

2008

# ISAT

## Sample Book



GRADE

8

**Sample Items for Reading and Mathematics**

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## Introduction

This sample book contains sample ISAT items classified with an assessment objective from the *Illinois Assessment Frameworks*. These samples are meant to give educators and students a general sense of how items are formatted for ISAT. All 2008 ISATs will be printed in color. This sample book does not cover the entire content of what may be assessed. Please refer to the *Illinois Assessment Frameworks* for complete descriptions of the content to be assessed at each grade level and subject area. The *Illinois Assessment Frameworks* are available online at [www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFindex.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFindex.htm). The Student Assessment website contains additional information about state testing ([www.isbe.net/assessment](http://www.isbe.net/assessment)).



Illinois Standards Achievement Test  
**Reading Samples**



## Structure of the Grade 8 Reading ISAT

ISAT Reading testing in spring 2008 will consist of 30 norm-referenced items, as well as criterion-referenced items. The 30 norm-referenced items are an abbreviated form of the *Stanford 10 Reading* assessment, developed by Harcourt, Inc. The criterion-referenced items are all written by Illinois educators and pilot tested with Illinois students.

### Item Formats

All items are aligned to the *Illinois Reading Assessment Framework*, which defines the elements of the Illinois Learning Standards that are suitable for state testing.

**Multiple-choice** items require students to read and reflect, and then to select the alternative that best expresses what they believe the answer to be. A carefully constructed multiple-choice item can assess any of the levels of complexity, from simple procedures to sophisticated concepts.

**Extended-response** items require students to demonstrate an understanding of a passage by explaining key ideas using textual evidence and by using this information to draw conclusions or make connections to other situations. The extended-response items are scored with a holistic rubric and count as 10% of the scale score of the test.

### Reading Sessions

All standard time administration test sessions are a minimum of 45 minutes in length. Any student who is still actively engaged in testing when the 45 minutes have elapsed will be allowed up to an additional 10 minutes to complete that test session. More details about how to administer this extra time will appear in the *ISAT Test Administration Manual*. This policy does not affect students who already receive extended time as determined by their IEP.

Reading ISAT Grade 8	
<b>Session 1 45 minutes</b>	6 shorter passages—30 multiple-choice items total
<b>Session 2 45 minutes</b>	Two longer passages consisting of: 1 expository passage with 10 multiple-choice items 1 literary passage with 10 multiple-choice items 1 extended-response item
<b>Session 3 45 minutes</b>	Two longer passages consisting of: 1 expository passage (or paired passage) with 10 multiple-choice items 1 literary passage (or paired passage) with 10 multiple-choice items 1 extended-response item
(Some items will be pilot items.)	



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## **Shorter Passage Followed by Multiple-Choice Sample Items**

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## School Photographer

by  
Kristine O'Connell George

- When I am behind my camera lens  
I can make people stand closer,  
wrap their arms around each other,  
even get them to smile.
- 5 When I am behind my camera lens  
I see things others don't.  
I can record a single moment  
That *distorts* or tells the truth.
- When I am behind my camera lens
- 10 I can see everything  
Except my own self, hiding  
behind my camera.





1

The poet most likely took the idea for this poem from —

- A a book on photography
- B a volume of poetry
- C her camera's owner's manual
- D her own experience

2

Why does the speaker feel hidden?

- A No one can see her.
- B She is looking through the camera.
- C There is no one around.
- D Other people are standing in front of her.

3

In line 6, when the speaker says, "I see things others don't," she most likely means —

- A people often overlook what's around them
- B people don't pay attention when their picture is taken
- C cameras are the most accurate form of record keeping
- D the camera lens is like a microscope

4

If you did not know the meaning of *distorts* in stanza 2, you should —

- A look for other words in the poem that begin with "d"
- B say the word over and over to yourself
- C read on, looking for clues
- D decide on the word's part of speech

5

In this poem, which point of view does the poet use?

