

## **GRADE 8 English Language Arts** **Reading and Responding: Lesson 13**

Read aloud to the students the material that is printed in **boldface type** inside the boxes. Information in regular type inside the boxes and all information outside the boxes should **not** be read to students. Possible student responses are included in parentheses after the questions.

Any directions that ask you to do something, such as to turn to a page or hand out materials to students, will have an arrow symbol (  $\Rightarrow$ ) by them.

*Optional:* At some point during the lesson, you may read the passage aloud so students can hear fluent, expressive reading and the correct pronunciation of unfamiliar words. You may read the passage aloud at any point during the lesson, as you feel appropriate. The decision to read the passage aloud should depend on student needs, the degree of text difficulty, and the particular lesson.

### *Purpose of Lesson 13:*

In this lesson, the tutor and students will practice reading, thinking, and test-taking strategies by

- reading and responding to nonfiction,
- using context to define vocabulary,
- finding main ideas,
- using comprehension strategies, and
- analyzing test questions.

### *Equipment/Materials Needed:*

- Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-1
- Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-2
- Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-3
- Pencils
- Chart paper

Introduction:

**Today we're going to practice reading, thinking and test-taking strategies. All of these three skills go together. Are any of you good readers who don't do well on tests? Pause. Do you know why you have trouble with multiple choice tests even when you can read and understand the questions just fine? Pause. (Test questions are tricky.)**

**Some strong readers are poor test-takers, and some sharp thinkers are poor test-takers; but skilled test-takers are always strong readers and sharp thinkers who use strategies to answer test questions.**

**For the next two lessons, we will practice some test-taking strategies skilled test-takers use, after reading about the *Iditarod*. Can anyone tell us what the *Iditarod* is? Pause. (A dogsled race held in Alaska)**

Briefly discuss, explaining that the *Iditarod* is a special dogsled race held every year in Alaska, where it is extremely cold and snowy. Encourage students to contribute any information they have about the *Iditarod*.

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-1.

**There are two passages on this sheet. The first passage has background information that will help you understand the second one. Right now we will concentrate on the first passage. Don't worry about the second passage for now. Read just the first passage silently. As you read, circle any vocabulary words you don't know.**

When students have read and circled unfamiliar words, have them share the words they circled. Then pronounce *each* word *each* student circled. Have students repeat the word after you.

**Now that you have heard these words pronounced, you may know what they mean. Did this oral activity help any of you figure out the meanings of some of the words you circled? Pause. Have students share any words they now recognize after having heard the way they sound.**

**Sometimes hearing the way a word sounds helps us define it. One strategy strong readers use to identify a new word is *sounding it out*.**

Is there another way to identify a new word? Pause. (Reread the sentence.) **Rereading the sentence to see what word would make sense in place of the unfamiliar word is a strategy called *using the context* to identify an unknown word. To use the *context*, find key words in the sentence. These key words give clues to the meaning of the unfamiliar word.**

**Look at the last sentence of the first passage use these strategies to define *contestant*. Read aloud the sentence: “Now, read this true account of a young contestant's attempt to win the Iditarod through frozen tundra.” First let’s try the *sounding out* strategy. Before trying to sound the word out, look at the whole word. Do you see any parts of *contestant* that are similar to a word you know? Pause. (*contest*) We all know what a *contest* is. The *Iditarod* is a kind of contest. Let’s try to sound this word out. (Demonstrate sounding the word out.) If sounding out the word still doesn’t help you understand it, use the strategy of rereading the sentence to see what word would make sense in place of *contestant*.**

Demonstrate by reading the sentence aloud, leaving out the word *contestant*. **Somebody who is attempting to win the Iditarod is someone who is in a contest. Since the Iditarod is a contest, a *contestant* must be one of the dogsled drivers in the race.**

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-2.

