



Nebraska State Assessment

Grade 3

English Language Arts

Released Passage

Name:

Directions:

On the following pages of your test booklet are questions for the Grade 3 *Nebraska State Assessment–English Language Arts (NeSA–ELA)*.

Read these directions carefully before beginning the test.

This test will include several different types of questions. Record all of your answers in the answer document.

The test will include questions that will ask you to provide your answer in a variety of ways.

- Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.
- Some questions will have two parts and require that you choose an answer or answers to each part.
- Some questions will ask you to construct an answer by following the directions given.

When you come to the word **STOP** at the end of the test, you have finished the Grade 3 English Language Arts Test. You may review the test to check your answers. Make sure you have marked all of your answers clearly and that you have completely erased any marks you do not want. When you are finished, put your answer sheet inside your test booklet and close your test booklet.

Elephant Talk

Elephants live in family groups called herds. The herds move often to find new sources of food and water. In Africa, as a herd walks across the plain, the elephants make many different kinds of noises. When elephants snort, thump, grunt, and rumble, they are talking to one another.

Elephants make more than seventy different kinds of calls. Some calls mean “Here I am. Where are you?” Others mean “Follow me for something good to eat.” They also use calls to warn one another of danger and to find mates.

Elephants have a strong system of communication that helps them to keep in touch whether they are close by or far away from each other. In fact, elephants use most of their senses to communicate, or share information, with each other.

With Sound

The main way an elephant “talks” is through sounds. Like a human, an elephant has vocal cords. This is where the sound begins, deep in the throat. Scientists believe an elephant can change its sound by moving its head and ears. An elephant can also change the type of sound it makes by opening its mouth or keeping it closed, holding its head high or holding it low, or even keeping its ears still or flapping them.

The most common elephant noises are deep rumbles. These sounds are like the lowest notes on a piano. Elephants can make and hear sounds lower than humans can. Some elephant rumbles are so low that humans cannot hear them. People who study elephants use special machines to hear these super-low sounds. These rumbles can even be felt in the ground. Scientists think elephants may use the soles of their feet to help “hear” sounds.

Low sounds travel well over long distances. People can sometimes hear the low rumble of thunder from a faraway storm. In the same way, the low sounds of elephants can be heard from far away. Elephants have good hearing. They can hear the rumbles of other elephants up to five miles away. Low sounds help members of the herd keep in touch even when they cannot see one another.

With Its Trunk

Elephants have many uses for their trunks. A mother elephant uses her trunk to teach her baby. She pats the baby on the head to show she cares. She also uses her trunk to tell the baby to keep moving with the herd.

Elephants sometimes wrap their trunks around each other, similar to a big hug. These actions can help individuals to bond with other elephants in the herd.

9 Using their sense of smell, elephants can keep track of the locations of their group members. A trunk also helps an elephant make its sounds louder. It **trumpets** to warn others of danger.

With Movement

The way an elephant moves helps it communicate. It may raise its tail or throw its trunk on its head in play. It may raise its head or spread its ears to show it is angry.

When an elephant returns to the herd after it has been gone for a while, the other elephants welcome it. They turn about and flap their ears to announce they are together again.

Elephants also stomp their feet to send a message. These sounds can be heard by elephants over twenty miles away.

So Much to Say

People communicate in many different ways. They use words, smiles, frowns, and many other types of body movements. An elephant uses many parts of its body to communicate too, including its eyes, ears, mouth, head, trunk, tail, and feet. Elephants' snorts, thumps, and rumbles help them tell each other how they feel, what they want, and what they are thinking.

What Elephants Are Saying

spreads ears	"I'm in charge."
flaps ears	"I'm happy."
raises tail	"I want to play."
swats tail	"Keep away!"
trumpets loudly	"An enemy is near."
raises trunk	"I'm not moving."

1. In the first paragraph, why does the author use onomatopoeia?
 - A. to make elephants seem more like humans
 - B. to compare elephant herds to families
 - C. to describe the sounds elephants make
 - D. to explain how elephant herds travel

2. In paragraph 9, which meaning of **trumpets** is used?
 - A. makes a loud cry
 - B. plays an instrument
 - C. looks like a certain shape
 - D. cheers noisily for something

3. How does the author use an organizational pattern in the section **With Movement**?
 - A. Sequencing is used to show the steps elephants take to flap their ears.
 - B. Cause and effect is used to show what happens when elephants play together.
 - C. Description is used to show how elephants talk using different parts of their bodies.
 - D. Compare and contrast is used to show how young and old elephants talk to each other.

4. Choose **two** ideas from the passage that show how elephants are similar to humans. Choose **two**.
- A. Both have vocal cords.
 - B. Both eat the same kinds of food.
 - C. Both can feel sounds through the ground.
 - D. Both can make very low sounds that travel long distances.
 - E. Both use many parts of their bodies to show how they feel.
5. How does the passage help the reader make a text-to-world connection?
- A. The passage discusses animals that live on a different continent.
 - B. The passage tells about elephants that are being studied in the United States.
 - C. The passage compares different types of elephants that live on different continents.
 - D. The passage focuses on studies that have been done by scientists from the United States.

6. This question has two parts. Answer part A, and then answer part B.

Part A

Which main idea is supported by information in the passage?

- A. Scientists have learned that elephants express two different emotions.
- B. Elephant herds only travel together when there are babies to care for.
- C. Scientists have studied elephant herds for many years.
- D. Elephants can talk to each other in many different ways.

Part B

Which detail from the passage BEST supports the answer in part A?

- A. Elephants have a strong system of communication that helps them to keep in touch whether they are close by or far away from each other.
- B. People who study elephants use special machines to hear these super-low sounds.
- C. When an elephant returns to the herd after it has been gone for a while, the other elephants welcome it.
- D. These sounds can be heard by elephants over twenty miles away.

7. How does the information in the chart support the passage?
- A. It gives reasons why elephants need to communicate.
 - B. It explains how elephants use their feet to communicate.
 - C. It provides more information about how elephants communicate.
 - D. It shows ways scientists gather information about how elephants communicate.
8. What makes the passage nonfiction?
- A. It provides facts about a topic.
 - B. It tells a story about a herd of elephants.
 - C. It teaches an important lesson.
 - D. It explains how to make the same sounds as elephants.

9. In “Elephant Talk,” the author tells how elephants share information with each other. Explain how elephants use most of their senses to communicate. Write a well-organized response using specific evidence from the passage to support your answer.

**Writer’s Checklist for
Text-Dependent Analysis**

PLAN before you write

- I read the task carefully.
- I read the text(s) carefully.
- I thought about how the task connects to the text(s).
- I organized my ideas on scratch paper.

FOCUS while you write

- I responded to all parts of the task.
- I analyzed the information from the text(s) in my response.
- I chose relevant and accurate evidence from the text(s) to support my response.
- I organized my response with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

REVISE after you write

- I wrote my response in English.
- I wrote my final draft in the response box.
- I focused my writing on the task.
- I used/cited evidence from the text(s) to support my response.
- I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence structure, punctuation, and word choice.

**Grade 3
ELA Practice Test
Answer Key**

1.	C
2.	A
3.	C
4.	A, E
5.	A
6.	D, A
7.	C
8.	A
9.	refer to TDA rubric

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English Language Arts Released Passage

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