

SPRING BREAK  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS PACKAGE  
Ms. Jackson



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Have a blessed and safe vacation!!!!!!  
The grade for this package will be on your next progress report!!!!!!



# English Language Arts

## READING COMPREHENSION

### DIRECTIONS

This session contains two reading selections with twelve multiple-choice questions and two open-response questions. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

*What was life at night like before people had electric light? Read the article and answer the questions that follow.*

## Summer, Winter, Spring, Fall ... and Night?

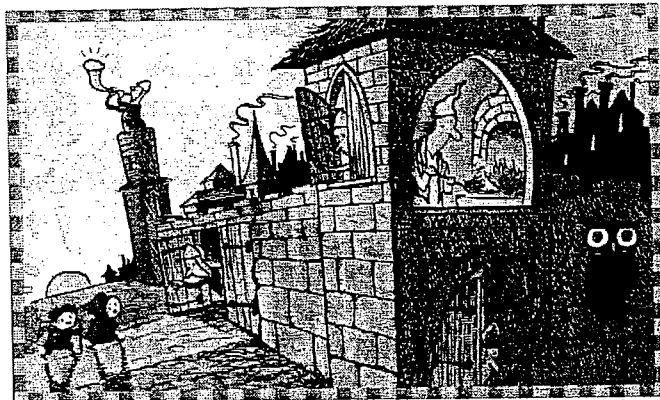
by Meg Moss

*Once upon a time, people thought of nighttime as a different season.*

- 1 **W**hat's the first thing you do in a dark room? Turn on the light, of course. Going outside after dinner? Grab a flashlight. You probably don't even think about the falling darkness as day slips quietly into night. Lights twinkle on and life continues.
- 2 Imagine what life was like before you could flip a switch. For most of history, with no electricity to light up cities, streets, or living rooms, the nighttime was truly dark. Until Thomas Edison invented the electric lightbulb—100 times brighter than a candle—people depended on fire. They burned wood, oil, or gas in torches, fireplaces, and primitive lamps. Stinky but cheap candles made of animal fat dimly lit many homes.
- 3 In Europe before electric lights, life in the day and night was so different that people considered the darkness a separate season. To overcome the difficulties of the unlit night and track and tame the darkness, they divided the hours between sunset and dawn into segments.

### Sunset

- 4 Because the earth turns, the sun is forever setting somewhere in the world. In fact, half the globe is always in darkness. That means night is huge—it covers 98.5 million square miles of the earth's surface all the time. But who cares? Night only matters when it's falling on you. Long ago, sunset signaled the approaching end of the day's useful



Our word **curfew**—a time set to be home or off the street—comes from the French for “cover fire.”

## ELA Reading Comprehension

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hours; people scurried home from the fields and the shops to prepare for the coming darkness.

### Shutting-In

- 5 In 15th-century England, people began “shutting-in” as the night fell. In medieval villages and towns, bells, horns, and drums warned folks to hurry home. Walled cities closed their gates and pulled up their drawbridges. Some pulled big chains or logs across the streets to discourage residents from venturing out—and criminals from making fast getaways.
- 6 Of all night’s dangers, townsfolk feared fire the most. Candles and fireplaces blazed everywhere and required constant tending. Wood and thatched houses could burn fast, and a shortage of water made firefighting difficult. The most important thing people had to do at shutting-in was to cover their hearth fires with ashes to make them burn slowly and safely.

### Candlelighting

- 7 Once indoors, families carefully got ready for darkness. Folded clothes made it easier to dress in the dark if necessary. Some people pushed furniture against the walls so as not to trip in the pitch black. People believed the night air to be poisonous, or at least unhealthy, so they tightly closed and locked all windows and doors. In wealthy households, thick curtains around the bed helped to block out the bad air. And everyone wore a nightcap.
- 8 In winter, people warmed their beds by slipping hot rocks or a metal pan filled with hot coals beneath the covers. Whether bedding down on a straw mattress or an elegant four-post bed, sleepers checked for fleas and lice before turning in. In some homes, entire families slept in the same bed and even shared it with visitors and strangers. Just before bedtime, people prayed for safe delivery through the dark hours.

