



**Sunshine State Standards
Review and Practice
Grade 6 Reading
Comprehension
with Extra Writing Practice**

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Table of Contents

To the Students	v	Try Again! <i>by Charlotte Elizabeth</i>	162
Jackie Cochran	1	“The New Colossus” <i>by Emma Lazarus</i>	167
The Heron and the Hummingbird	8	Young Benjamin Franklin	170
The Mystery of Dreams	15	<i>by Nathaniel Hawthorne</i>	
“Confessions of a Sixth-Grade Bully”	22	True Manliness	175
Pygmalion	27	“The Place Where the Rainbow Ends”	180
Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!	31	<i>by Paul Laurence Dunbar</i>	
<i>by Patrick Henry</i>		A New Kind of Fun	184
Shall We Dance?	35	Three Poems <i>by Robert Frost</i>	189
Perseus and the Prophecy	38	“FIRE AND ICE”	
Pandora	42	“STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING”	
Be More Active	47	“THE ROAD NOT TAKEN”	
Persephone	51	from <i>Understood Betsy</i>	194
Awesome Expeditions	55	<i>by Dorothy Canfield</i>	
Bellerophon	58	“Barbara Frietchie”	206
Echo and Narcissus	63	<i>by John Greenleaf Whittier</i>	
Pelé	67	from <i>Peter Pan</i> <i>by James M. Barrie</i>	212
Athena and Arachne	71	“O Captain! My Captain!”	222
Viking Explorers	76	<i>by Walt Whitman</i>	
from <i>The Red Badge of Courage</i>	81	A Boy on a Farm	226
<i>by Stephen Crane</i>		<i>by Charles Dudley Warner</i>	
from <i>Little Women</i> <i>by Louisa May Alcott</i>	87	“The Cross-Current”	230
Vulcan and His Inventions	93	<i>by Abbie Farwell Brown</i>	
Otitis Media	98	Watseka	235
from <i>20,000 Leagues Under the Sea</i>	104	“The Sword of Arthur”	240
<i>by Jules Verne</i>		<i>by John Clair Minot</i>	
from <i>20,000 Leagues Under the Sea</i>		Madam C.J. Walker	243
Part II <i>by Jules Verne</i>	109	Flight Knows No Boundaries	251
from <i>Around the World in 80 Days</i>	113	<i>by Peter Allen</i>	
<i>by Jules Verne</i>		Why We Need to Restore the Flow of Fresh Water	
The Essex Steam Train	117	Through the Everglades and into Florida Bay	255
Love Canal	120	<i>by Casie Regan</i>	
Skiing and Snowboarding	123	Ring and Mound Building	261
Cadet Rings	128	Construction of Castillo de San Marcos	264
from <i>The Red Badge of Courage</i> —Part II	131	Construction of Fort Matanzas, 1740	269
<i>by Stephen Crane</i>		St. Augustine’s Defenses	274
Nathan Hale, A Young Hero	135	The British Period in Florida, 1763–1784	279
from <i>The Happy Prince</i> <i>by Oscar Wilde</i>	140	Juan Ponce de Leon	
Is This Something to Eat?	144	and the Fountain of Youth	284
Opossums	149	French Revenge is Planned	288
Air Bags: The Benefits and the Risks	153	The Expedition of Tristán De Luna	293
Water Cycle	158	Two Endangered Species	296
		First Spanish Period	301

Read the passage "The Heron and the Hummingbird." Then answer Numbers 1 through 8.

THE HERON AND THE HUMMINGBIRD

adapted from a folk tale told by the Hitchiti Tribe

Heron and Hummingbird were great friends, even though they were not at all alike. While Heron was tall with long legs and a long beak, Hummingbird was tiny and moved his wings and body very fast. The two had one thing in common, however; they both loved to eat fish. Heron feasted on large fish while Hummingbird ate only minnows, and the two fished together nearly every day.

After a while, both Heron and Hummingbird noticed that there were fewer fish in the water to eat. "I am not sure that there are enough fish in the world for both of us to eat every day," said Hummingbird. "Maybe we should race to see which one of us owns all of the fish." Hummingbird considered Heron his friend, but he knew that he could fly faster than Heron. His body was light as a feather and he could flap his wings so quickly that they made a humming sound. Heron couldn't do that.

Heron was also worried that there would not be enough fish for both of them to eat, so he agreed. The two birds decided



to race for four days and agreed that the finish line would be an old dead tree next to a faraway river. Whichever of them reached the top of the tree first on the fourth day of the race would have the right to eat all of the fish in the lakes and rivers.

The two friends started out the next morning. With a slow heavy motion, Heron flapped his giant wings as Hummingbird quickly flitted around him. Sometimes Hummingbird would get ahead of Heron, but then he would become distracted by the brightly colored flowers he saw along the way. Hummingbird couldn't resist the flowers and would stop to feast on their sweet-tasting nectar. However, whenever Hummingbird noticed Heron getting ahead of him, he zoomed ahead again quickly, flapping his tiny wings too quickly to be seen. Soon Hummingbird left Heron far behind.



4. Read this sentence from the story "Persephone."

He could not return her, he said, if she had eaten anything in the underworld, for the Fates decreed that no being who ate the food of the dead could return.

Based on this sentence, what does the word *decreed* mean?

- F. suggested
- G. complained
- H. sang
- I. decided

5. According to the story, when does winter begin each year?

- A. when Persephone leaves her mother
- B. when Hades returns to the underworld
- C. when mortals eat the food of the dead
- D. when Demeter begins her work again

6. The author's main reason for writing "Persephone" was

- F. to explain the difference between dark and light.
- G. to show readers the importance of certain foods.
- H. to describe to readers the proper way to grow crops.
- I. to use a myth to explain the changing seasons.

Read the poem "The New Colossus." Then answer Numbers 1 through 4.

The people of France decided to give a statue to the people of the United States. The **Statue of Liberty** was to be in recognition of the friendship established during the American Revolution. Sculptor Frederic Auguste Bartholdi was commissioned to design a sculpture. It was to be completed in 1876. That was the centennial year of the American Declaration of Independence.

The statue was a joint effort between America and France. It was agreed upon that the American people were to build the pedestal. The French people were responsible for the statue. However, lack of funds was a problem. In the United States, a wide variety of events were held to raise money. Emma Lazarus wrote this poem in 1883 to help raise money for the pedestal. At that time, Brooklyn was not yet part of New York City.

The original Colossus had been built in Rhodes 2,300 years ago. It celebrated a victory over invaders and freedom. The statue was 110 feet high. The Liberty statue is the same size. The Colossus in Rhodes stood upon a 50-foot pedestal near the harbor. The Liberty pedestal is much bigger.

"THE NEW COLOSSUS"

by Emma Lazarus

NOT like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command

The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Now answer Numbers 1 through 12. Base your answers on the article “Madam C.J. Walker.”

1. The author’s main reason for beginning this article with a quote to
 - A. encourage readers to follow their hearts.
 - B. provide readers with practical information.
 - C. capture the reader’s attention right away.
 - D. persuade the reader to start a business.

2. Read this sentence from the article “Madam C. J. Walker.”

The city also was home to a substantial African-American community.

Based on this sentence, what does the word *substantial* mean?

- F. large
 - G. struggling
 - H. thriving
 - I. friendly

3. Why did Madam Walker move her business to Indianapolis?
 - A. She would be located near many other thriving businesses.
 - B. She wanted women to have the opportunity to get better jobs.
 - C. She thought that she would be happier if she lived near her daughter.
 - D. She knew that being near railroads would help her business grow.