New York State English As A Second Language Achievement Test

NYSESLAT

Name: _____

Grades 9–12

SPEAKING

LISTENING
READING
WRITING

Test Booklet

TEST SAMPLER

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Directions

I am going to ask you some questions. Listen and then answer. Be sure to answer in English using your own words.

Scientists study many different things.

1.

2.

3.

4.

1 **Tell me what other scientists do.**

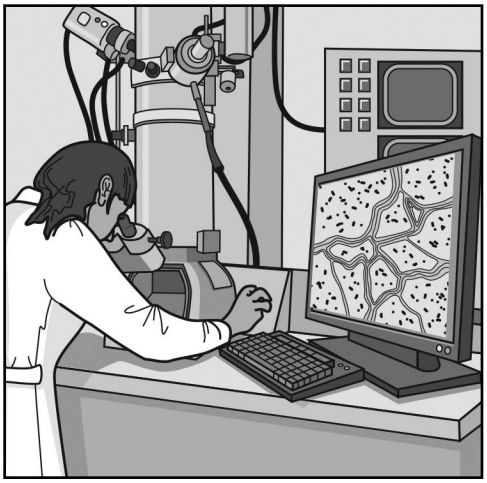
Go On

For hundreds of years, scientists have used different tools to look at things that are very small. In the past, they used things like special glasses and microscopes. More advanced and powerful versions of these tools have been developed over time. Some scientists today use computer technology.

1.

2.

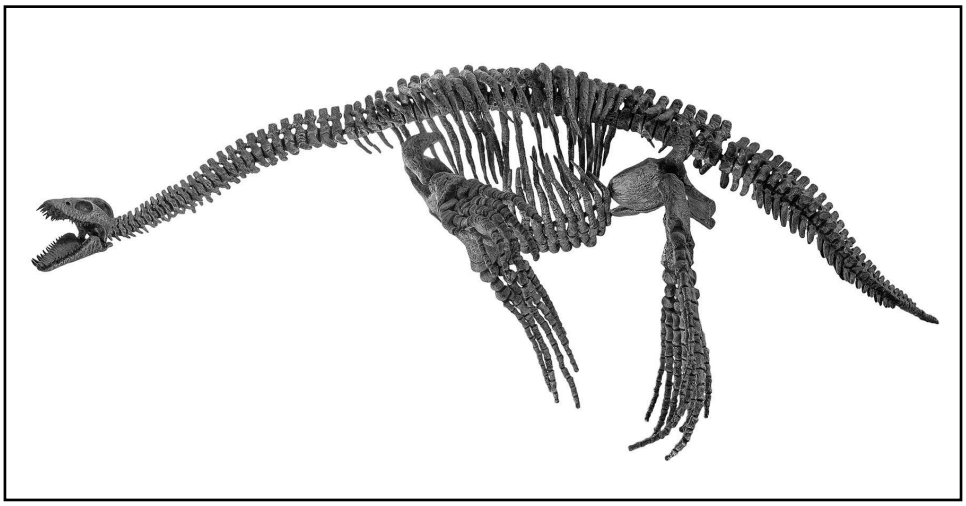
3.



2 **Tell me how scientific technology and tools are different today than in the past.**

Directions

Now let's talk about a scientist named Mary Anning.



When an animal dies, its body may become covered by dirt, and over time, that dirt can turn into rock. This rock, shaped like the animal's body, is a fossil. Mary Anning has been called a great fossil hunter. In the early 1800s, she and her brother discovered the fossil of an entire dinosaur on the cliffs near their home in England. This led 10-year-old Mary Anning on a lifelong search for fossils. She eventually became a respected scientist known for her discoveries of many fossils. These fossils can be seen in various museums around the world today.