- A First person (one person who describes her own thoughts)
- B Third person (a person outside the story who describes the thoughts of one other person)
- C Third person omniscient (a person outside the story who describes the thoughts of several characters)
- D Third person objective (a person outside the story who describes events objectively)



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**Longer Passage Followed by  
Multiple-Choice Sample Items and  
Extended-Response Sample Item**

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This is a story about one parent's experiences with Little League baseball. His descriptions of these games show how exciting and unpredictable a baseball game can be.

## They Might Be Giants

by Dave Barry

- 1 OK, fans. Time for Great Moments in Sports. The situation is this: The Giants are playing a team whose name we did not catch in the hotly contested Little League Ages 6 and 7 Division, and the bases are loaded. The bases are always loaded in this particular Division for several reasons.
- 2 First off, the coach pitches the ball to his own players. This is because throwing is not the strong suit of the players in the Ages 6 and 7 Division. They have no idea, when they let go of the ball, where it's headed. They just haul off and wing it, really try to *hurl* that baby without getting bogged down in a lot of picky technical details such as whether or not there is now, or has ever been, another player in the area where the ball is likely to land. Generally there is not, which is good, because another major area of weakness, in the Ages 6 and 7 Division, is catching the ball.
- 3 Until I became a parent, I thought children just naturally knew how to catch a ball, that catching was an instinctive biological reflex that all children are born with, like knowing how to operate a remote control or getting high fevers in distant airports. But it turns out that if you toss a ball to a child, the ball will just bonk off the child's body and fall to the ground. So you have to coach the child. I go out in the yard with my son, and I give him helpful tips such as: "Catch the ball!" And: "Don't just let the ball bonk off your body!" Thanks to this coaching effort, my son, like most of the players on the Giants, has advanced his game to the point where, just before the ball bonks off his body, he winces.
- 4 So fielding is also not the strong suit of the Giants. They stand around the field, chattering to each other, watching airplanes, picking their noses, thinking about dinosaurs, etc. Meanwhile on the pitchers' mound, the coach of the opposing team tries to throw the ball just right so that it will bounce off the bat of one of his players, because hitting is another major area of weakness in the Ages 6 and 7 Division.





- 5 The real athletic drama begins once the opposing coach succeeds in bouncing the ball off the bat of one of his players, thus putting the ball into play and causing the fielders to swing into action. It reminds me of those table-hockey games, where you have a bunch of little men that you activate with knobs and levers, except that the way you activate the Giants is, you yell excitedly in an effort to notify them that the ball is headed their way. Because otherwise they'd probably never notice it.
- 6 "Robby!" I'll yell if the ball goes near my son. "The ball!" Thus activated, Robby goes on Full Red Alert, looking around frantically until he locates the ball, which he picks up and — eager to be relieved of the responsibility — hurls in some random direction. Then, depending on where the ball is headed, some other parent will try to activate his child, and the ball will be hurled again and again, pinball-style, around the field, before ultimately bonking off the body of the first baseman. Of course at this point the batter has been standing on the base for some time. Fortunately, in this league, he is required to stop there; otherwise, he could easily make it to Japan.
- 7 This is why the bases are always loaded, which is what leads us to today's Sports Moment. Standing on third base is James Palmieri, who is only 5, but who plays for the Giants anyway because his older brother, T.J., is on the team. James got on base via an exciting play: He failed to actually, technically, *hit* the ball, but the Giants' wily coach, Wayne Argo, *employed* a classic bit of baseball strategy. "Let's let James get on base," he said. And the other team agreed, because at this point the Giants were losing the hotly contested game by roughly 143 — 57.
- 8 So here it is: James is standing on third, for the first time in his entire life, thinking about dinosaurs, and next to him, ready to activate, is his mom, Carmen. And now Coach Wayne is throwing the pitch. It is a good pitch, bouncing directly off the bat. Bedlam erupts as parents on both teams try to activate their players, but none is shouting with more enthusiasm than Carmen. "Run, James!" she yells, from maybe a foot away. "Run!"
- 9 James, startled, looks up, and you can almost see the thought forming in his mind: *I'm supposed to run*. And now he is running, and Carmen is running next to him, cheering him on, the two of them chugging toward the plate, only 15 feet to go, James about to score his first run ever. Then suddenly, incredibly, due to a semi-random hurl somewhere out in the field, there appears of all things: the ball. And — this is a nightmare — an opposing player actually *catches* it, and touches home plate and little James is OUT.
- 10 Two things happen:
- Carmen stops. She says a bad word. A mom to the core.
  - James, oblivious, keeps running. Chugs right on home, touches the plate smiling and wanders off, happy as a clam.
- 11 You can have your Willie Mays catch and your Bill Mazerowski home run. For me, the ultimate mental picture is James and Carmen at that moment: the Thrill of Victory, the Agony of Defeat. A Great Moment in Sports.



