

PRACTICE EXAM 8: EQAO GRADE 6 LANGUAGE SIMULATION (47 QUESTIONS)

READING SESSION A

Time: Approximately 35 minutes

Passage 1: "The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter"

A short story told through diary entries by Aisha Brent

April 3, 1894

Father is gone again. The supply boat came yesterday and took him to the mainland for medicine. Mother is sick with the fever that has been moving along the coast. I am alone at the lighthouse with her, and I am eleven years old, and I am not afraid.

I am writing this in the kitchen at the small table where Mother used to set down the lamps for cleaning. The light is on. I lit it myself this evening — climbed the spiral stairs the way Father has shown me a hundred times. The wick is steady. The lens is clean. The ships will see us tonight.

Mother is sleeping. Her face is too warm.

April 4, 1894

The wind picked up at three o'clock this morning. I heard it tear at the shutters before I was fully awake. I checked the light. It was still burning steadily. I checked Mother. She was still warm but had eaten a little broth.

The supply boat will not return today. The captain said two days, three at most. But no boat will land here in this wind. The waves are higher than the bottom of the cliff.

I lit the light again at sunset. My hands shook on the second match.

April 5, 1894

There is a ship.

I saw it just before dawn — a sail, far out, struggling against the storm. I could not see the colours. I could not see the flag. But I could see that it was being pushed toward the rocks at the southern point.

The light has been burning all night. I have not let it go out for one minute. I have been climbing the stairs every two hours to check.

The ship is still there. It is closer to the rocks than it was before.

I am writing this with one hand on my pen and one hand on the bell rope. Father said the bell is for when the light is not enough.

I pulled it.

I pulled it twenty times. I do not know if anyone heard.

April 6, 1894

The ship is gone.

When I climbed the stairs this morning, the bay was empty. The storm was easing. I do not know if the ship made it past the rocks or struck them. I will not know until the supply boat returns.

Mother's fever broke during the night. She is weak but speaking. She did not know that I had been at the light alone for three days. She thinks Father has been here.

I have not told her.

April 9, 1894

The supply boat returned this afternoon. Father came back with the captain. He brought medicine, flour, and the news.

There was a ship caught in the storm on the third night. A schooner called the Mary Catherine, sailing from Boston with twelve people on board. The captain told Father that they had been pushed by the wind toward the rocks at the southern point. They had given up hope. They were preparing for the worst.

Then the captain saw a light. A small, steady light, burning at the top of a cliff. He saw it through the spray of the waves, and he saw a second flash from a bell tower beside it. He turned the ship. He used the light to guide them past the rocks.

Twelve people came home that week because of a light that did not go out.

Father did not say much when the captain finished telling him. He looked at me for a long time. He set down his cup of tea. He walked over to me. He put both of his hands on my shoulders.

"Eleanor," he said. His voice was thicker than I had ever heard it. "You are a lighthouse keeper."

I did not say anything. I think I could not.

Mother is recovering. The lens is clean. The wick is steady. The supply boat returns again next week.

I am eleven years old.

I will turn twelve in October.

1. What is the MOST LIKELY reason the author chose to tell this story through DIARY ENTRIES with dated headings?

- A. To prove that Eleanor was a skilled writer for her age in 1894
- B. To show events unfolding day by day from Eleanor's own perspective
- C. To make the story more difficult for readers to follow than usual
- D. To suggest that diary writing was the most popular activity in 1894

2. Read this line from the April 3 entry:

"I am writing this in the kitchen at the small table where Mother used to set down the lamps for cleaning."

What does the word used to in this sentence MOST LIKELY suggest?

- A. Mother is currently too sick to do her usual lamp-cleaning work
- B. Mother no longer lives at the lighthouse with her family
- C. Mother had been replaced by a new helper at the lighthouse
- D. Mother had moved the lamps to a different room recently

3. Why does Eleanor MOST LIKELY write "I am eleven years old, and I am not afraid" in the very first entry?

- A. To prove to anyone reading the diary that she is a brave child
- B. To explain why her father trusted her to look after her mother
- C. To convince herself that she can handle the situation she is facing
- D. To show that she does not understand how serious the storm will be

4. Read this line from the April 4 entry:

"My hands shook on the second match."

What does this small detail MOST LIKELY suggest about Eleanor?