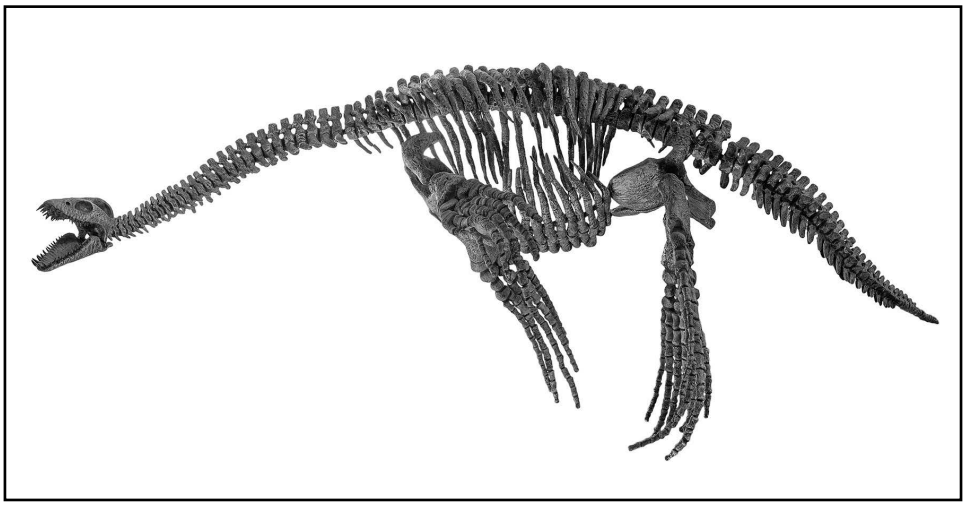
Before her time, Earth science was not considered to be as important as physics or chemistry. Thanks to the work of people like Mary Anning, scientists realized that the study of rocks and fossils helps us better understand Earth and its history. Today, Earth science is an important branch of science.

3 **Tell me about Mary Anning's work as a scientist.**

Go On

Directions

You just learned about a scientist named Mary Anning.



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4 **Tell me why some people would say that Mary Anning made an important contribution to science.**

Directions

Now let's talk about Roman concrete.

The Coliseum, Rome, 80 B.C.

The ancient Roman Empire is famous today for many of its buildings. Today we can still see the Coliseum, an arena that was used for sporting events, as well as the Pantheon, which is still used today as a church. We can also still see aqueducts, which were structures used for the transportation of water across the empire. All of these were built using concrete.

Today people are very interested in this concrete because it lasted for such a long time. These buildings were built nearly 2,000 years ago. In some ways, this concrete is not as strong as modern concrete; it cannot hold as much weight. However, Roman concrete lasts much longer. Scientists think that this durability comes from the ingredients used to make the concrete. One of the ingredients was ash from the eruption of a volcano. This ash is not used in modern concrete, but may be helpful in improving modern engineering.

5 **Tell me how ancient Romans used concrete.**

Go On

You just learned about Roman concrete.

The Coliseum, Rome, 80 B.C.

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6 **Tell me how the concrete used in ancient Rome is different from modern concrete.**

STOP

LISTENING
READING
WRITING

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Directions

Listen to the passage. Then answer Questions 1 through 6. Fill in the correct circle on your answer sheet.

Bringing Silk to the West

Go On

1 **Which phrase explains where the Roman Empire obtained new items?**

A At its peak

B Around the world

C Luxurious, soft material

D Large amounts

2 **Which phrase helps explain the meaning of traders?**

A The world

B Began selling

C Was available

D Began to seek

3 **Which phrase from the passage indicates that silk is a popular clothing material, even today?**

A Originally believed

B Collected these threads

C Still frequently used

D In some areas

4 **Which word describes the items the Romans obtained?**

A Grown

B Wealthy

C Exotic

D World

5 **Which phrase helps explain the meaning of exotic?**

A Large and wealthy

B New, unfamiliar

C Luxurious, soft material

D Began to seek

6 **Which pair of phrases from the passage supports the idea that the Romans were eager to buy silk?**

A The Roman Empire had grown
Between the Roman Empire and China

B Spent large sums of money
Traded gold and other goods to obtain it

C Grew on Chinese trees
Collected these threads

D Still frequently used around the world

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Directions

Read the passage. Then answer Questions 7 through 12. Fill in the correct circle on your answer sheet.

Oral Histories: New and Old

An oral history involves obtaining, recording, and preserving people's memories. It is a kind of interview in which one person recalls events or circumstances from the past and another person records the interview in order to preserve it. The means of recording can vary from taking notes by hand to using audio and video technologies.

Since an oral history is based on an individual's personal memories and experiences, it must take place during the lifetime of the person being interviewed. For this reason, there is often a sense of urgency about oral histories. For example, the men and women who served in World War II during the 1940s are now in their eighties and nineties. Soon there will be no survivors still living. There is an urgency to collect any stories the survivors have not yet told. No one else can recall what happened in the same way that the survivors can.