1

What is ironic about Dave Barry's reference to the game as "hotly contested"?

- A The score is very one-sided.
- B The game is played at a high level of skill.
- C The parents become upset after the game is over.
- D The coaches become angry when the ball is caught.

2

Why doesn't a player pitch the ball during the game?

- A The players do not have enough control when they throw.
- B The ball is not small enough for six- and seven-year-olds.
- C The bases will not be loaded unless the coach is the pitcher.
- D The team does not have enough players to fill the pitching position.

3

Why do the young players wince?

- A The players strike out often.
- B The players seldom get on base.
- C The players are going to be hit.
- D The players are often embarrassed.

4

Why is the picture on the first page of the passage included with this story?

- A To show that the game is more important to parents than to the players
- B To show the different activities that children enjoy doing
- C To show how adults are more easily frightened than children
- D To show that children on two different teams can be friends after the game

5

What causes Robby to go on "Full Red Alert"?

- A He hears his father yelling at him.
- B He knows that he can score a run.
- C He hits the ball that the coach pitches.
- D He hears his teammates cheering for him.



6

The author compares the players' actions to which activity?

- A A nightmare
- B A busy airport
- C A pinball game
- D A skating party

7

What does the author mean when he says that the batter "could easily make it to Japan"?

- A The two teams are playing in a different country.
- B The two teams often play on the same baseball field.
- C The players on each team are good at running long distances.
- D The players have trouble getting the ball where it needs to go.

8

The coach "*employed* a classic bit of baseball strategy." Which word means the same as *employed* in this sentence?

- A Used
- B Made
- C Hired
- D Found

9

Why does the author refer to Carmen as "a mom to the core"?

- A To emphasize her devotion to her son
- B To emphasize her loyalty to the team
- C To emphasize her knowledge of the game
- D To emphasize her fear of being ignored

10

The author describes James as "happy as a clam." What literary device is this?

- A Simile
- B Metaphor
- C Hyperbole
- D Personification



11

Why does the author write about the Little League game?

- A** He is trying to explain the rules to people who have never played the game.
- B** He thinks people should know about the effort that players put into organized sports.
- C** He is fascinated by the behavior of the participants compared to the behavior of the spectators.
- D** He wants to tell about his son's adventures and boast about his talent for playing baseball.

13

Which words best describe the parents at the Little League game?

- A** Overly suspicious
- B** Intensely involved
- C** Annoyingly rude
- D** Extremely quiet

12

Which aspect of the story makes it funny?

- A** The jokes that the players tell their coaches
- B** The names the author gives the characters
- C** The way that the players talk to their parents
- D** The way that the author describes the game

14

Which type of writing best describes this passage?

- A** Fairy tale
- B** Biography
- C** Historical fiction
- D** Essay

**15**

In the story, the author describes the behavior of adults at a little league game. Explain why adults behave as they do in this story. Use information from the story and your own observations and conclusions to support your answer.