- A. Her hands were cold from the wind blowing through the lighthouse
- B. The wooden matches she was using were dangerous and unreliable
- C. She had never lit the lighthouse lamp by herself before that day
- D. The fear she is hiding from the diary is starting to show through

5. Why does Eleanor write that she "pulled it twenty times" when she rang the bell?

- A. To show the urgency and desperation she felt as the ship neared the rocks
- B. To prove that she had counted exactly how many times the bell rang
- C. To explain why her arms were tired the following morning at sunrise
- D. To suggest that the bell was difficult to ring for any extended period

6. When Eleanor's father says, "Eleanor, you are a lighthouse keeper," what is he MOST LIKELY communicating?

- A. He wants her to take over the lighthouse permanently from now on
- B. He is officially giving her a job title for her work in the lighthouse
- C. He recognizes that what she did showed she has the heart of a keeper
- D. He is reminding her that she is just one of many lighthouse workers

7. What is the central THEME of this story?

- A. Children should always be brave when their parents are away from home
- B. Lighthouses were the most important safety tools used at sea in the 1890s
- C. Sickness can strike a family at the worst possible time of year
- D. Quiet courage in a difficult moment can save more lives than the person knows

8. Why does Eleanor MOST LIKELY end the diary by mentioning that she will turn twelve in October?

- A. She is hoping that her father will give her a special birthday gift
- B. She is signalling that she has grown up in ways larger than her age
- C. She is worried that she may not be alive to see her next birthday
- D. She wants to remind herself of how young she still is for her work

9. (Open-Response)

Explain how the diary format helps the reader experience the events of the storm as Eleanor experienced them. Use at least TWO specific details from the passage to support your answer.

(Write your response in the space provided.)

Passage 2: "The Ballad of the River Boy" — A Narrative Poem

By Eugene Falconer

(A ballad — a song-like poem that tells a story.)

There was a boy in Riverbend,
A boy of twelve or so,
Who loved the rushing river more
Than anyone could know.
He fished it in the morning,
He waded it at noon,
He sat beside it after dark
And spoke things to the moon.
His mother often warned him,
"The river takes its own.
Do not go near it after rain.
Stay home. Stay near. Stay known."
The boy would nod politely,
He'd promise her the same,
But every Saturday at dawn
He'd whisper out his name —
And slip out through the kitchen,
And run across the field,
And come back wet to find his mother
Pale and almost ill.
One April after three long days
Of rain that would not stop,
The river rose six metres
And swallowed every crop.
The boy stood at the kitchen window,

Watching the brown flood pass.
He saw a calf, half-drowning,
Pressed up against the grass.
He did not stop to think.
He did not stop to call.
He ran through the wet pasture
Where the river took it all.
He pulled the calf from the water,
Used a rope and his own arm.
He brought it shivering to the barn,
Where it found the others, warm.
His mother stood beside him
When he came in with the rope.
She did not speak. She did not scold.
She gave him bread and hope.
"You went," she said. "I told you not.
But you went where you were called.
A river takes its own, my child —
But sometimes lets us hold."

11. What is the MAIN message (theme) of this poem?

- A. Children should always disobey their parents in serious emergencies
- B. Rivers and floods are too dangerous for any child to approach
- C. Sometimes courage means acting on what feels right, even against advice
- D. Rural families were unfairly affected by floods in earlier times

12. What kind of poem is this called, based on its structure and content?

- A. A ballad — a song-like poem that tells a story

- B. A free-verse poem — a poem with no regular pattern
- C. A haiku — a short three-line poem about nature
- D. A concrete poem — a poem shaped like its subject

13. Read these lines from the poem:

"He sat beside it after dark / And spoke things to the moon."

What does this MOST LIKELY suggest about the boy?

- A. The boy is afraid of being inside the house with his family at night
- B. The boy is unable to fall asleep until he has visited the river first
- C. The boy uses the moon as a kind of compass to find his way home
- D. The boy has a deep, private connection to the river and nature

14. What does the mother's warning — "The river takes its own" — MOST LIKELY mean?

- A. The river belongs to the families who live closest to its banks
- B. The river is dangerous and has claimed lives that came too close to it
- C. The river only floods during the spring rainy season every year
- D. The river fish are not safe for the local families to catch

15. (Open-Response)

The short story "The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter" and the poem "The Ballad of the River Boy" both describe young people who do brave things during dangerous weather. Choose ONE specific way these two pieces are SIMILAR. Use details from BOTH pieces to support your answer.

(Write your response in the space provided.)