Go On

Oral histories focus on the lives of ordinary people and also enhance what we know about public figures. Shortly after Abraham Lincoln's death in 1865, his secretary and law partner, William Herndon, gathered recollections of Lincoln from people who had known and worked with him. Similarly, soon after Bill Clinton left the presidency, former officials from his administration began to record their memories of what they had experienced while working with Clinton. These oral histories greatly improve our understanding about these presidencies.

The story of the Civil Rights Movement in this country also has been told through oral histories. Many projects begun over the last 50 years have captured the voices of men, women, and children who participated in the national effort by black people and others in the 1950s and 1960s to eliminate segregation and gain equal rights.

Still other oral history projects have been conducted within communities to document the lives of long-time residents or local leaders. Students in middle and high schools frequently conduct oral history projects as part of their education. Although these projects are of a smaller scale, they serve to record people's experiences that would otherwise be lost.

Oral history is not new. Although technologies may have changed the methods, it remains the oldest type of historical documentation. Over the years, the goal has remained the same—to tell history in the voices of those who experienced it.

7 **Read these sentences again.**

"Shortly after Abraham Lincoln's death in 1865, his secretary and law partner, William Herndon, gathered recollections of Lincoln from people who had known and worked with him. Similarly, soon after Bill Clinton left the presidency, former officials from his administration began to record their memories of what they had experienced while working with Clinton."

Which word shows that the two oral history projects were alike in some way?

A Shortly

B After

C Similarly

D Soon

8 **Read this paragraph again.**

"Oral histories focus on the lives of ordinary people and also enhance what we know about public figures. Shortly after Abraham Lincoln's death in 1865, his secretary and law partner, William Herndon, gathered recollections of Lincoln from people who had known and worked with him. Similarly, soon after Bill Clinton left the presidency, former officials from his administration began to record their memories of what they had experienced while working with Clinton. These oral histories greatly improve our understanding about these presidencies."

Which phrase explains why oral histories about Abraham Lincoln and Bill Clinton are important?

A ". . . William Herndon, gathered recollections of Lincoln . . . ."

B ". . . improve our understanding about these presidencies."

C ". . . focus on the lives of ordinary people . . . ."

D ". . . former officials from his administration began to record . . . ."

9 **Read this paragraph again.**

"Still other oral history projects have been conducted within communities to <u>document</u> the lives of long-time residents or local leaders. Students in middle and high schools frequently conduct oral history projects as part of their education. Although these projects are on a smaller scale, they serve to record people's experiences that would otherwise be lost."

Which phrase helps explain the meaning of <u>document</u>?

A Have been conducted

B Record people's experiences

C On a smaller scale

D Part of their education

Go On

10 **Read this paragraph again.**

"Oral histories focus on the lives of ordinary people and also enhance what we know about public figures. Shortly after Abraham Lincoln's death in 1865, his secretary and law partner, William Herndon, gathered recollections of Lincoln from people who had known and worked with him. Similarly, soon after Bill Clinton left the presidency, former officials from his administration began to record their memories of what they had experienced while working with Clinton. These oral histories greatly improve our understanding about these presidencies."

Which phrase helps explain the meaning of improve?

A Focus on the lives

B Gathered recollections

C Began to record

D Enhance what we know

11 **Read the last paragraph of the passage again.**

"Oral history is not new. Although technologies may have changed the methods, it remains the oldest type of historical documentation. Over the years, the goal has remained the same—to tell history in the voices of those who experienced it."

Which phrase shows the reason for this type of documentation?

A Tell history

B Not new

C The oldest type

D Remained the same

12 **Read these phrases again.**

". . . obtaining, recording, and preserving people's memories."

". . . collect any stories the survivors have not yet told."

". . . tell history in the voices of those who experienced it."

Which idea about oral histories do these phrases support?

A Oral histories teach us how to repeat the activities that people experienced during the past.

B Oral histories help us avoid repeating the mistakes that occurred in the past.

C Oral histories help us preserve thoughts and activities of the past.

D Oral histories teach us how people used technology in the past.

STOP

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Directions

Read this passage. Then you will be asked to write one paragraph based on the passage.

