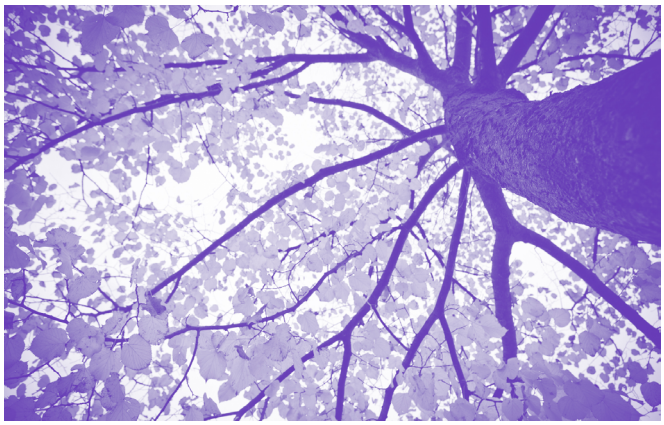

Exemplar Grade 7 Reading Test Questions

ACT® Aspire®

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Introduction

This booklet explains ACT® Aspire® Grade 7 Reading test questions by presenting, with their answer keys, sample questions aligned to each reporting category on the test. A key includes the question's depth-of-knowledge (DOK) level,[1] an explanation of the task posed by each question, a thorough explanation of correct responses, ideas for improvement, and more. The exemplar test questions included here are representative of the range of content and types of questions found on the ACT Aspire Grade 7 Reading test. Educators can use this resource in several ways:

- Become familiar with ACT Aspire question types.
- See what typical questions in each ACT Aspire reporting category look like.
- Help reinforce or adjust teaching and learning objectives.
- Learn how ACT Aspire improvement idea statements can help students identify key skills they have not yet mastered.

Each ACT Aspire Reading assessment contains several passages, including literary narratives (prose fiction, memoirs, personal essays) and informational texts (social science, natural science). Within and across grade levels, the passages span a range of complexity levels in order to provide students, teachers, and parents with information about how well students understand texts of increasing difficulty. Students answer a series of selected-response (multiple-choice), technology-enhanced, and constructed-response questions that assess their abilities to recognize meaning in, reason logically about, and make connections between and among texts. ACT Aspire Reading questions operate at various DOK levels, or cognitive complexities, and reflect a range of difficulty appropriate for the grade level.

All levels of ACT Aspire Reading assessments include constructed-response tasks that measure the higher-order cognitive processes necessary for reading and understanding increasingly complex texts. Constructed-response tasks are scored according to rubrics that allow students to receive varying amounts of credit for responses that are correct or partially correct, enabling differentiation between multiple skill levels.

The types of constructed-response tasks in ACT Aspire Reading assessments include the following examples:

- Formulate a conclusion by making connections within a passage, and provide support using specific details from the text.

[1] Norman L. Webb, "Depth-of-Knowledge Levels for Four Content Areas," last modified March 28, 2002, **http://facstaff.wcer.wisc.edu/normw/All%20content%20areas%20%20DOK%20levels%2032802.doc**.

- Formulate a conclusion by making connections between a pair of passages, and provide support using specific details from both texts.
- Identify cause-and-effect relationships within a passage, and provide support using specific details from the text.
- Identify similarities and differences between the key ideas of paired passages, and provide support using specific details from both texts.

Reporting Categories

ACT Aspire Reading tests assess skills in the following reporting categories, which are the same as the categories listed in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Reading strand and those found in the ACT College and Career Readiness Standards in Reading.

Key Ideas and Details

These questions require students to read texts closely; to determine central ideas and themes and summarize information and ideas accurately; and to understand sequential, comparative, and cause-effect relationships.

Craft and Structure

These questions require students to determine word and phrase meanings and analyze an author's word choice rhetorically; to analyze text structure; and to understand purpose and point of view.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

These questions require students to understand how arguments are constructed and to make connections to prior knowledge and between and among texts.

Improvement Ideas

ACT Aspire includes simple improvement ideas at the reporting category (skill) level on student and parent reports. These improvement ideas are provided for the lowest performing skill for each subject tested. The skills are always ordered from highest performing to lowest performing based on the percentage of points correct. If the percentages for two or more skills are tied, the skill with the lower number of total points is displayed first.

Keep in mind that the order of skills listed on reports may not always be exemplary of where to focus learning. For example, the skills in which a student performed within the ACT Readiness Range may not always be listed first, and the skills in which a student did not perform within the ACT Readiness Range may not always be listed last. Also, keep in mind the total number of points possible in each skill when interpreting the percentage correct.