What Lightning Actually Is

A bolt of lightning is a giant electrical discharge — a burst of electricity that travels between two points where there is a large difference in electrical charge. Usually, this happens between the bottom of a storm cloud (which becomes negatively charged) and the ground (which becomes positively charged). The air between the cloud and the ground normally acts as an insulator — meaning it does not allow electricity to flow through it easily. But when the difference in charge becomes large enough, the air gives way, and a massive surge of electricity rushes from the cloud to the ground.

This surge happens incredibly fast — in less than a thousandth of a second. The temperature inside the bolt of lightning reaches approximately 30,000 degrees Celsius. This is about five times hotter than the surface of the Sun.

How That Heat Becomes Sound

Here is the part that surprises most people. When the lightning bolt heats the air around it to such an extreme temperature, the air does not just get warm — it explodes outward. The air expands so rapidly that it creates a shock wave, sending vibrations rolling outward in every direction. Those vibrations are what we hear when they reach our ears.

That is thunder.

In other words, thunder is the sound of air violently expanding away from the path of a lightning bolt. The lightning came first. The thunder comes after — sometimes immediately, sometimes after a noticeable delay — because sound travels much more slowly than light.

Counting the Distance

Because light travels nearly a million times faster than sound, the flash of lightning reaches our eyes almost instantly, while the thunder takes longer to arrive. This delay is what makes it possible to estimate how far away a thunderstorm is.

The rule is simple. Sound travels through air at roughly 343 metres per second, which works out to approximately one kilometre every three seconds. To estimate the distance of a lightning bolt:

Step 1: Watch for the flash of lightning.

Step 2: Begin counting the seconds until you hear the thunder.

Step 3: Divide the number of seconds by three.

Step 4: The result is the approximate distance, in kilometres, between you and the lightning.

A three-second gap means the lightning struck about one kilometre away. A nine-second gap means three kilometres. A thirty-second gap means about ten kilometres.

Different Kinds of Thunder

Not all thunder sounds the same. Sometimes thunder is a sharp, sudden crack. Other times it is a long, slow rumble that can last for many seconds. The difference depends on the lightning bolt itself.

A short, nearby lightning bolt produces a sharp crack — the shock wave reaches the listener all at once. A long, distant lightning bolt produces a rolling rumble — different parts of the lightning bolt are at different distances from the listener, so the sound waves arrive at slightly different times. The result is a sound that seems to roll and stretch through the sky.

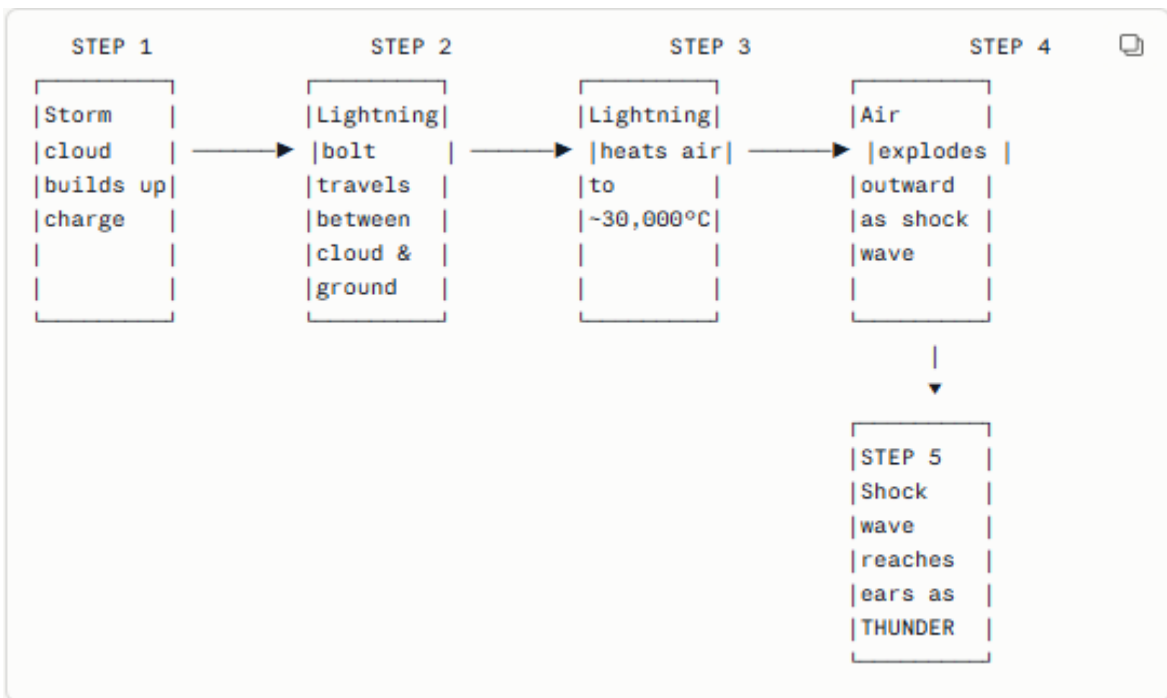
This is why thunder in the distance can sometimes seem to last much longer than thunder that strikes nearby.