## Answer Key with Assessment Objectives Identified

	Item Number	Correct Answer	Assessment Objective
<b>Shorter Passage</b>	1	D	<b>2.8.04</b> Compare stories to personal experience, prior knowledge, or other stories.
	2	B	<b>1.8.19</b> Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.
	3	A	<b>2.8.10</b> Identify literary devices: (e.g., figurative language, hyperbole, understatement, symbols, dialogue).
	4	C	<b>1.8.03</b> Determine the meaning of an unknown word using word, sentence, and cross-sentence clues.
	5	A	<b>2.8.05</b> Recognize points of view in narratives (e.g., first person).

	Item Number	Correct Answer	Assessment Objective
Longer Passage	1	A	<b>2.8.12</b> Identify varieties of irony, including dramatic irony.
	2	A	<b>1.8.14</b> Determine the answer to a literal or simple inference question regarding the meaning of a passage.
	3	C	<b>1.8.04</b> Determine the connotation of a word using word, sentence, and cross-sentence clues.
	4	A	<b>1.8.25</b> Determine why some points are illustrated.
	5	A	<b>1.8.18</b> Identify the causes of events in a story or nonfiction account.
	6	C	<b>1.8.14</b> Determine the answer to a literal or simple inference question regarding the meaning of a passage.
	7	D	<b>2.8.11</b> Explain how the literary devices (e.g., imagery, metaphor, figurative language dialogue) contribute to the meaning of a literary selection.
	8	A	<b>1.8.05</b> Determine the meaning of a word in context when the word has multiple meanings.
	9	A	<b>2.8.11</b> Explain how the literary devices (e.g., imagery, metaphor, figurative language dialogue) contribute to the meaning of a literary selection.
	10	A	<b>2.8.10</b> Identify literary devices: (e.g., figurative language, hyperbole, understatement, symbols, dialogue).
	11	C	<b>1.8.24</b> Determine the author's purpose as represented by the choice of genre, and literary devices employed.
	12	D	<b>1.8.24</b> Determine the author's purpose as represented by the choice of genre, and literary devices employed.
	13	B	<b>2.8.06</b> Determine what characters are like by their words, thoughts, and actions, as well as how other characters react to them.
	14	D	<b>2.8.13</b> Identify various subcategories of genres: poetry, drama (comedy and tragedy), science fiction, historical fiction, myth or legend, drama, biography/autobiography, story, poem, fairy tale, folktale, fable, nonfiction, and essay.
	15	Extended-Response Item	<b>2.8.06</b> Determine what characters are like by their words, thoughts, and actions, as well as how other characters react to them.

To view all the reading assessment objectives, download the *Illinois Reading Assessment Framework* for Grades 3–8 online at [www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFindex.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/IAFindex.htm).



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# **Extended-Response Scoring Rubric**

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## Reading Extended-Response Scoring Rubric

Readers identify important information found explicitly and implicitly in the text. Readers use this information to interpret the text and/or make connections to other situations or contexts through analysis, evaluation, or comparison/contrast. A student-friendly version of this extended-response rubric is available online at [www.isbe.net/assessment/reading.htm](http://www.isbe.net/assessment/reading.htm).

Score	Criteria
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader demonstrates an accurate understanding of important information in the text by focusing on the key ideas presented explicitly and implicitly.</li> <li>• Reader uses information from the text to interpret significant concepts or make connections to other situations or contexts logically through analysis, evaluation, inference, or comparison/contrast.</li> <li>• Reader uses relevant and accurate references; most are specific and fully supported.</li> <li>• Reader integrates interpretation of the text with text-based support (balanced).</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader demonstrates an accurate understanding of information in the text by focusing on some key ideas presented explicitly and implicitly.</li> <li>• Reader uses information from the text to interpret significant concepts or make connections to other situations or contexts logically (with some gaps) through analysis, evaluation, inference, or comparison/contrast.</li> <li>• Reader uses relevant and accurate references; some are specific; some may be general and not fully supported.</li> <li>• Reader partially integrates interpretation of the text with text-based support.</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader demonstrates an accurate but limited understanding of the text.</li> <li>• Reader uses information from the text to make simplistic interpretations of the text without using significant concepts or by making only limited connections to other situations or contexts.</li> <li>• Reader uses irrelevant or limited references.</li> <li>• Reader generalizes without illustrating key ideas; may have gaps.</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader demonstrates little or no understanding of the text; may be inaccurate.</li> <li>• Reader makes little or no interpretation of the text.</li> <li>• Reader uses no references or the references are inaccurate.</li> <li>• Reader's response is insufficient to show that criteria are met.</li> </ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reader's response is absent or does not address the task.</li> <li>• Reader's response is insufficient to show that criteria are met.</li> </ul>