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Oral history is not new. Although technologies may have changed the methods, it remains the oldest type of historical documentation. Over the years, the goal has remained the same—to tell history in the voices of those who experienced it.

13 **Now read the directions below.**

The passage "Oral Histories: New and Old" mentions several oral history projects. Who would you like to interview for an oral history project and why? Write one paragraph to tell who you would interview for an oral history project and why you would choose that person. Use your own ideas and ideas from the passage to help you write.

Checklist ☑

- ☐ Write about the topic.
- ☐ Plan your writing from beginning to end.
- ☐ Use your own ideas and ideas from the passage.
- ☐ Support your answer with details.
- ☐ Use complete sentences.
- ☐ Check your writing for grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

On the lines below, tell who you would interview for an oral history project and why you would choose that person. Remember to use your own ideas and ideas from the passage to help you write.

STOP

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Directions

Read this passage. Then you will be asked to write at least two paragraphs based on the passage.

Protecting Our Night Skies

Orbital view of artificial light in the United States

Many people around the world are concerned about the impact humans have on our environment. While this may seem like a modern problem, over one hundred years ago the U.S. government began to recognize the need to protect its country's unique places. In 1872, the U.S. Congress took a historic step toward protecting and preserving natural spaces with the establishment of its first national park—Yellowstone National Park. In the years following Yellowstone's creation, national park land was set aside across the United States. The National Park Service was founded in 1916 in order to manage and promote these precious sites.

Go On

Millions of people visit national parks in the United States each year to enjoy gorgeous scenery, stunning natural wonders, and the opportunity to see wildlife in its natural habitat. What many don't realize is that, in addition to protecting landscapes and wildlife, the National Park Service also assists in the preservation of another rapidly disappearing resource—views of the night sky. Since national parks have been maintained in their natural state, their skies have less light pollution than the skies over areas with houses, cities, and other sources of artificial, or man-made, light.

Light pollution, also referred to as "photopollution," was not a problem when the first national parks were established. Over the years, however, it has increased significantly. Today, light from man-made sources affects the ability of nearly all people in the United States to see the stars, planets, and other features of the night sky. This increase in artificial light is problematic for many reasons. The feeding and mating patterns of nocturnal animals, which are active in the dark, can be negatively influenced if the night sky is too bright. In addition, light pollution can be confusing to migrating birds and sea turtles, which use natural light sources to guide them as they travel.

Humans, too, can be affected by photopollution. When we are exposed to too much light at night, our mood and sleeping patterns can be disturbed or disrupted. In addition, night-sky darkness has scientific and educational value—looking up at the stars encourages us to learn about the universe and our place in it.

Educating the public is one of the ways in which the National Park Service works to protect the night skies. Many national parks offer nighttime tours or stargazing opportunities, where guides teach visitors about the stars. The National Park Service developed the Night Skies Program in 1999. This program is led by a team of researchers that evaluates and monitors the parks' night skies. By using advanced light-sensing equipment, these scientists take detailed measurements of the light in the sky at night. In this way, they can track light pollution levels and the different kinds of light pollution in the parks.

The Night Skies Program team uses all of this data to find new and better ways to decrease existing light pollution. Through its efforts to solve the problem of photopollution, the National Park Service shows that it is able to face modern challenges while honoring its commitment to protect its unique environment.

Go On

14 **Now read the directions below.**

> The passage "Protecting Our Night Skies" describes how the National Park Service works to control light pollution. How does light pollution affect humans and the environment? Write at least two paragraphs to describe how light pollution affects humans and the environment. Use your own ideas and ideas from the passage to help you write.

You may plan your writing for Question 14 here, if you wish. Use the space below to organize your ideas about what to write. Your writing on this planning page will NOT count toward your final score.

Write your final answer on Pages 27 and 28.

Planning Page

Checklist ☑

- ☐ Write about the topic.
- ☐ Plan your writing from beginning to end.
- ☐ Use your own ideas and ideas from the passage.
- ☐ Support your answer with details.
- ☐ Use complete sentences.
- ☐ Check your writing for grammar, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

On the lines below, describe how light pollution affects humans and the environment. Remember to use your own ideas and ideas from the passage to help you write.

Go On

Writing, continued

STOP

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