Why It Matters

For all of human history, thunderstorms have fascinated us — and frightened us. Many ancient cultures developed myths to explain thunder, often imagining gods, giants, or great battles in the sky. Today, science offers a different kind of explanation, but the wonder remains the same. A lightning bolt heats the air to five times the temperature of the sun's surface. That heated air explodes. The sound rolls outward and reaches our ears, sometimes from many kilometres away.

The next time a storm passes overhead, listen carefully. Count the seconds between the flash and the thunder. Each second carries the sound of air violently rushing back into the place where, for less than a thousandth of a second, a bolt of pure electricity passed through it.

Graphic Text 1: How Lightning Becomes Thunder (Flowchart)



Graphic Text 2: Estimating Distance from Lightning

Seconds Between Flash and Thunder Approximate Distance

Seconds Between Flash and Thunder	Approximate Distance
3 seconds	About 1 km
6 seconds	About 2 km
9 seconds	About 3 km
15 seconds	About 5 km
30 seconds	About 10 km

16. What is the MAIN idea of this article?
- A. Lightning is one of the most dangerous weather events on Earth
 - B. Many ancient cultures created myths to explain thunder long ago
 - C. People can accurately estimate the distance of any storm using their ears
 - D. Thunder is the sound of air violently expanding after a lightning bolt
17. Why does the author MOST LIKELY begin the article by mentioning old stories that thunder was the sound of "clouds bumping together"?
- A. To suggest that ancient cultures had no useful ideas about weather
 - B. To set up the contrast between popular beliefs and the scientific explanation
 - C. To prove that thunder remains poorly understood by scientists today
 - D. To explain why many young children are still afraid of thunderstorms
18. What does the article state about the temperature inside a bolt of lightning?
- A. The temperature reaches about 30,000 degrees Celsius
 - B. The temperature reaches about 3,000 degrees Celsius
 - C. The temperature reaches about the same as the surface of the Sun
 - D. The temperature varies depending on the time of year

19. Why does it take longer to HEAR thunder than to SEE the lightning flash?

- A. Lightning bolts are usually closer to the listener than the thunder is
- B. The lightning bolt's heat causes a delay in the air's reaction
- C. Sound travels much more slowly through the air than light does
- D. Thunder travels in a curved path while lightning travels in a straight line

20. Read this sentence from the article:

"The air between the cloud and the ground normally acts as an insulator — meaning it does not allow electricity to flow through it easily."

What does the word insulator MOST LIKELY mean as it is used in this sentence?

- A. A material that conducts electricity quickly across long distances
- B. A wire used to connect electronic devices to a power source
- C. A storm cloud that is gathering electrical charge from the ground
- D. A material that blocks or slows the flow of electricity through it

21. Why does the article explain that a long, distant lightning bolt produces a ROLLING rumble?

- A. Because the air vibrates more slowly when it is far from the listener
- B. Because different parts of the bolt are at different distances and arrive at slightly different times
- C. Because the lightning bolt itself rolls across the sky as it moves
- D. Because rolling thunder is caused by a weaker discharge of electricity

22. (Open-Response)

Using information from BOTH the article and Graphic Text 1 (the flowchart), explain in your own words how a lightning bolt becomes the sound of thunder. Include at least TWO specific details in your answer.

(Write your response in the space provided.)

26. What does the article suggest in its CLOSING paragraph about how readers should respond to a passing thunderstorm?

- A. They should run inside and avoid windows for safety reasons
- B. They should photograph the storm to share with friends and family
- C. They should be afraid of the lightning rather than the thunder
- D. They should listen carefully and notice the science happening above them

27. (Open-Response)

The article mentions that ancient cultures often "developed myths to explain thunder, often imagining gods, giants, or great battles in the sky." Why might people have created these myths before the science of thunder was understood? Use details from the article to support your answer.