**Now try these strategies for identifying vocabulary to answer some questions. First, scan the worksheet; what kinds of questions do you see? Pause. (Mostly multiple choice, a few short answers) Look closely at the multiple choice questions; most are questions about vocabulary words.**

**Read the first passage silently again; then answer the questions about this passage. You might see some of the words you circled on this worksheet. Try your best to figure out the meanings as you answer the questions. Then we'll go over the answers and discuss how we found them.**

After students complete the worksheet, ask them to put it away for now.

**Before we go over your answers, let's think about how you go about answering multiple choice questions.** Ask one or two students to explain the way they find the answer to a multiple choice question.  
**Let's look at a strategy good test takers use to answer multiple choice questions.**

**To answer a multiple choice question, you must ask three questions:**

- 1. Does this choice make sense?** If it doesn't make sense, then it can't be correct. If it *does* make sense, then it *might* be correct; however, we cannot be sure the choice is correct until we ask the next question.
- 2. Can this choice be found in the story?** If the choice can't be found in the story, then it can't be correct. If it *can be found in the story* and *makes sense*, then it *might* be the correct answer; but we cannot be sure it is the correct answer until we ask the *next question*.
- 3. Is this choice the very best one out of all choices?** If this choice *makes sense*, *can be found in the story*, and is the *best one*, it is the correct answer.

**\*Remember, the answer to all three questions must be yes if your choice is the correct one.** (Write the following three criteria on the board or on chart paper big enough for all students to see.)

**\* Your answer must**

- ◆ **make sense,**
- ◆ **be found in the story, and**
- ◆ **be the best answer.**

⇒ Distribute Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-3.

**This flowchart shows the three questions we should ask when choosing the answer to a multiple choice question about a story or article. You may keep this sheet as a reminder to use this strategy for multiple choice questions.**

**Now that we have looked at this test taking strategy, look again at your worksheet. Check each answer to see whether it *makes sense, is in the story, and is the best choice.* If you think any of these answers need to be changed, go back and change them on your worksheet.**

After a few minutes, ask students how many answers they changed. Then discuss each question, thoroughly explaining reasons for eliminating or choosing answers. *Do not* simply call out answers. Get as much student input as possible, encouraging and guiding them through the reasoning necessary to find the answers. Have students explain their answers and any clues they used. (Although it is time consuming to discuss the process for finding each answer, it is critical that students understand the *hows* and *whys* involved in reading, thinking, and answering questions.)

#### Answers to Worksheet Lesson 13-2

- 1. Choice A (*yearly*) is correct: When you don't know the word and context clues aren't enough, you must use the process of elimination.
  - ◆ Choice B (*daily*) can't be right; daily would be too often; I can't think of any sporting event that happens *every* day.
  - ◆ Choice C (*summer*) can't be right; the race is through *frozen tundra*; in Alaska, summer is too hot for anything to be frozen.
  - ◆ Choice D (*religious*) can't be right; there is no mention of religion or anything that means religion.**
- 2. Choice D (*tiring*) is correct: If you didn't know this word, you just had to guess; context doesn't help here because each choice makes sense. In this case, it only helps if you know something about dogsled races. Then you would use what you already know to make a good guess. Tell students: *Sometimes* strategies are not enough to choose the right answer. When strategies don't help, *do not spend too much time on the question*; just guess and go on to the next one.**