There are two levels of improvement idea statements (low and high) for ACT Aspire summative reporting. Low statements are given on the report if the student's lowest skill score is below the ACT Readiness Range for that particular skill. High statements are given on the report if the student's lowest skill score is at or above the ACT Readiness Range for that particular skill.

Answer Key

This section presents a reading passage and the sequence number, grade, question type, DOK level, alignment to the ACT Aspire reporting categories, and correct response for each question. Each question is accompanied by an explanation of the question and the correct response as well as improvement idea statements for ACT Aspire Reading.

Passage: "Now You See It, Now You Don't"

Now You See It, Now You Don't

NATURAL SCIENCE: This passage is an original work of nonfiction.

Oregon is home to one of the most famous lakes in the world. This lake is not very large—about the size of a football field. It never gets very deep, either—at most nine feet, the height of a middle-school basketball rim. What makes this lake spectacular is that it disappears each spring, turning into a meadow. In the fall, during the rainy season, it returns to being a lake. Indigenous people in the region call the place "Kwoneksamach," or "unknown." European Americans in the 1880s couldn't find it at the spot marked on their map and called it Lost Lake.

Lost Lake is found in the Cascade Mountains, which are part of the Willamette National Forest, located about two hours southeast of Portland. This mountain range consists of large and small volcanoes, a few of which are still active. It is the story of the volcanoes that solves the mystery of Lost Lake.

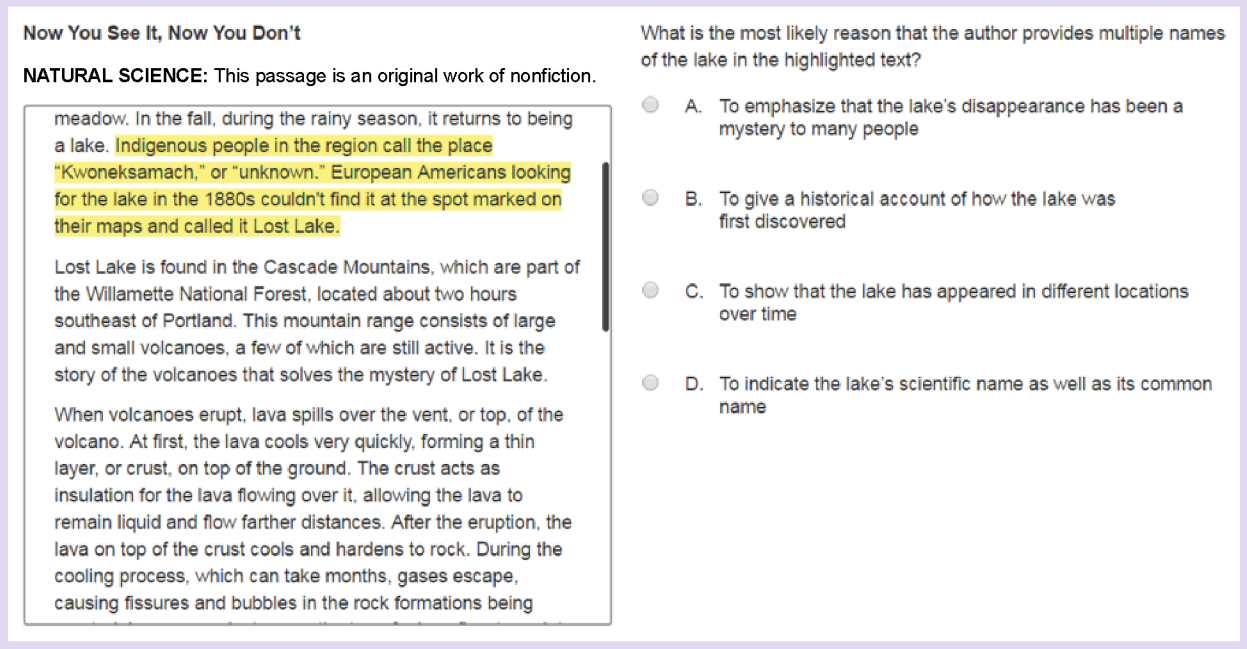
When volcanoes erupt, lava spills over the vent, or top, of the volcano. At first, the lava cools very quickly, forming a thin layer, or crust, on top of the ground. The crust acts as insulation for the lava flowing over it, allowing the lava to remain liquid and flow farther distances. After the eruption, the lava on top of the crust cools and hardens to rock. During the cooling process, which can take months, gases escape, causing fissures and bubbles in the rock formations being created. In very rare instances, the top of a lava flow turns into a crusty layer as well, creating a tube through which hot lava flows. After the eruption, the tube becomes rock and is called a lava tube.