(Write your response in the space provided.)

29. Which sentence uses commas correctly?

- A. The students brought books pencils, and notebooks to the library
- B. The students brought books, pencils, and notebooks to the library
- C. The students brought, books pencils, and notebooks to the library
- D. The students, brought books, pencils and notebooks to the library

30. Read the sentence:

The team practised hard all season, ___ they won the championship at the end of June.

Which word BEST completes the sentence?

- A. but
- B. although
- C. and
- D. unless

31. Which sentence has correct subject-verb agreement?

- A. The bowl of fresh strawberries was sitting on the kitchen counter
- B. The bowl of fresh strawberries were sitting on the kitchen counter
- C. The bowl of fresh strawberries are sitting on the kitchen counter
- D. The bowl of fresh strawberries have been sitting on the kitchen counter

32. Which sentence is punctuated correctly?

- A. Although the path was steep, and rocky, we hiked all the way to the lookout
- B. Although the path was steep and rocky we hiked, all the way to the lookout
- C. Although the path was steep and rocky we hiked all the way, to the lookout
- D. Although the path was steep and rocky, we hiked all the way to the lookout

Part 2: Short Writing Responses (Questions 33-35)

33. (Open-Response)

Part 3: Extended Writing Prompt (Question 36)

36. (Extended Writing — Narrative)

Write a story about a time when an ordinary day became unforgettable.

The day and the events can be real or imagined.

Your story should:

- Begin on what seems like an ordinary day
- Build naturally toward the moment that makes the day unforgettable
- Include a clear beginning, middle, and end
- Have at least one main character
- Use specific details and descriptions to bring the story to life
- Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation

(Aim for approximately three to five paragraphs.)

Which word BEST completes the sentence?

- A. that
- B. which
- C. unless
- D. however

38. Which sentence is a complete sentence (not a fragment or run-on)?

- A. Walking slowly along the path beside the wide quiet river that morning
- B. Although the assignment was difficult and required hours of careful research
- C. The carpenter measured the wood carefully before making the first cut
- D. The wind picked up suddenly the leaves swirled across the empty parking lot

39. Which sentence uses an apostrophe correctly?

- A. The childrens art was hanging on the walls of the school gymnasium
- B. The children's art was hanging on the walls of the school gymnasium
- C. The childrens' art was hanging on the walls of the school gymnasium
- D. The children's' art was hanging on the walls of the school gymnasium

40. Which sentence contains a spelling error?

- A. The author was grateful for the kind reviews of her latest novel
- B. The teacher carefully explained the assignment to the entire class
- C. The athletes celebrated their hard-earned victory after the long season
- D. The committee gathered to discuss the upcoming community festival

Part 2: Short Writing Responses (Questions 41-42)

41. (Open-Response)

Read the sentence below, which contains an error. Rewrite the sentence correctly, fixing the error.

Part 3: Conventions Continued (Questions 43-45)

43. Which sentence uses capitalization correctly?

- A. In july, my Family travelled to prince edward island to visit our cousins
- B. In July, my family travelled to prince edward island to visit our cousins
- C. In july, my family travelled to Prince Edward Island to visit our Cousins
- D. In July, my family travelled to Prince Edward Island to visit our cousins

44. Read the sentence:

The author ___ wrote the bestselling novel will be visiting our school next month.

Which word BEST completes the sentence?

- A. whom
- B. whose
- C. who
- D. which

45. Which sentence uses quotation marks correctly?

- A. "Have you finished the assignment yet asked Ms. Chen from her desk"
- B. "Have you finished the assignment yet?" asked Ms. Chen from her desk.
- C. Have you finished the assignment yet "asked Ms. Chen, from her desk"
- D. "Have you finished the assignment yet, asked Ms. Chen from her desk"

Part 4: Extended Writing Prompts (Questions 46-47)

47. (Extended Writing — Series of Paragraphs)

Think about a time period from history that interests you. This could be a famous era (such as ancient Egypt, the Middle Ages, or the early days of Canada), or a smaller moment in history (such as the building of a local landmark or the life of a relative who lived long ago).

Write a piece in which you:

- Introduce the time period or moment you have chosen
- Describe at least TWO specific things that interest you about it
- Include specific details that show why it matters to you
- End with a reflection on what this time period helps you understand

(Aim for approximately four paragraphs.)

been interrupted. The other options take the phrase too literally as a move, a replacement, or a room change.