### Bedtime

- 9 While some people tucked in, others ducked out. Without streetlights, however, travel at night could be dangerous. People memorized the local landscape, remembering the locations of ditches, ponds, trees, and other obstacles to avoid in the night’s complete darkness. Many people believed that supernatural beings came out at night, so it was smart to know where the ghosts, elves, and fairies lurked.
- 10 To find their way, some travelers marked their route during the daytime with white, chalky soil. Those on foot wore light-colored clothing so that coach drivers could see them, and nighttime riders preferred white horses. A gentleman returning home after dark depended on a servant with a lantern. Less well-off or unprepared travelers took their chances, sometimes stumbling to their deaths in a deep ditch or remote lake.

## ELA Reading Comprehension

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### Midnight

- 11 When you sleep, you probably dream your way right through the midnight hour. In fact, most of us in the modern world think that an uninterrupted night's sleep is ideal. But it wasn't always so. Before electric lights, people slept in two phases each night. In between, they awoke and spent an hour or two reading by candlelight, thinking about their dreams, or conversing with a bedfellow. Some folks even arose to tend to animals or chat with neighbors. People valued this dark and peaceful time as an escape from the hard lives they led.
- 12 Today, people who live in traditional farming societies without electric lights still sleep this way. Curious to find out more about these long, two-part nights, scientists experimented by confining a small group of volunteers every night for a month without electric lights. After a few days, the volunteers began to awaken each midnight for an hour or two and then return to sleep. The researchers identified chemicals in the volunteers' brains that kept them in a relaxed and peaceful state, even when awake. Darkness, it seems, triggers these chemicals to control and regulate our sleep. Today, instead of responding to natural changes in light and dark, these chemicals don't go to work until we turn out the lights. Does it matter? Is a longer night's sleep divided into two segments healthier than our short, modern nights? No one yet knows.

### Dead of Night

- 13 Before streetlights, in the wee hours between midnight and 3 a.m., much mischief could be done. Burglars and other bad guys roamed the streets and country roads, holding up travelers and breaking into homes under cover of darkness. In the cities, noisy gangs might disturb the dark predawn hours. Many towns and cities employed night watchmen to patrol the darkened streets or keep watch from towers or city walls. They rang the fire alarm and enforced the curfew. On quiet nights, they strolled the streets, calling out the time and perhaps the weather or a reassuring "All's well." As years went by, police replaced the old-fashioned night watchmen.