Lost Lake sits on fissured volcanic rock created about 12,000 years ago. Later, roughly 3,000 years ago, a lava flow dammed a river, creating Lost Lake. Along with the fissures through which water seeps, there are two small lava tubes under the lake. Water from the lake flows down through these tubes, constantly draining, like water in an unplugged sink. In the late fall and winter, rain and snow provide enough water to keep the lake full, despite the drain. At the end of the rainy season, the water empties into the lava tubes until the lake is gone.

Geologists (scientists who study rocks) think that after the water goes down the tubes, it probably seeps slowly through cracks in the volcanic rocks below into an aquifer, an underground layer of rock that can hold water. Another opinion was expressed by a spokesperson for the Willamette National Forest: "Here in western Oregon, the water comes out at the valley floor and supplies drinking water and an important habitat for humans, fish, and all kinds of species." It takes roughly seven to ten years for Lost Lake water to filter into the water supply.

Lava tubes are found wherever there are volcanoes. They can be large enough to walk around in, like the Thurston Lava Tube on the island of Hawaii, or extremely long, like the lava tube in Australia that once extended for 100 kilometers. However, very few lava tubes are found under bodies of water. The water disappearing from Lost Lake each year may no longer be a mystery, but it is a natural wonder.

Question 1



Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	Reporting category	Correct response
1	7	Selected response	3	Craft and Structure	A

This selected-response question requires students to analyze the main purpose of specific sentences in a text (aligns with the Common Core State Standards College and Career Readiness anchor standard [CCRA] R.5). To answer the question, students must read the entire passage carefully, determine the implied purpose of the highlighted sentences within the context of the passage, and distinguish this purpose from functions that are subordinate or for which no text support exists.

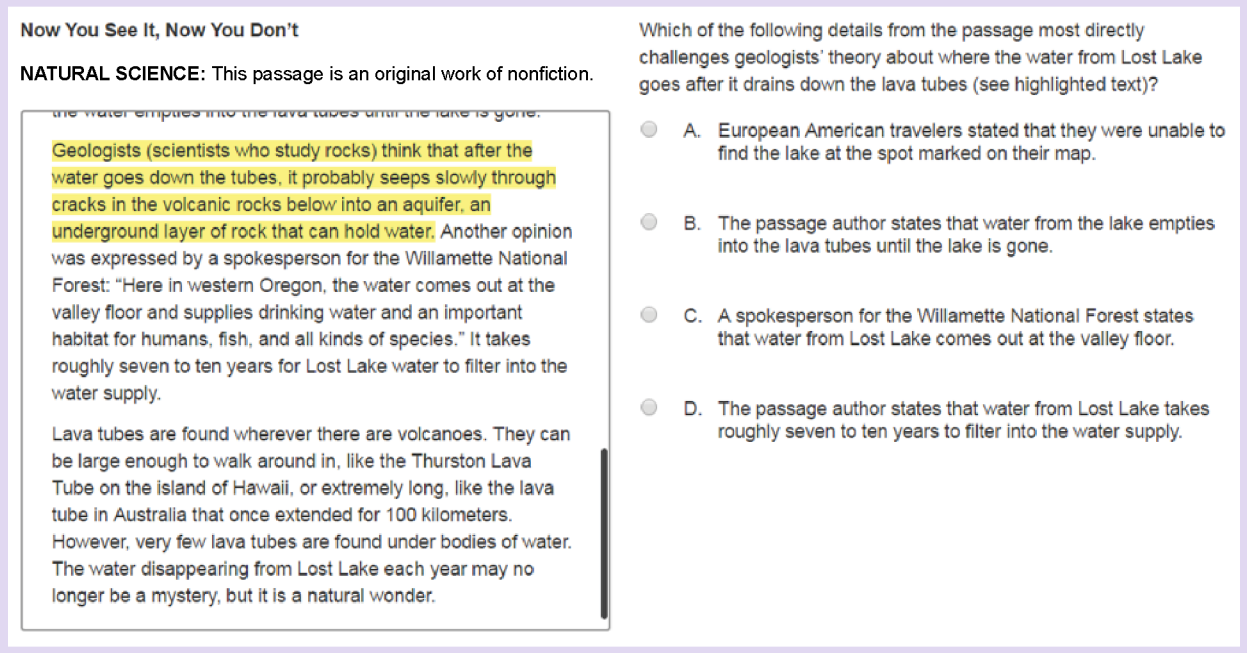
Correct Response

Only answer option A accurately describes the main purpose of the highlighted sentences ("To emphasize that the lake's disappearance has been a mystery to many people"). The other answer options offer functions of the highlighted sentences that are not supported by information in the passage.