Grade: 8

Sample: 1

Score: 3

**DIRECTIONS**

Make sure you

- Read the question completely before you start to write your answer,
- Write your answer to the question in your own words,
- Write as clearly as you can so that another person can read your answer and understand what you were thinking,
- Read over your answer to see if you need to rewrite any part of it.

As people grow up, they find importance in other things. At a little league game, even if the kids lose, they will be happy. Even if they get an out, they will not realize it, and they will celebrate. Parents on the other hand, want to win. They want to be the number one team. As a parent, adults want their children to be successful. When James was out, he still ran to the base and was happy. Carmen, his mom, was upset that her son received an out. When Robby doesn't see the ball, his father yells to get it. This is

because parents think kids will only be happy if they win. In reality, kids like to have fun. My father reacts the same way.

My brother has played hockey since he was 4; he is now seven. Whenever my brother would do something wrong, my dad would lecture him about it. My father wanted for my brother to be the champion, the star player, the best player on the ice. All my brother wanted was to have fun.

\*This response demonstrates a good understanding of the text by focusing on some key ideas, for example, "... even if the kids lose, they will be happy"; "Parents on the other hand, want to win."; and by providing some interpretations, "Even if they get an out, they will not realize it, and they will celebrate"; and "In reality, kids like to have fun."

\*The response makes some connections in the last paragraph, but the connections are not well supported. To obtain a higher score, the response needed to better reinforce statements made in the last paragraph, and to include explicit, text-based support.

Grade: 8

Sample: 2

Score: 3

**DIRECTIONS**

Make sure you

- Read the question completely before you start to write your answer,
- Write your answer to the question in your own words,
- Write as clearly as you can so that another person can read your answer and understand what you were thinking,
- Read over your answer to see if you need to rewrite any part of it.

The behavior of adults at little league games is quite peculiar. It seems to be that the moms and dads are more intense than the children. In the story a mother is controlling her child and telling him when to run. To me I think this is funny because the behaviors of the children as they are playing are very spacy. I don't even think the little boys know what sport they're playing. In the text, a mother is described as a mom to the core. which obviously means that she is horrified when her son doesn't score. my observations of the story tell me that the parents are like this only because they care for their child and want the best for them. maybe the adult had some child

good experience and they didn't want it to happen to their kid. To quote the text, "but no one is shouting with more enthusiasm than Carmen!" So in conclusion I think that the only reason parents act crazy at little league games, is that they only want the best for there son and they want them to succeed at what ever they do.

\*This response demonstrates an accurate understanding of some key ideas presented in the essay; for example, ". . . the moms and dads are more intense then the children."; ". . . the children as they are playing are very spacey." The writer uses explicit and implicit text-based support to interpret some key points; for example, ". . . a mother is described as a mom to the core. Which obviously means that she is horrified when her son doesn't score."; ". . . parents are like this only because they care for their child and want the best for them."

\*The response attempts to connect the text to a possible childhood experience, but the connection is weak and not well supported. To obtain a higher score, the response needed to better reinforce statements made to support the connection.



Grade: 8

Sample: 3

Score: 4

**DIRECTIONS**

Make sure you

- Read the question completely before you start to write your answer,
- Write your answer to the question in your own words,
- Write as clearly as you can so that another person can read your answer and understand what you were thinking,
- Read over your answer to see if you need to rewrite any part of it.