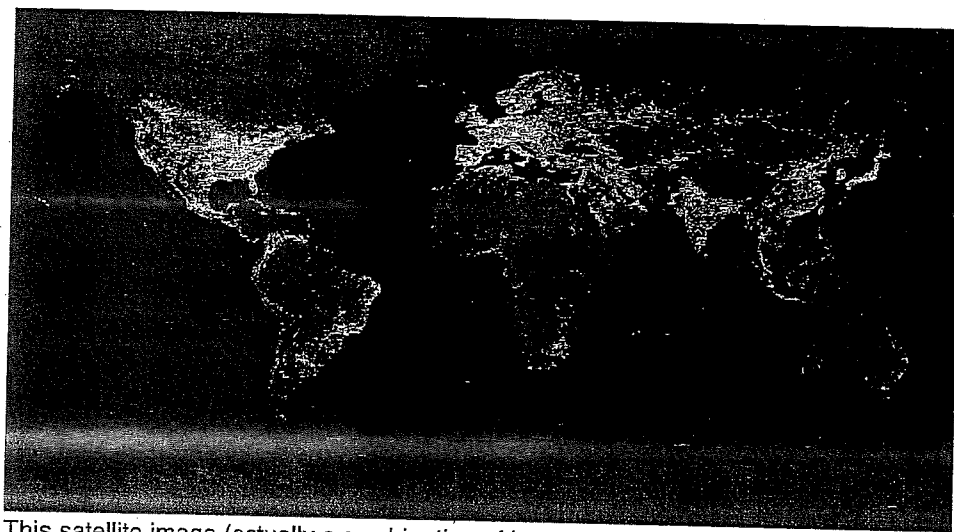
### Cockcrow

- 14 For merchants, fishers, and farmers, the working day was not far off by cockcrow at 3 a.m. But some folks were already hard at work by then. Bakers, shepherds, garbage collectors, and street cleaners worked in the darkness. The dark was perfect for digging graves and cleaning out sewers, jobs that were illegal to do by day.

### Dawn

- 15 The "night season" drew to a close at sunrise. People could see again, dress, work, and move about easily without fear. The poisonous night air lifted, and the peril of ghosts, burglars, and large ditches faded away. Until sunset.

## ELA Reading Comprehension



This satellite image (actually a combination of images) shows the earth at night in the 21st century. Even now, many places don't have electric lights. . . .

24/7

- 16 In the 1700s, people's attitudes toward the darkness in countries like England and France changed. They began to believe more in science and less in superstition, so the nighttime became less scary. They invented ways to light the streets, so the nighttime became less dark. Folks stayed up later and went outdoors for fun, shopping, and work. Authors, poets, and artists began to discover the beauty of the night. Sleeping in two phases began to fade. After Edison perfected the lightbulb in 1879, the custom disappeared.
- 17 Today, people live and work 24/7. Life in the darkness of night differs little from life in the lightness of day. We sleep, of course, but around us the world is alive with activity and bright with light. Have we gone too far? Some people think so. The International Dark-Sky Association believes that light pollution—too much artificial light at night—wastes energy, harms the health of humans and nighttime animals, and destroys the beauty of the night. Its mission is “to preserve and protect the nighttime environment and our heritage of dark skies.” In response, cities, companies, and universities are installing dark-friendly lights to reduce the glare and glow that destroy our sense of the darkness and our view of the night.

“Summer, Winter, Spring, Fall . . . and Night?” by Meg Moss, from *Ask*, October 2007. Text copyright © 2007 by Carus Publishing Company. Illustration copyright © 2007 by David Clark. Reprinted by permission of Cricket Magazine Group, Carus Publishing Company. Satellite image by NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center Scientific Visualization Studio.

## ELA Reading Comprehension

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- 1 In paragraph 1, what point is the author making?
- A. People should spend more time outside at night.
  - B. People today are wasteful with electricity at night.
  - C. People want to return to a time when night was exciting.
  - D. People today take their mastery over the night for granted.
- 2 Which of the following examples is the **most** similar to the way people in medieval times prepared to travel at night?
- A. A blind person memorizes the location of the furniture in her home.
  - B. A person fills up her car with gas before driving to her night job.
  - C. A hiker brings a sleeping bag with him during a nighttime hike.
  - D. A person researches the history of a town he is going to.
- 3 What do the results of the experiment described in paragraph 12 suggest about sleeping in phases?
- A. It can make people smarter.
  - B. It can make people irritable.
  - C. It might be more natural for people than continuous sleep.
  - D. It might promote more frightening dreams than continuous sleep.
- 4 Based on paragraph 14, in medieval times how were merchants and farmers different from bakers and street cleaners?
- A. Merchants and farmers woke up later.
  - B. Merchants and farmers worked harder.
  - C. Merchants and farmers earned more money.
  - D. Merchants and farmers did more dangerous work.

## ELA Reading Comprehension

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- 5 What does the satellite image of the earth **mainly** show?
- A. how many people travel around the world at night
  - B. how beautiful the earth is at night from outer space
  - C. the number of people who wake up once during the night
  - D. the different amounts of nighttime illumination across the earth
- 6 What is the **main** purpose of the subheadings in the article?
- A. to lead the reader through the stages of night
  - B. to show how nighttime changed through history
  - C. to highlight the author's feelings about nighttime
  - D. to set up a comparison between ancient and modern times
- 7 In paragraph 4, what does the use of the word "scurried" suggest about people in the past?
- A. They were mischievous.
  - B. They disliked their jobs.
  - C. They enjoyed sleeping long hours.
  - D. They were eager to be inside at night.

