy! They are made for snow and ice.

Excerpt from "Hike" by Susan Ackerman, from *Click Magazine*, Jan 2015. Copyright © 2015, Carus Publishing Company. Used by permission of Cricket Media Inc. via Copyright Clearance Center.

1. What happens **first** in the text?
 - E. Zoey picks Jip to train.
 - F. Bella has her puppies.
 - G. Jip gets his first collar.
 - H. Axel and Zoey teach command words.
2. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B?

Part A

What does distractions mean as it is used in paragraph 15?

- E. rocks on the trail
- F. commands for “stop” and “go”
- G. praise from humans
- H. things that are not important

Part B

Which sentence from the passage supports the correct answer to Part A?

- A. “Then I’d praise my puppy for stopping.” (paragraph 14)
 - B. “Like wolves, sled dogs have a strong instinct to chase anything that’s moving.” (paragraph 15)
 - C. “We started teaching the command ‘On by!’” (paragraph 15)
 - D. “The first snowstorm buried the world in white.” (paragraph 16)
3. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B?

Part A

What are **two** actions Zoey does to help the puppies learn how to be good sled dogs?

- E. explains the work that sled dogs do
- F. tells Jip he is fast
- G. names animals that sled dogs like to chase
- H. teaches Jip to come when he is called
- I. tells the reader about Alaska
- J. takes care of Bella’s puppies to get them used to human touch

Part B

What message can be learned from the answers to Part A?

- A. It is easy for people to train sled dogs.
 - B. Old dogs cannot be trained to be sled dogs.
 - C. Sled dogs need people to train them.
 - D. Sled dogs work quickly.
4. Select **two** central ideas from the text.
- E. Sled dogs can be trained by adults.
 - F. People in Alaska often train dogs in the winter.
 - G. Sled dogs go through many steps when training as puppies.
 - H. Mother dogs train puppies.
 - I. Training sled dogs can be fun.

Assessment Information

Text Type: Informational

Lexile: 410-600

Word Count: 716

Answer Key

Item Number	Answer	Standard
1	B	3.RI.KID.3
2 Part A	D	3.FL.VA.7a.i
2 Part B	B	3.FL.VA.7a.i
3 Part A	D, F	3.RI.KID.2
3 Part B	C	3.RI.KID.2
4	C, E	3.RI.KID.2