3. **Choice B (*disease*) is correct:** One clue that can be found in the same sentence as *diphtheria* is the word *outbreak*, often used when describing a *disease* that spreads to many people. Another clue can be found in the next sentence: *A team raced to deliver the serum necessary to save lives.* Something that is needed to save lives gives us a hint that sickness or *disease* is involved.
- ◆ Choice A (*bad weather*) is incorrect. It doesn't make sense.
  - ◆ Choice C (*problems*) is incorrect. It does make sense that an *outbreak of problems* would be a reason for the dogsled. The problem of saving people's lives is found in the story; but *problems* is not the best answer, because we read that *diphtheria* is the specific problem.
  - ◆ Choice D (*bad news*) is incorrect. It does make sense in the sentence, but it cannot be found in the story.
4. **Choice D (*far away*) is correct.** It makes sense. Clues are found in the first sentence (...race from Anchorage to Nome). This sounds like a long distance between two cities. Another clue can be found in your own head. What do you think of when you hear the word *remote*? Pause (remote control) A remote control allows you to change TV channels from a distance. *Remote* has something to do with distance.
- ◆ Choice A (*nearby*) is incorrect. It wouldn't make sense to need to have a race to somewhere *nearby* to save lives.
  - ◆ Choice B (*wealthy*) is incorrect. This answer may have tricked you. *Wealthy* makes sense; people who lived in gold-mining settlements might have been rich or *wealthy*. The story doesn't say one way or another, but *wealthy* is not the best answer.
  - ◆ Choice C (*crowded*) is incorrect. *Crowded* does make sense in the sentence. The settlements might have been *crowded*, but we don't know because the story doesn't say. Even though *crowded* makes sense, it is not the best answer.

5. **Choice C (*medicine*) is correct.** It makes sense; *medicine* can save lives. *Medicine* is the best answer, although other choices make sense.

◆ Choice A (*a doctor*) is incorrect. This one is tricky; we know *a doctor* can help save lives, but *a doctor* does not make sense in this sentence. Listen while I read the sentence substituting *doctor* for *serum*. (*A team raced to deliver a doctor necessary to save lives.*) Does this answer sound right or make sense?

Pause. (no)

◆ Choice B (*a hospital*) is incorrect. *Hospitals* may help save lives, but this choice does not make sense; a dogsled cannot *deliver a hospital*.

◆ Choice D (*a nurse*) is incorrect. Just like *a doctor*, *a nurse* can help save lives; but *a nurse* does not make sense in this sentence. Read it to yourself substituting *a nurse* for *serum*. Does it make sense? (Have a student read the sentence aloud). *A team raced to deliver a nurse necessary to save lives.* Does this sound right?

Pause. (no)

6. **Choice A (*competitor*) is correct.** One clue is the phrase *attempt to win the Iditarod*. Another clue is the way the word *competitor* looks. It is very close to the word *compete*, which is like entering a contest.

◆ Choice B (*hunter*) is incorrect. It does make sense that a *hunter* might try to win the race, but this choice is not the best answer.

◆ Choice C (*doctor*) is incorrect. Although it does make sense that a *doctor* could try to win the race, this choice is not the best answer.

◆ Choice D (*a dog trainer*) is incorrect. Like *hunter* and *doctor*, *a dog trainer* makes sense in the sentence; but it is not the best answer.

7. **Choice D (*ground hardened with permafrost*) is correct.** *Frozen* is a clue; when something is *frozen*, it is *hard*. *Frozen* is also like *frost* in *permafrost*. This choice is the only one that makes sense.

◆ Choice A (*jungle*) is incorrect. This choice doesn't make sense because it is too hot in a *jungle* for anything to be frozen.

◆ Choice B (*north pole*) is incorrect. Even though the north pole is *frozen*, nobody lives there, so this choice doesn't make sense.

◆ Choice C (*ditches*) is incorrect. It wouldn't make sense to have a race over an area as small as a *ditch*.

**8. Choice D (*the person who drives the dogsled*) is correct.** *Mushers* is defined in the first sentence [...*dogsled drivers (mushers) race...*]. The parentheses let us know *mushers* is another word for *dogsled drivers*.

Also, this choice is the *only* one that makes sense.

- ◆ Choice A (*a dog trained...*) is incorrect. This choice wouldn't make sense because a *dog* cannot *drive a dogsled*.
- ◆ Choice B (*a team of dogs*) is incorrect. Like the above choice, this choice wouldn't make sense because *dogs* can't drive.
- ◆ Choice C (*a special type of sled...*) is incorrect. This choice doesn't make sense because a *sled* can't drive either.