Parents tend to be extremely supportive when it comes to their children playing sports. A parent is often a child's "greatest fan." It is a parent's job to encourage their child to do their best, give moral support and constructive criticism, and to show pride in their child even if they don't play their best or win. In this story, Dave describes in great detail how he and the other parents act during the game. Dave shows some amusement and frustration that the Giants Little League team cannot throw and catch well. He does try to give his child advice about catching, but he doesn't make much progress. However, Dave and the other parents still continue to show their support by coming to the games and shouting at them to get their attention when

the ball is near, the adults in this story behave the way they do because it is very important to them that their child plays the game and wins. They probably feel that their child's success reflects on their abilities as a parent, this is why they try so hard to get their children to play the game, and "activate" their children to get the ball. Even though the parents become frustrated, there is a certain fondness to their child's weaknesses and it can be joked about as Dave describes the game. At the end, Dave implies that even though James didn't get a home run, he was victorious and felt as happy as a clam, while Carmen felt disheartened and upset. He also says that she is "a mom to the core" because she displayed typical behavior for a mom whose child didn't win. The child did his best, and felt over the moon. But the mother, ever the greatest fan, was let down when her son did not get the home run she was hoping for.

\*This response demonstrates a strong interpretation of the text by focusing on the key ideas, *“It is a parent’s job to encourage their child . . .”*; *“ . . . it is very important to them that their child plays the game and wins. They probably feel that their child’s success reflects on their abilities as a parent.”* The writer uses explicit text references, for example, *“ . . . activate . . .”*; *“ . . . happy as a clam . . .”*; *“ . . . a mom to the core . . .”*, along with implicit text references, *“ . . . Little League team cannot throw and catch well . . .”*; *“ . . . shouting at them to get their attention when the ball is near . . .”* In-depth analyses is evident; *“The adults in this story behave the way they do because it is very important to them that their child plays the game and wins.”*; *“ . . . she displayed typical behavior for a mom whose child didn’t win. The child did his best, and felt over the moon. But the mother, ever the greatest fan, was let down when her son did not get the home run she was hoping for.”*

\*This response is well-balanced with both specific text-based references and student interpretations related to the passage.

Grade: 8

Sample: 4

Score: 4

**DIRECTIONS**

Make sure you

- Read the question completely before you start to write your answer,
- Write your answer to the question in your own words,
- Write as clearly as you can so that another person can read your answer and understand what you were thinking,
- Read over your answer to see if you need to rewrite any part of it.

Every proud parent wants their child to win. If their kid doesn't care if they win they won't participate. To make the child participate the parent has to "activate" the child and tell them what to do. "Robby! The ball!" is an example the author used.

Since he called his child's name, Robby is now "activated" and paying attention. Robby should now grab the ball and throw it. This makes the game go on despite the lack of knowledge and skill in the players. That is where the parents come in.

James got out. James didn't care however. His mother on the other hand was furious. James' mom is "a mom to the core," meaning she wants her baby boy to win. Since he is out, he can no longer win. This

disappoints the mother leaving her to feel  
angry. Parents act in strange ways to  
get what they want. If they want their  
kid to win they will yell directions  
and run along side them if they have to.  
It's all so the parents can brag to other parents  
and put their baby's trophy on the mantle.  
If they don't yell directions the child  
won't participate causing them to lose.  
If they lose there is no trophy, no  
bragging, and a huge open spot on the  
mantle.

\*This response demonstrates a very complete understanding of information in the passage. The writer cites numerous passage references to support interpretations; for example, "James got out. James didn't care however. His mother on the other hand was furious. James' mom is 'a mom to the core,' meaning she wants her baby boy to win. Since he is out, he can no longer win. This disappoints the mother . . ."

\*This response is well-balanced with both specific, text-based references and interpretations related to the passage.



