

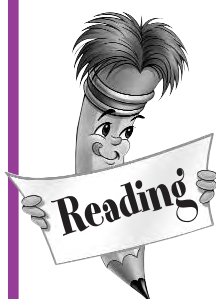
# ADVANTAGE Test Prep

Grade

# 5

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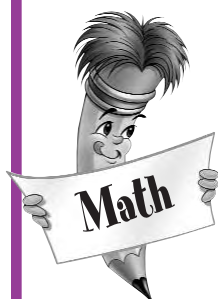
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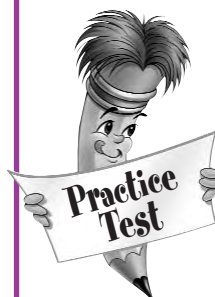
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# Introduction

Testing is a big part of education today, and this workbook is designed to help students become better prepared to succeed at taking standardized and proficiency tests. This workbook contains skills and strategies that can be used in any kind of testing situation. Even if students don't have to take standardized tests, they will still benefit from studying the skills and strategies in this workbook.

## Standardized Tests

Standardized tests get their name because they are administered in the exact same way to hundreds of thousands of students across the country. They are also referred to as *norm-referenced tests*. Norms give educators a common standard of measurement of students' skills and abilities across the country. Students are ranked according to their test scores and then assigned a percentile ranking. This ranking tells what percent of all students scored better or worse than the norm.

## Proficiency Tests

Many states develop their own statewide proficiency tests. Proficiency tests are also known as *criterion-referenced tests*. This means that the test is based on a list of standards and skills (criteria). States develop standards for what students should know at each grade level. The proficiency test evaluates how well students have mastered these standards.

Although both tests may look similar, they measure different things. A proficiency test measures a student's mastery of set standards. A standardized test compares a student's achievement to others who took the same test across the country.

Many tests were reviewed in developing the material for this workbook. They include the following:

- **California Achievement Tests (CAT)**
- **Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS)**
- **TerraNova**
- **Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)**
- **Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT)**
- **Stanford Achievement Tests (SAT)**
- **Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)**

It is important to recognize that all national standardized achievement tests work essentially the same way. They ask multiple-choice questions, have specific time limits, and compare your child's results to national averages. The goal of this test-prep series is to teach **test-taking strategies** so that no matter which test your child is required to take, he or she will be successful.

# Introduction

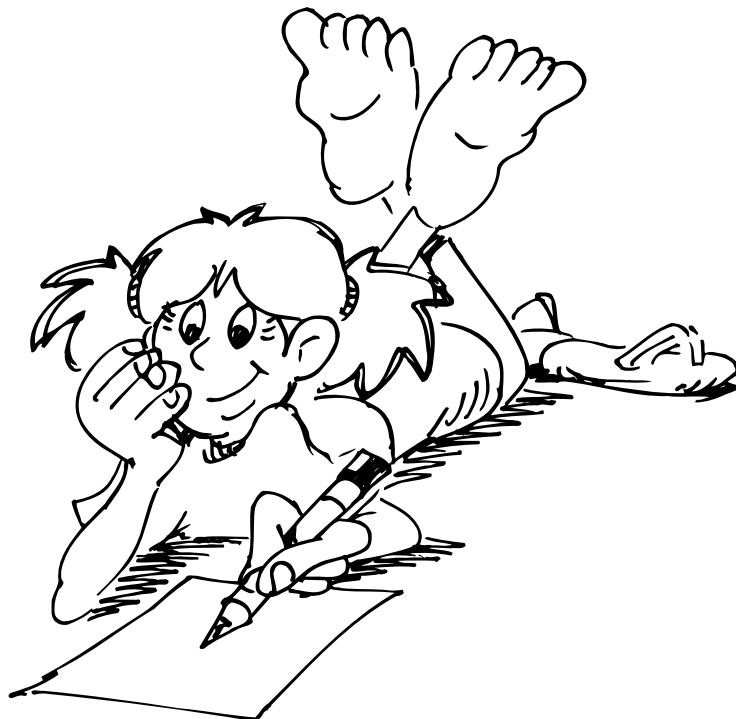
## Preparing for Tests

The more students are prepared for taking standardized and proficiency tests, the better they will do on those tests. A student who understands the skills commonly measured and who practices test-taking strategies will be more likely to be a successful test-taker. The more the student knows and knows what to expect, the more comfortable he or she will be in actual test-taking situations.