**9. Choice A (*the need to get medicine quickly...*) is correct.** This answer is found in several sentences, but *in different words* from those in the story. *Medicine* is a kind of *serum*. *Sick people* had a disease called *diphtheria*. *Gold-mining towns* are called *gold-mining settlements* in the story. The word *quickly* makes us think of *race*.

- ◆ Choice B (*the need to find gold quickly*) is incorrect. This choice makes sense in the sentence, but *finding gold* is probably not so important as *saving lives*. It would make more sense that a race as important as the *Iditarod* would have gotten started because of serious reasons. Also, this choice *cannot be found* in the story.
- ◆ Choice C (*the need to have competition for dogs*) is incorrect. This choice makes sense in the sentence, but like *finding gold*, is not so serious as saving lives. Also, this choice cannot be found in the story.
- ◆ Choice D (*the need for a cold weather sport*) is incorrect for the same reasons that Choice B and Choice C are incorrect; it makes sense in the sentence, but is not so serious a reason as saving lives, and it cannot be found in the story.

**10. Choice A is correct.** We had to read between the lines to get this answer. The story does not say the *Iditarod* has been an annual event for over 50 years. We can figure it out by putting together information from different sentences. We do know that *an annual event* is in the first sentence. Who can tell me how we can figure out how long this event has been taking place? Pause.

The race *was inspired by a 1925 outbreak*...If the first Iditarod took place in 1925 or soon after, it has been going on about 75 years (2001-1925). (If any students answered correctly and can explain how they got it, be sure to praise: i.e., *sharp thinking! great job reading between the lines.*)

If you thought Choice A was right, but weren't sure, then you had to look at the other choices to make sure they were wrong.

- ◆ Choice B (*The young contestant won the race*) is incorrect. The last sentence tells us about *a young contestant's attempt to win...*, but does not say whether she won or not. We can *eliminate* (get rid of) this choice.
- ◆ Choice C (*The Iditarod usually lasts about 10 minutes*) is incorrect. This choice doesn't make much sense; the *gold-mining settlements were remote*; the race to *save lives* probably lasted much longer than 10 minutes; but if we are still puzzled about this choice, we can ask, "*Can this answer be found in the story?*" Since it doesn't make much sense, and we cannot find it in the story, we can eliminate this choice.
- ◆ Choice D (*Only a few teams compete in the Iditarod each year*) is incorrect. The second sentence says the *race attracts approximately 75 teams each year*, which is more than a few.

**11. *Where does the Iditarod take place?*** The first sentence says the race was *from Anchorage to Nome*. This answer should have been very easy to find. Did you have to *read between the lines* to answer this one? Pause. (no)

The answer was in the lines, not between the lines. Did the question and sentence where the answer was found have many of the same words? Pause (no). The question and sentence with the answer had many words that meant the same thing, but did not have the same words.

**12. The *Iditarod* race attracts approximately how many teams each year? The answer, *75 teams*, is found in the second sentence: *This grueling race attracts approximately 75 teams each year.***

**What made this answer easy to find? Pause. It was almost word for word like the question. Underline all the words that are in the question and the sentence. Pause. You should have underlined *race, attracts, approximately, teams, each, and year*. This question was easy to answer, but most will not be so easy.**

**13. *About how many teams compete in the annual Iditarod? Did anyone get the same answers for numbers 12 and 13? Pause. You should have gotten the same answer (*75 teams*) because these two questions mean the same thing.***

**Circle the words that mean the same in both questions. Pause. You should have circled *approximately* and *about; how many teams; year and annual; Iditarod*. Remember, there are many ways to ask the same question.**

**14. *Why do you think serum was delivered to remote settlements by dogsleds instead of automobiles? Before answering, tell what you had to do to answer this question. Pause. (Read between the lines.)***

**You had to get information from several sentences and *think about what you already knew* about dogsleds and automobiles. Do you think automobiles can drive across the *frozen tundra*? Pause. (no, because they would skid across the ice and probably get wrecked)**