## ELA Reading Comprehension

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Question 8 is an open-response question.

- Read the question carefully.
- Explain your answer.
- Add supporting details.
- Double-check your work.

Write your answer to question 8 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

- 8** Based on the article, explain what people in the past did to protect themselves from the dangers of nighttime. Support your answer with important and specific information from the article.



# English Language Arts

## READING COMPREHENSION

### DIRECTIONS

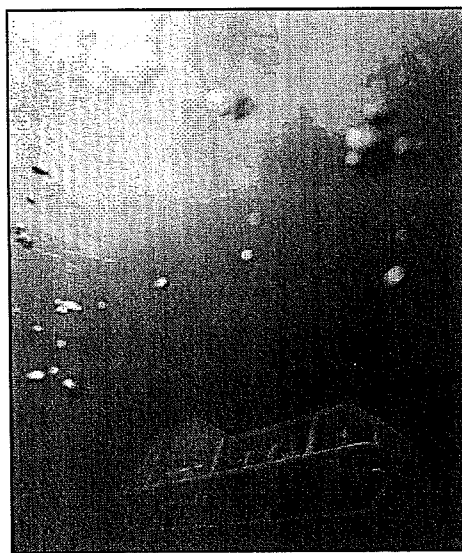
This session contains three reading selections with twenty-one multiple-choice questions and three open-response questions. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

*On April 14, 1912, the passenger ship R.M.S. Titanic hit an iceberg in the North Atlantic Ocean and sank. Robert Ballard led a search for the sunken ship in 1985. At the beginning of this selection, Ballard and his team are nearing the end of their scheduled time at sea. Read the selection and answer the questions that follow.*

### from **Exploring the Titanic**

by Robert D. Ballard

- 1 Then we had only five days left to go. The crunch had come. Suddenly the ocean seemed huge, and our doubts began to grow. Was the *Titanic* really in our carefully plotted search area? If so, surely something would have shown up on our monitor screens by now. Were we looking in the wrong place? Would we return empty-handed? I began to feel a rising panic.
- 2 In a last-ditch effort, we decided to check out a tiny portion of ocean bottom that Jean-Louis and his SAR sonar system had missed because of strong currents. We headed to that spot ten miles away.
- 3 But as we began to tow *Argo*<sup>1</sup> back and forth across the new search area, our hopes really began to fade. There was nothing down there. By now the routine inside our control room had become mind-numbing: hour after hour of staring at video images of flat bottom mud. On top of that, we were exhausted. The strain of it all was getting to us, and the boredom was becoming unbearable. Then, with a bad turn in the weather and only four days left, we reached our lowest point. I began to face total defeat.
- 4 Just after midnight, on September 1, I went to my bunk for some rest, and the night shift led by Jean-Louis manned their stations. About an hour into their watch, one of the team members asked the others, "What are we going to do to keep ourselves awake tonight?" All they'd seen so far was mud and more mud, endless miles of nothing. Stu Harris, who was busy flying *Argo*, didn't answer. His eyes were glued to the *Argo* video monitor.
- 5 "There's something," he said, pointing to the screen. Suddenly every member of the sleepy watch was alive and alert. No one could believe it wasn't just another



A photograph of the *Argo* as it works underwater

<sup>1</sup> *Argo* — the underwater vessel that contained a video camera

## ELA Reading Comprehension

false alarm, or a joke. But, no, there on the screen were clear images of things man-made. Stu yelled, “Bingo!” The control room echoed with a loud “Yeah!” from the whole team, and then wild shrieks and war-whoops. All sorts of wreckage began to stream by on the screen. Then something different appeared — something large and perfectly round. Jean-Louis checked in a book of pictures of the *Titanic*. He came across a picture of the ship’s massive boilers, used to burn coal and drive the engines. He couldn’t believe his eyes. He looked from book to video screen and back again. Yes, it was the same kind of boiler!