## Standardized and proficiency testing is used to:

- evaluate students' progress, strengths, and weaknesses.
- show how each student's school achievement compares with other students on a local and nationwide level (standardized).
- show an individual student's achievement of set standards (proficiency).
- select students for remedial or achievement programs.
- tell educators whether school systems are succeeding.
- evaluate the success of school programs.
- help educators develop programs to suit their students' specific needs.

Standardized tests are only one measure of student achievement, however. Teachers use many other methods to gain insights into each student's skills, abilities, and knowledge. They evaluate students through day-to-day observation, evaluation, and assessment.



# Introduction

## How Can Parents Help Children Succeed at Standardized Testing?

The following list includes suggestions on how to prepare your child for testing.

### Tips for Parents

- Monitor your child's progress.
- Get to know your child's teacher, and find out what he or she thinks you can do to help your child at home.
- Be informed about your state's testing requirements.
- Motivate your child to prepare.
- Make homework part of your child's daily routine.
- Set aside a period of time each day to study with your child.
- Read aloud to your child.
- Share learning experiences with your child.
- Make sure your child is getting the sleep and nutrition he or she needs to succeed.
- Always nurture your child's curiosity and desire to learn.
- Encourage your child to learn about computers and technology.
- Encourage your child to take tests very seriously but to have healthy expectations and keep testing in perspective.
- Offer encouragement and support so that your child wants to make a good effort.

### Where Can I Learn More About Testing?

ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation  
209 O'Boyle Hall  
The Catholic University of America  
Washington, DC 20064  
(202) 319-5120  
<http://ericcae.net/>

National Center for Fair and Open Testing, Inc. (FairTest)  
342 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
<http://www.fairtest.org/>

## Introduction to Reading



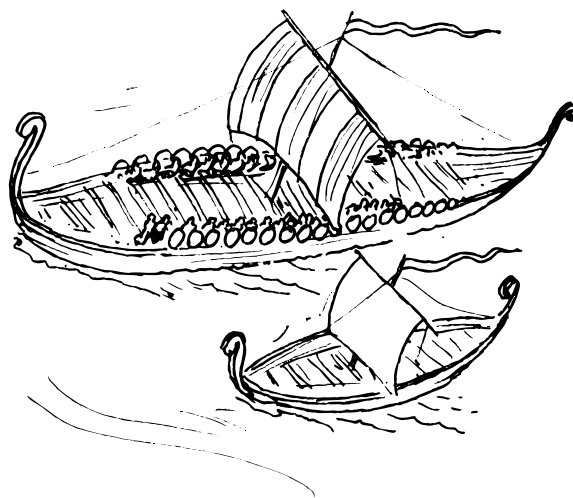
Reading is an important part of life and a big part of standardized and proficiency tests. Good reading skills will help you achieve success in all you do. The best way to improve your reading skills is to become an avid reader. Get in to the habit of reading. Read often, and read many different types of reading materials. Read alone and with others. Read aloud and to yourself. The more you read, the better you will get at it. The better you get at it, the more you will enjoy it, and the better you will score on tests.

Nearly every standardized or proficiency test includes a section on reading. The reading passages may be fiction, nonfiction, or poetry. They may also be graphic information like maps or reference information like library catalog cards and dictionaries. You will be asked questions to recall, interpret, and reflect on what you read.

In the following pages, you will review your reading skills. You will practice the skills with questions just like ones you'll be expected to answer on tests. If you understand and practice these skills now, you'll perform better later. In this workbook section, you will learn to:

- find words that have the **same or similar meaning**.
- find words that have **opposite meanings**.
- solve problems that involve **analogies**.
- recognize details that **compare or contrast**.
- understand the **main idea** of a passage.
- identify **details** and understand how they support the main idea.
- see the connection between **cause and effect**.
- **predict outcomes** based on what you read.
- **draw conclusions** and support them with evidence.
- determine the author's **point of view** and how it affects a story.
- analyze the **setting** of a story or poem.
- know the **characters** in a story.
- **make generalizations** about what you read.
- **extend meaning** by understanding more than what the author said.
- see the **sequence of events**, the order in which things happen.
- understand **graphic information** in maps, graphs, charts, schedules, and diagrams.
- use **reference sources** such as library materials, indexes, and tables of contents.