Improvement Idea Statements

Reporting category	Grade	Low statement (scored below ACT Readiness Range)	High statement (scored at or above ACT Readiness Range)
Craft and Structure	7	As you read, consider the purpose of texts and parts of texts, how texts are structured, how authors use point of view, how context helps determine word meanings, and how authors use words and phrases.	Read as many above grade-level texts as you can, especially informational texts. Analyze how texts are organized, how authors use point of view, and how authors use words and phrases.

Question 2



Now You See It, Now You Don't

NATURAL SCIENCE: This passage is an original work of nonfiction.

the water empties into the lava tubes until the lake is gone.

Geologists (scientists who study rocks) think that after the water goes down the tubes, it probably seeps slowly through cracks in the volcanic rocks below into an aquifer, an underground layer of rock that can hold water. Another opinion was expressed by a spokesperson for the Willamette National Forest: "Here in western Oregon, the water comes out at the valley floor and supplies drinking water and an important habitat for humans, fish, and all kinds of species." It takes roughly seven to ten years for Lost Lake water to filter into the water supply.

Lava tubes are found wherever there are volcanoes. They can be large enough to walk around in, like the Thurston Lava Tube on the island of Hawaii, or extremely long, like the lava tube in Australia that once extended for 100 kilometers. However, very few lava tubes are found under bodies of water. The water disappearing from Lost Lake each year may no longer be a mystery, but it is a natural wonder.

Which of the following details from the passage most directly challenges geologists' theory about where the water from Lost Lake goes after it drains down the lava tubes (see highlighted text)?

A. European American travelers stated that they were unable to find the lake at the spot marked on their map.

B. The passage author states that water from the lake empties into the lava tubes until the lake is gone.

C. A spokesperson for the Willamette National Forest states that water from Lost Lake comes out at the valley floor.

D. The passage author states that water from Lost Lake takes roughly seven to ten years to filter into the water supply.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	Reporting category	Correct response
2	7	Selected response	3	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	C

This selected-response question requires students to evaluate the specific claims in a text (aligns with CCRA R.8). To answer the question, students must read the entire passage carefully, identify the claim that is being presented in the highlighted quotation, and evaluate the logical relationship between this claim and other details presented in the passage.

Correct Response

Only answer option C is best described as challenging geologists' theory about where the water from Lost Lake goes ("A spokesperson for the Willamette National Forest states that water from Lost Lake comes out at the valley floor"). The other answer options offer details that either support the theory in the highlighted quotation or have no clear logical relationship to the highlighted quotation.

Improvement Idea Statements

Reporting category	Grade	Low statement (scored below ACT Readiness Range)	High statement (scored at or above ACT Readiness Range)
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	7	As you read, consider how authors present their arguments. Also read multiple texts with similar topics or similar themes and look for connections between and among these texts.	Read as many above grade-level texts as you can, focusing on informational texts. Think about how authors construct arguments and support claims. Also, look for connections between and among related texts.

Question 3

Now You See It, Now You Don't

NATURAL SCIENCE: This passage is an original work of nonfiction.

Oregon is home to one of the most famous lakes in the world. This lake is not very large—about the size of a football field. It never gets very deep, either—at most nine feet, the height of a middle-school basketball rim. What makes this lake spectacular is that it disappears each spring, turning into a meadow. In the fall, during the rainy season, it returns to being a lake. Indigenous people in the region call the place "Kwoneksamach," or "unknown." European Americans looking for the lake in the 1880s couldn't find it at the spot marked on their maps and called it Lost Lake.

Lost Lake is found in the Cascade Mountains, which are part of the Willamette National Forest, located about two hours southeast of Portland. This mountain range consists of large and small volcanoes, a few of which are still active. It is the story of the volcanoes that solves the mystery of Lost Lake.

