

*SKILLS LIST and SAMPLE ITEMS FOR*  
**PRACTICE TEST FOR LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADE 8**  
(Test items developed for skills measured in MCT)

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*Skills*

- 1.0 Meaning
    - 1.1 Paragraph Development
    - 1.2 Organizational Patterns
    - 1.3 Follows Written Directions
  - 2.0 Sentence Structure
    - 2.1 Word Choices
    - 2.2 Sentence Patterns
    - 2.3 Types of Sentences
  - 3.0 Editing
    - 3.1 Capitalization
    - 3.2 Punctuation
    - 3.3 Grammar
  - 4.0 Spelling
    - 4.1 Frequently Used Words
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Number of questions: 52  
Number of pages: 10

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## MCT PRACTICE TEST IN LANGUAGE ARTS - GRADE 8

*Directions: For Numbers 1 and 2, choose the best topic sentence for the paragraph.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_ . It is a short-term insurance on the life of the purchaser. It is usually sold to a customer buying on the installment plan. Under the terms of the contract, credit life pays the remaining debt under the installment plan should the purchaser die. Sometimes the cost of the insurance is included in the total cost of the installment purchase. The purchase of this insurance is optional.
  - A. Credit life is also known as consumer credit insurance.
  - B. Many people are not covered by insurance.
  - C. Insurance policies are really not expensive.
  - D. Short term life insurance is basically useless.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ . It is a light, malleable metal. When it is properly combined with other metals, it is very durable and strong. This is what makes magnesium so important.
  - A. This important metal can be found in the sea as well as on land.
  - B. Because of this special light property, magnesium is useful in building airplanes.
  - C. Magnesium is one of the most important metals known to man.
  - D. Magnesium, however, weighs only one hundred and twelve pounds per cubic foot.

*Directions: For Numbers 3 and 4, read the topic sentence. Then choose the answer that best develops that topic sentence.*

3. Nearly 150 million years ago, trees were buried by mud and sand.
  - A. Imprints of the bodies of ancient plants and animals are found on petrified trees. These imprints are called fossils.
  - B. Scientists called paleontologists study fossils to learn about plants and animals that lived long ago. They have learned of the development of plants and animals from prehistoric times until the present time.
  - C. Minerals from underground water seeped into them. After a long span of time, the wood was replaced by minerals and was hardened. Finally, whole trees and pieces of trees were petrified, or turned to stone.
  - D. Scientists have discovered numerous minerals in the ground that may have existed many years ago. These minerals are located near old mines.
  
4. Sundews are beautiful little plants that seem small and harmless.
  - A. Some plants collect rain water at their base. When insects go inside to get the water, they cannot escape. The plants are lined with a powder that makes it impossible for the insects to climb back out.
  - B. When an insect lands in the colorful petals, the bug starts falling. The insect slides down into the slippery insides of the plant.
  - C. But their looks are deceiving. All around the edges of their leaves are tiny hairs that glisten with a shiny liquid. To an insect, this liquid looks like food. The insect lands on the leaf. The liquid is sticky, and the insect cannot get loose.
  - D. When an insect comes near the trap doors of the bladderwort leaf, the trap door opens. The insect is pulled inside.