# Rune Stones and Dragon Ships



Whom would you choose as the greatest sailors in history? Many people would vote for the fearless Vikings. Viking sailors, riding the waves in their mighty dragon ships, ruled the seas from about A.D. 800 to 1200. The Vikings lived in Scandinavia, the large peninsula in northern Europe that includes today's countries of Sweden and Norway. Vikings from Sweden, Norway, and nearby Denmark were known as Norse, or North, men.

The name Viking means "pirate," and the Vikings were the most frightening raiders throughout Europe and the Mediterranean. They searched for gold, silver, and other plunder. But Vikings also founded peaceful colonies in the places they raided.

Danish Vikings conquered parts of England, Ireland, France, and southern Russia. Everywhere they went, the Vikings left behind carved rocks called rune stones that told of their adventures.

You have probably seen pictures of Viking ships. In fact, the Vikings had two different kinds of ships. Each one was designed and perfectly suited for a different purpose. When Viking pirates went on raids, they sailed in a longship. This is the Viking boat often pictured in movies and pictures. It was long and narrow, with a single mast and square sail. On each end of a longship was a colorful dragon head, designed to strike fear in the hearts of people living along the coasts of

Europe. As many as 30 oars, with two rowers per oar, helped a dragon ship slice through the waves. A single long oar, called a steerboard, helped steer a longship. It was located on the right side of the boat. Today, sailors call the right side of a boat the starboard. The left side is known as the port side.

Longships were fine for sailing long distances across rough seas. However, a different kind of boat was needed when Vikings sailed up rivers and on lakes. At times like these, Vikings usually sailed in a shorter, wider boat called a knorr or halfship. A knorr was designed for carrying a large cargo and many passengers. Like a longship, a knorr had a single sail and oars. However, a knorr was not as deep as a longship. This meant it could sail in shallower waters. It was also safer and more stable, less likely to capsize in high winds.

Both types of ships were built from wood planks. The planks overlapped to keep out water and were held together with iron nails. If holes or gaps between the planks appeared, Vikings stuffed them with pieces of rope soaked in tar. Some knorrs and longships had cloth tents on deck to protect sailors from rain and storms. Others, however, offered no shelter at all. But the tough Vikings didn't seem to mind. They cooked, ate, and slept outside, perhaps dreaming of their next conquest!

## VOCABULARY



### KNOW THE SKILL: **SAME/OPPOSITE MEANING**

Almost every word has other words that mean the same or the opposite. You probably know lots of examples. Think of the word *fast*. *Speedy* means the same, and *slow* means the opposite. Standardized tests often ask you to choose a word that means the same as or the opposite of another word.

### DURING THE TEST

The question will tell you what kind of answer is needed. Look for phrases like *the same as*, *same meaning*, *about the same thing as*, *the opposite of*, and *the opposite meaning*.

### TEST EXAMPLE

- 1 A word or words that mean the same as *capsize* are \_\_\_\_\_.
- (A) sail fast
  - (B) tip over
  - (C) drown
  - (D) catch fire

### THINK ABOUT THE ANSWER

The answer is B. Because a knorr was safer and more stable than a longship, the extra weight made it harder for the wind to tip it over. The word *safer* in the text is a good clue. Sailing fast does not have anything to do with stability, so option A is not correct. Option C is not correct because living things, not boats, drown. High winds don't make things catch fire; therefore, option D is wrong.

### NOW YOU TRY IT

- 2 A word that means the opposite of *founded* is \_\_\_\_\_.
- (F) started
  - (G) began
  - (H) destroyed
  - (J) lost

Check your answer on page 107.



### Look Around!

Use context, or the words around the word in question, to help you figure out its meaning. Then use your vocabulary skills to find an answer with the same or the opposite meaning.



## VOCABULARY



### KNOW THE SKILL: **WORKING WITH ANALOGIES**

Analogy questions ask you to find the relationship between things. Once you understand the relationship, you can select the answer that expresses the same relationship to a different word.