3. C — Eleven-year-old Eleanor is writing partly to convince herself that she can handle being alone with her sick mother in a lighthouse. The statement "I am not afraid" reads like reassurance she is offering herself. The other options misread the statement as bravado, an explanation of trust, or naïveté about the storm.

4. D — Trembling hands on the second match reveal the fear Eleanor is not naming in her diary entries. The detail shows the gap between what she writes and what her body is feeling. The other options take the detail too literally as cold, faulty matches, or lack of experience.

5. A — Twenty rings of the bell signal urgency and desperation — far more than the few rings that would normally suffice. Eleanor is doing everything she can to warn the ship. The other options misread the detail as counting practice, physical fatigue, or mechanical difficulty.

6. C — Eleanor's father is not assigning her a job — he is recognizing that what she did during the storm showed she has the heart and character of a true keeper. His thick voice and the way he places both hands on her shoulders convey emotional recognition. The other options misread the line as a permanent assignment, a formal title, or a generic statement.

7. D — The story's resolution turns on the fact that Eleanor's quiet, persistent courage saved twelve people she never met and could not even see clearly through the storm. She did not know until later what her bell-ringing and steady light accomplished. The other options misread the theme as duty, lighthouse history, or sickness.

8. B — Eleanor's closing line about turning twelve in October quietly emphasizes how much she has grown beyond her chronological age. After three days of carrying adult responsibility alone, the simple statement carries weight. The other options misread the closing as gift-wishing, fear, or self-doubt.

9. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *The diary format lets the reader experience the events as Eleanor did, one day at a time, without knowing what would happen next. On April 3, she does not yet know how long her father will be gone — she only knows her mother is sick and she must keep the light burning. On April 5, she writes "There is a ship" as it is happening, with her hand on the bell rope, not knowing if she will be heard. The format makes her uncertainty and courage feel immediate. (Strong: claim + two specific entries + explanation of effect.)*

10. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *Eleanor chooses not to tell her mother because her mother has been seriously ill and Eleanor does not want to upset her. The passage says her mother "thinks Father has been here," and Eleanor does not correct her. Eleanor likely felt that telling her mother would only worry her at a time when she was recovering, and that the burden of those three days was hers to carry quietly. (Strong: clear interpretation + text evidence.)*

11. C — The poem's mother warns the boy, but the boy does what feels right — pulling the calf from the flood — and his mother eventually recognizes that "sometimes lets us hold." The theme is that real courage

sometimes means acting on what feels right even when it goes against advice. The other options misread the message as universal disobedience, danger warnings, or rural commentary.

12. A — A ballad is a song-like poem that tells a story, usually with regular rhythm and rhyme. This poem has clear narrative structure (boy who loves river → flood → rescue → mother's reflection), four-line stanzas with regular meter, and a steady rhyme pattern — the defining features of a ballad. The other options describe poetry forms that do not match.

13. D — Sitting by the river after dark and speaking "things to the moon" suggests an intimate, private bond with the river and nature. This is not about fear, sleep, or navigation — it is about emotional connection. The other options misread the lines.

14. B — "The river takes its own" is the mother's warning that the river is dangerous and has claimed lives before. The phrase means the river can take what comes near it. The other options misread the phrase as ownership, seasonal flooding, or fish safety.

15. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *Both pieces feature young people who do something brave during dangerous weather without being told to. Eleanor keeps the lighthouse burning and rings the bell twenty times during a storm to warn a ship she can barely see. The boy in the ballad runs through a flooded field to pull a half-drowning calf from the rising river. In both pieces, the young person acts on instinct in a moment that would frighten most people, and their bravery saves another life. (Strong: clear similarity + evidence from both texts.)*

16. D — The article's central claim is that thunder is the sound of air violently expanding after lightning superheats it. Every section supports this — from the introduction asking "what is thunder, exactly?" to the closing description of air rushing back. The other options are supporting details (danger, myths, distance estimation), not the main idea.

17. B — The mention of old beliefs about clouds bumping together sets up a clear contrast: people once thought one thing, but science now reveals something different. This rhetorical move drives the rest of the article. The other options misread the opening as criticism, ongoing mystery, or commentary on fear.