**Would sleds skid across the ice? Pause. (no)**

**What is the difference between a sled and an automobile?**

**Pause. (Sleds have blades like ice skates and automobiles have wheels.)**

**Today you have practiced many tricks that should help you become strong readers, sharp thinkers, and good test takers.**

## Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-1

*The Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race is an annual event in which dogsled drivers (mushers) race from Anchorage to Nome. This grueling race attracts approximately 75 teams each year. The dogsled race was inspired by a 1925 outbreak of diphtheria at one of the remote gold-mining settlements. A team raced to deliver the serum necessary to save lives. Now, read this true account of a young contestant's attempt to win the Iditarod through frozen tundra.*

### **THE RACE**

Competing in the Iditarod, the 1,000-mile dog sled race held every year in Alaska, was an unforgettable experience for Susan Butcher. Just hours after the start, a snowstorm covered the trail and caused Susan to take a wrong turn and a long detour. Another disaster struck when Susan got off the sled to help the dogs up a hill. With great energy, the whole team took off without her. After chasing the dogs for miles, she found them by a huge snowdrift. The sled had overturned, but the dogs were uninjured.

Susan and her team of dogs endured subzero weather and piercing wind for much of the race. They struggled for many days to cross the frozen land. To make up lost time, Susan drove long into the night. Many times she heard the ancient spirits howling in the dark.

On the final day of the race, Susan and her dogs were exhausted, but determined to finish. With only thirty miles to go, she moved into fifth place. The push was on. She managed to overtake three of the teams, but the lead team stayed out in front, less than four minutes ahead. Despite a valiant effort, Susan and her team could not catch the leader.

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-2

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Choose the *best* answer.

- The Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race is an annual event in which dogsled drivers race from Anchorage to Nome. Annual means*
  - yearly.
  - daily.
  - summer.
  - religious.
- This grueling race attracts approximately 75 teams each year. Grueling means*
  - exciting.
  - athletic.
  - winter.
  - tiring.
- The dogsled was inspired by a 1925 outbreak of diphtheria at one of the remote gold-mining settlements. Diphtheria is*
  - bad weather.
  - a disease.
  - problems.
  - bad news.
- Remote means*
  - nearby.
  - wealthy.
  - crowded.
  - far away.
- A team raced to deliver the serum necessary to save lives. Serum is*
  - a doctor.
  - hospital.
  - medicine.
  - a nurse.

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-2 (cont'd)

Now, read this true account of a young contestant's attempt to win the Iditarod through frozen tundra.

6. A contestant is
- A. a competitor.
  - B. a hunter.
  - C. a doctor.
  - D. a dog trainer.

7. Tundra is
- A. jungle.
  - B. the north pole.
  - C. ditches.
  - D. ground hardened with permafrost.

*The Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race is an annual event in which dogsled drivers (mushers) race from Anchorage to Nome.*

8. A *musher* is
- A. a dog trained to run on frozen ground.
  - B. a team of dogs.
  - C. a special type of sled designed for racing.
  - D. the person who drives the dogsled.
9. The idea of the *Iditarod* came about because of
- A. the need to get medicine quickly to sick people living in the gold-mining towns.
  - B. the need to find gold quickly.
  - C. the need to have competition for dogs.
  - D. the need for a cold weather sport.
10. Which one of these statements is true?
- A. The *Iditarod* has been an annual event for over 50 years.
  - B. The young contestant won the race.
  - C. The *Iditarod* usually lasts about 10 minutes.
  - D. Only a few teams compete in the *Iditarod* each year.

Student Worksheet Reading and Responding Lesson 13-2 (cont'd)

11. Where does the *Iditarod* take place?

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12. The *Iditarod* race attracts approximately how many teams each year?

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13. About how many teams compete in the annual *Iditarod*?