#### DURING THE TEST

Seeing the words in a sentence makes it easier to see their relationship. It is also helpful to decide what kind of word you are looking for in your answer. If the word in one position in the first pair is a certain part of speech, then the word in the same position in the second pair should be the same part of speech. It may also help to draw a little diagram. On one line, place the pair of words you know. On the second line, write the word you know and a blank space for the word you are trying to match. Try filling in this blank space with each of the word choices to find the one that makes sense.

#### TEST EXAMPLE

- 1 Plunder is to Vikings as \_\_\_\_\_ are to squirrels.
- (A) trees
  - (B) dogs
  - (C) nuts
  - (D) animals

#### THINK ABOUT THE ANSWER

The answer is C. The Vikings went out looking for plunder, such as gold and silver. Just as the Vikings went out looking for plunder, squirrels go out looking for nuts. Option A is not correct because trees are where squirrels live. Option B is not correct because dogs chase squirrels. Option D is incorrect because squirrels are a kind of animal. That leaves option C.

#### NOW YOU TRY IT

- 2 Longship is to sail as hot-air balloon is to \_\_\_\_\_.
- (F) float
  - (G) sky
  - (H) airplane
  - (J) go

Check your answer on page 107.



#### Read the Directions Carefully

This is a no-brainer! Pay attention while you read the directions. It will help you avoid careless errors.

## COMPREHENSION



### KNOW THE SKILL: **COMPARING AND CONTRASTING**

Passages often compare places, situations, or things. The passage might explain how things are similar by comparing or how they are different by contrasting.

#### DURING THE TEST

After you read the question, reread the passage. As you reread the passage, look for sentences and details that explain how the two things are the same or how they are different. Key words and phrases to look out for include *in contrast to*, *but*, *however*, *like*, and *unlike*.

#### TEST EXAMPLE

- 1 Write two or more sentences that compare two kinds of Viking ships.

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#### THINK ABOUT THE ANSWER

Here's one possible answer: *Longships and knorrs were two kinds of Viking ships. Both had a single sail and oars. Both ships were made of overlapping wood planks. On both ships, holes in the planks were filled with rope soaked in tar.* This answer describes similarities, but it does not mention differences.

#### NOW YOU TRY IT

- 2 Write two or more sentences explaining how longships and knorrs were different.

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Check your answer on page 107.



#### Trust Your Instincts

If you have a hunch about an answer, it is more likely to be the correct answer. Don't second-guess your decisions and change your answers unless you have a very good reason to believe you made a mistake!

## COMPREHENSION



### KNOW THE SKILL: MAIN IDEA AND DETAILS

Have you ever asked someone, “What’s the big idea?” Reading tests often ask the same question! This kind of question focuses on the main idea of a passage and on the details that support the main idea. The main idea is the most important point in a passage. Details are facts that explain the main idea of a passage.

### DURING THE TEST

You can often find the main idea of a passage in its first paragraph. The last paragraph of a passage sometimes summarizes the main idea. In the paragraphs in the middle of a passage, you’ll find details that support the main idea. After you’ve read a passage once, ask yourself, “What is the passage about?” In answering this question, you’ve taken the first step toward finding the main idea.

### TEST EXAMPLE

- 1 What is the main idea of this passage?
- (A) Carved rocks called rune stones told the exciting story of Viking adventures.
  - (B) Vikings were great adventurers, and their two kinds of ships helped them rule the seas.
  - (C) Vikings came from a part of Europe called Scandinavia.
  - (D) Knorrs and longships were two kinds of Viking boats.

### THINK ABOUT THE ANSWER

Option B is correct. That’s because the passage is about both the Vikings’ adventures and the two kinds of boats that helped them sail to distant parts of the world. Options A and C are true, but they are details that support the main idea. Option D is also true, but it does not include the important idea that Vikings sailed their longships and knorrs on great adventures.

### NOW YOU TRY IT

- 2 Which of the following is a detail that supports the main idea of the passage?
- (F) Viking longships often had dragon heads.
  - (G) Rune stones told about Viking travels and adventures.
  - (H) The name Viking means “pirate.”
  - (J) All of the above

Check your answer on page 107.



### Study with a Group

Form a small study group with members of your class. You can prepare for tests together. After tests you can brainstorm new preparation strategies as a group.