When volcanoes erupt, lava spills over the vent, or top, of the volcano. At first, the lava cools very quickly, forming a thin

This question has 3 parts. You must enter your answer for each part in the box provided. Read all parts before answering.

Part A

Identify one way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

600

Part B

Identify a second way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

600

Part C

Identify a third way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

600

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	Reporting category	Correct response
3	7	Constructed response	2	Key Ideas and Details	See sample student responses.

This constructed-response task requires students to understand stated and implied cause-and-effect relationships (aligns with CCRA R.3). Specifically, this task requires students to determine how volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake. Students must read the passage carefully and construct a written response that demonstrates an understanding of the cause-and-effect relationship stated in the prompt.

Improvement Idea Statements

Reporting category	Grade	Low statement (scored below ACT Readiness Range)	High statement (scored at or above ACT Readiness Range)
Key Ideas and Details	7	Read a variety of grade-level texts, focusing on informational texts. Work on reading closely, determining main ideas/ themes, and identifying sequences and relationships (comparative, cause/effect).	Read increasingly complex texts from a variety of genres. Work on making and supporting reasonable inferences and on identifying and inferring main ideas, themes, sequences, and relationships.

Scoring Framework

Evidence
A detail the author uses to show how volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake (1 point)
A detail the author uses to show how volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake (1 point)
A detail the author uses to show how volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake (1 point)

Sample Student Response—Score Point 3

Part A

Identify one way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

Lost Lake was created 3,000 years ago when a lava flow blocked a river.

Part B

Identify a second way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

Lost Lake's water seeps through the fissures of the volcanic rock underneath the lake.

Part C

Identify a third way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

Lost Lake's water drains out through two small lava tubes that are under the lake.

Scoring Rationale

3 This response earns Score Point 3.
- An acceptable response is offered in Part A.
- An acceptable response is offered in Part B.
- An acceptable response is offered in Part C.

Sample Student Response—Score Point 2

Part A

Identify one way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

"Roughly 3,000 years ago, a lava flow dammed a river, creating Lost Lake."

Part B

Identify a second way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

Water seeps through cracks in the volcanic rocks under the lake.

Part C

Identify a third way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

The water goes into an underground rock layer called an aquifer.

Scoring Rationale

2 This response earns Score Point 2.

- An acceptable response is offered in Part A.
- An acceptable response is offered in Part B.
- This response does not earn credit for Part C because it is not evidence supporting the prompt; it is a detail about Lost Lake, but it does not relate to volcanic activity.
- Please note that a student may also receive Score Point 2 if acceptable responses are offered in any two of the three parts.

Sample Student Response—Score Point 1

Part A

Identify one way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

disappears each spring, becomes a meadow

Part B

Identify a second way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

fills up during rainy season, becomes a lake

Part C

Identify a third way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

made when a lava flow dammed a river

Scoring Rationale

1 This response earns Score Point 1.

- An acceptable response is offered in Part C.
- This response does not earn credit for Part A because it is not evidence supporting the prompt; it is a detail about Lost Lake, but it does not relate to volcanic activity.
- This response does not earn credit for Part B because it is not evidence supporting the prompt; it is a detail about Lost Lake, but it does not relate to volcanic activity.
- Please note that a response may earn Score Point 1 if evidence is offered in any one of the three parts.

Sample Student Response—Score Point 0

Part A

Identify one way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

a volcano contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake

Part B

Identify a second way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

volcanoes solve the mystery of Lost Lake

Part C

Identify a third way that volcanic activity contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

lava tubes are found wherever there are volcanoes

Scoring Rationale

0 This response earns Score Point 0.

- This response does not earn credit for Part A because it is a restatement of the prompt.
- This response does not earn credit for Part B; it suggests that volcanoes are related to Lost Lake, but it does not explain how volcanic activity contributed to the formation of Lost Lake.
- This response does not earn credit for Part C; it mentions lava tubes, but it does not explain how lava tubes contributed to the unusual formation of Lost Lake.

Scoring Guidelines

i. Creditable evidence may be verbatim, paraphrased, or a logical inference based on information from the text.

ii. If a response gives the same answer or support twice using different words, it does not earn additional points.

iii. Responses do not have to be in complete sentences. Even a one- or two-word response can receive a point.

iv. Extraneous material in a response, as long as it doesn't contradict the appropriate response, is not taken into consideration when assigning a score.

v. Each part of the response must be entered in the correct box. Each part can receive a maximum of 1 point, even if multiple pieces of evidence are offered in the same box.