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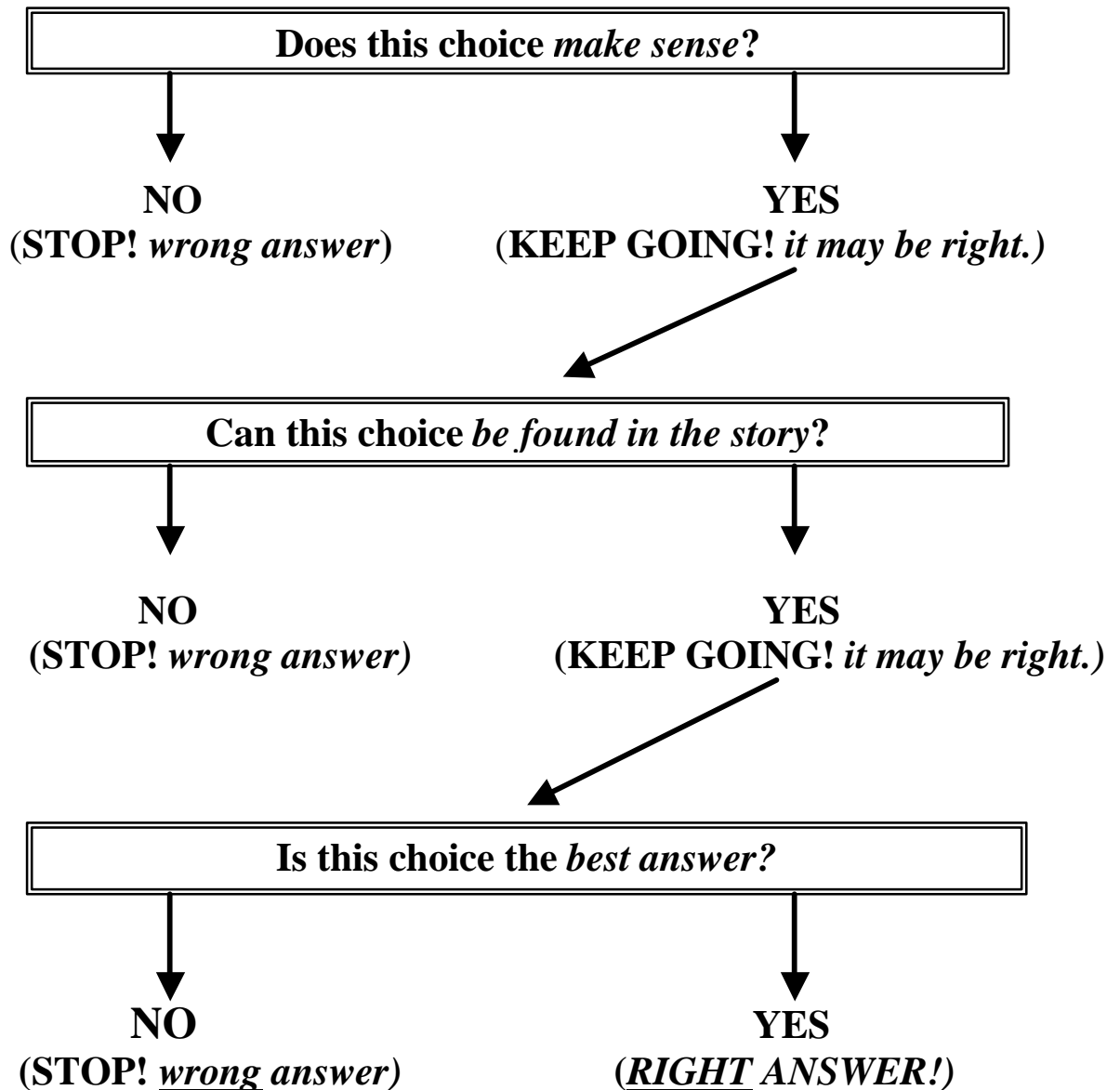
14. Why was serum delivered to remote settlements by dogsleds instead of automobiles?

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## Finding the Right Answer To Multiple Choice Questions

*Ask 3 Questions:*



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