18. A — The article states directly: "The temperature inside the bolt of lightning reaches approximately 30,000 degrees Celsius." This number is also presented as "about five times hotter than the surface of the Sun." Option B understates the temperature; option C is too vague; option D contradicts the article.

19. C — The article explicitly states that "sound travels much more slowly than light," which is why the flash reaches our eyes before the thunder reaches our ears. This is the basic physics explanation given in the article. The other options invent reasons that the article does not support.

20. D — In context, an insulator is a material that blocks or slows electricity — air does not normally conduct electricity easily. The article uses the term to explain why lightning only happens when the charge difference becomes large enough to overcome this. The other options misread the word as a conductor, a wire, or a cloud.

21. B — The article explicitly explains: "different parts of the lightning bolt are at different distances from the listener, so the sound waves arrive at slightly different times." This staggered arrival creates the rolling sound. The other options invent or misread the cause.

22. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *Lightning becomes thunder through a chain of fast events. According to the flowchart, a storm cloud first builds up an electrical charge, and then a lightning bolt travels between the cloud and the ground. The article explains that the lightning bolt heats the air to about 30,000 degrees Celsius, and that this extreme heat makes the air "expand so rapidly that it creates a shock wave." That shock wave travels outward through the air and reaches our ears as the sound we call thunder.* (Strong: claim + two specific details from both sources.)

23. A — Graphic Text 2 lists "9 seconds = about 3 km." The rule from the article is to divide the seconds by three to get distance in kilometres, and the chart confirms this: $9 \div 3 = 3$ km. The other options misread the chart or invent distances.

24. C — Heating air to "five times hotter than the surface of the Sun" is the most powerful and violent detail in the article — it most directly supports the claim about lightning's violence. The other options describe myths, the speed of sound, or general audibility, none of which capture violence as directly.

25. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *A person could estimate that a thunderstorm is about five kilometres away by following the steps in the article. First, they would watch for the flash of lightning and begin counting the seconds until they hear the thunder. The article and Graphic Text 2 both show that a 15-second gap means the lightning was about 5 kilometres away — found by dividing 15 seconds by 3 (since sound travels roughly one kilometre every three seconds).* (Strong: two specific steps + accurate math + both sources.)

26. D — The closing paragraph invites the reader to "listen carefully" and "count the seconds," reframing the storm as a science event happening above them. The article ends not with fear or instruction to flee, but with wonder. The other options misread the closing as safety, photography, or fear of lightning.

27. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *People long ago likely created myths because they wanted to explain something they did not yet understand. The article describes thunder as one of the most "violent and powerful events" on Earth — a sound so loud and unexpected that early cultures naturally wondered what could cause it. Without scientific tools to study lightning, imagining "gods, giants, or great battles in the sky" was a way to make sense of something that felt enormous and beyond their control.* (Strong: clear interpretation + text evidence.)

28. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *Thunder is the sound of air violently expanding after a bolt of lightning heats it to about 30,000 degrees Celsius — five times hotter than the surface of the Sun. The lightning flash reaches our eyes almost instantly, but the thunder takes longer to arrive because sound travels much more slowly than light. By counting the seconds between the flash and the thunder, a person can estimate how far away the lightning struck.* (Strong: captures main ideas + uses specific detail + own words.)

29. B — Option B correctly uses commas to separate three items in a list: "books, pencils, and notebooks." Option A omits the first comma. Option C misplaces the first comma after "brought." Option D incorrectly

adds a comma after "students" and omits one in the list. The Oxford comma before "and" is standard in Canadian usage.

30. C — The two clauses describe a positive cause-and-effect: the team practised hard, *and* they won. "And" correctly joins the related ideas. "But" and "although" signal contrast (which the sentence does not have), and "unless" signals a condition that does not fit.

31. A — The subject is "bowl" (singular), not "strawberries" (which is part of the prepositional phrase "of fresh strawberries"). The singular verb "was" is correct. Options B, C, and D use plural verbs that incorrectly agree with the closer noun rather than the actual subject — the classic subject-verb agreement trap.

32. D — Option D correctly places a single comma after the introductory dependent clause ("Although the path was steep and rocky,") and uses no other unnecessary commas. Option A adds a comma between "steep" and "and." Options B and C misplace or omit the comma after the introductory clause.

33. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *Yesterday, my older sister and I went to the public library to study for the upcoming science test. We worked quietly for two hours before stopping for a snack. The librarian was very helpful and showed us several books about volcanoes.* (Three errors fixed: "my older sister and me" → "my older sister and I"; "upcomming" → "upcoming"; "befor" → "before.")

34. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *When the storm rolled in suddenly and the streetlights flickered on early, the streets emptied within minutes.* (Strong: combines all three ideas using subordination, flows smoothly, paints a coherent scene.)

35. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *Last spring, I learned that I was braver than I thought I was. During a school presentation, the slideshow on the screen suddenly stopped working, and I had to keep speaking from memory for nearly five minutes. My hands were shaking the whole time, but I made it to the end without freezing up. That afternoon I realized that being nervous and being brave can happen at the same time.* (Strong: specific moment, sensory detail, personal insight.)

36. Extended Writing — **Sample Level 3 response benchmark:** A strong narrative response begins with a clearly ordinary scene (a regular morning, a routine activity, a typical school day) and builds naturally toward an unexpected event that transforms the day. Strong responses use specific sensory details and a clear emotional arc — the writer's reaction to the unforgettable moment should be evident. Length: approximately three to five paragraphs. The strongest responses earn the word "unforgettable" through specific detail rather than simply announcing the change.

37. A — The construction "such [adjective] that [result]" requires "that" as the connector. "The musician played with such skill *that* the audience rose" follows the standard pattern. "Which" introduces a relative clause that does not fit here, "unless" signals condition, and "however" signals contrast.

38. C — Option C has a clear subject ("The carpenter"), a verb ("measured"), and a complete thought. Option A is a fragment (no main subject/verb). Option B is a fragment (a dependent clause alone). Option D is a run-on (two independent clauses fused without proper punctuation).

39. B — "Children" is already plural without an "s," so the possessive form is "children's" (adding 's after the irregular plural). Option A has no apostrophe at all. Option C incorrectly places the apostrophe after the s. Option D adds an extra apostrophe. This follows the same rule as "men's" and "women's" — irregular plurals form possessives by adding 's.

40. A — "Greatful" is misspelled; the correct spelling is "grateful." The other three sentences contain no spelling errors. This is one of the more commonly misspelled words at the Grade 6 level — the "e" is sometimes confused with the spelling of "great" as a root word.

41. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *Either the dog or the cats are responsible for knocking the plant off of the windowsill.* (Correction: "is" → "are." In "either/or" constructions, the verb agrees with the subject closer to the verb. "Cats" is closer to the verb and is plural, so the verb must be plural — "are.")

42. Open-Response — **Sample strong answer:** *The bus was running late this morning. We waited at the stop for almost twenty minutes before it finally arrived around the corner.* (Strong: run-on split cleanly into two complete sentences while preserving the full meaning.)

43. D — Option D correctly capitalizes the month "July" and the proper noun "Prince Edward Island," while leaving "family" and "cousins" lowercase (common nouns). Option A fails to capitalize "July" and "Prince Edward Island" and incorrectly capitalizes "Family." Options B and C miss one or more proper nouns or incorrectly capitalize common nouns.

44. C — "Who" is used to refer to people doing an action — the author *who* wrote the novel. "Whom" is the object form (incorrect here because the pronoun is the subject of "wrote"). "Whose" indicates possession, and "which" refers to things. "Who" is the only correct relative pronoun here.

45. B — Option B correctly punctuates dialogue: opening quotation marks, a question mark inside the closing quotation mark before the speaker tag, and a period at the end of the sentence. Options A, C, and D either omit quotation marks, misplace them, or fail to handle the punctuation around the speaker tag.

46. Extended Writing — **Sample Level 3 response benchmark:** A strong opinion response takes a clear stand (more outside-the-classroom learning OR mostly classroom learning OR a balanced position) in the opening paragraph, develops at least two well-reasoned arguments in body paragraphs with specific examples (hands-on learning, focus and structure, community connections, weather and logistics), briefly acknowledges an opposing view, and closes with a thoughtful concluding sentence. Length: approximately four paragraphs. Wandering between both sides without committing loses marks on Ideas.

47. Extended Writing — **Sample Level 3 response benchmark:** A strong series-of-paragraphs response introduces a specific historical period or moment in the opening paragraph, develops at least two aspects of interest (people, events, daily life, art, conflict, innovation) in separate body paragraphs with concrete detail, and closes with a reflection on what the time period teaches the writer. Length: approximately four paragraphs. The strongest responses pick a focused topic (a single decade, a single event, a specific person) rather than a vast sweep, and let the writer's genuine curiosity show through.