- 6 I scrambled out of my bunk when I got the news and ran to the control room. We replayed the tape of the boiler. I didn’t know what to say. I turned to Jean-Louis. The look in his eyes said everything. The *Titanic* had been found. We’d been right all along. Then he said softly, “It was not luck. We earned it.”

- 7 Our hunt was almost over. Somewhere very near us lay the R.M.S. *Titanic*.

- 8 Word had spread throughout the ship. People were pouring into the control room. The place was becoming a madhouse. Everyone was shaking hands and hugging and slapping each other on the back.

- 9 It was now almost two in the morning, very close to the exact hour of the *Titanic*’s sinking. Someone pointed to the clock on the wall. All of a sudden the room became silent.

- 10 Here at the bottom of the ocean lay not only the graveyard of a great ship, but of more than 1,500 people who had gone down with her. And we were the very first people in seventy-three years to come to this spot to pay our respects. Images from the night of the disaster — a story I now knew by heart — flashed through my mind.

- 11 Out on the stern of the *Knorr*,<sup>2</sup> people had started to gather for a few moments of silence in memory of those who had died on the *Titanic*. The sky was filled with stars; the sea was calm. We raised the Harland & Wolff flag, the emblem of the shipyard in Belfast, Ireland, that had built the great liner. Except for the shining moon overhead, it was just like the night when the *Titanic* had gone down. I could see her as she slipped nose first into the glassy water. Around me were the ghostly shapes of lifeboats and the piercing shouts and screams of passengers and crew freezing to death in the water.

- 12 Our little memorial service lasted about ten minutes. Then I just said, “Thank you all. Now let’s get back to work.”



Wreckage of the *Titanic*

<sup>2</sup> *Knorr* — the research ship used by Robert Ballard

## ELA Reading Comprehension

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1 According to the selection, how did crew members make certain that they had found the correct ship?

- A. They sent a diver down to explore the wreckage.
- B. They compared what they saw to old photographs.
- C. They had an expert examine the items they picked up.
- D. They saw the name of the ship on a piece of wreckage.

2 What is the **most likely** reason paragraph 7 is so short?

- A. to suggest the narrator's doubts
- B. to show how little time was left
- C. to show the narrator's exhaustion
- D. to highlight the drama of the event

3 Based on paragraphs 9 and 10, which reason **best** explains why "the room became silent"?

- A. The crew members realized they had a lot of work left to do.
- B. The crew members did not want to wake others who were asleep.
- C. The crew members were thinking about the tragedy of the *Titanic*.
- D. The crew members were not certain that they actually found the *Titanic*.

## ELA Reading Comprehension

- 4 Read the sentences from paragraph 11 in the box below.

... it was just like the night when the *Titanic* had gone down. I could see her as she slipped nose first into the glassy water. Around me were the ghostly shapes of lifeboats and the piercing shouts and screams of passengers and crew freezing to death in the water.

Which of the following **best** describes the sentences?

- A. The narrator is watching a movie.
- B. The narrator is imagining the scene.
- C. The narrator is remembering his past.
- D. The narrator is reading about an event.

- 5 Based on paragraphs 1 and 2, what is a “last-ditch effort”?

- A. a deep dive into unexplored areas
- B. a plan to do something dangerous
- C. a final try to accomplish something
- D. a way to correct a previous mistake

## ELA Reading Comprehension

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Question 6 is an open-response question.

- Read the question carefully.
- Explain your answer.
- Add supporting details.
- Double-check your work.

Write your answer to question 6 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

- 6 Based on the selection, describe the narrator's feelings about the search for and the discovery of the sunken *Titanic*. Support your answer with important details from the selection.

