

# comprehension practice

## California Reading Standard 2.0: Focus on Informational Materials

The multiple choice questions in this section provide practice in commonly used standardized testing format emphasizing functional and textual reading material. Questions are divided into the following categories:

- Initial Understanding
  - Specific Detail
  - Action/Reason/Sequence
- Interpretation
  - Inference
  - Extending Meaning
- Critical Analysis
- Strategies
- Skills Specific to Individual Standards

Although we have provided engaging and in some cases humorous materials, they can be deceptively challenging and require *close* and *complete* reading of the text.

Marguerite Johnson grew up to be the author we know as Maya Angelou. Her many autobiographies and books of poetry have been praised for their candid examinations of life; she depicts events and scenes as they really happened without changing them for the reader's comfort. Her writing speaks about life in the black community of her youth, her challenges as a single mother, her work for human rights, and her experiences as a writer and editor in Africa. During her career she has worked on projects at the request of Martin Luther King, Jr., President Gerald Ford, and President Jimmy Carter. She has touched many people and received many awards. The poem she wrote and read for President Clinton's inauguration was heard by millions of viewers the world over. Indeed, Maya Angelou has come a long way from the silent child Mrs. Flowers befriended.

Wherever Maya Angelou speaks, she holds the audience spellbound. Lori Rohlk, a journalist who heard her speak recently, describes it this way:

On this particular June night, Angelou had me and about 2,400 other people thinking about rainbows: those people whose lives are bright, shining examples for others. "I'm so amazed, and it is so true, that each of us has a rainbow — has four or five," said Angelou. She urged us to give the power of our rainbows to the children. "A lot of our children, unfortunately, look for rainbows on MTV. Some of the mega-stars don't care if they live or die . . . that's hard to say, but it's the truth." She said that we need to find people in our environment to be rainbows to these children. "I think we need to tell the children — look in the family first, look in the group first, look in the church first, look in the temple — look for someone who will encourage them to be more like themselves. When I look at my family members, I'm flooded with gratitude, and with the responsibility myself to be a rainbow." She encouraged the audience to be courageous, noting that being a rainbow takes courage but that courage is the greatest virtue of all. "I would also encourage you to laugh as much as possible — I never trust people who don't laugh." And then she received applause for this statement: "I would encourage ourselves to love us — so we don't have to hate anyone else."

It has often been said that a single action can have undreamed-of consequences. Little did Mrs. Flowers know that when she encouraged a girl named Marguerite, she was helping to create the rainbow the world would know as Maya Angelou.

- 1 According to this reading, Maya Angelou has written all of the below except --
- A autobiographies
  - B biographies
  - C poems
  - D speeches
- 2 "Her many autobiographies and books of poetry have been praised for their candid examinations of life; she depicts events and scenes as they really happened without changing them for the reader's comfort."
- In the sentence above, candid probably means --
- A honest
  - B creative
  - C sweet
  - D unhappy
- 3 During her lifetime Maya Angelou has filled all of the following roles except --
- A single mom
  - B human rights worker
  - C editor
  - D lawyer
- 4 When Angelou refers to "rainbows," she means -
- A people who have colorful personalities
  - B people who stand out in a crowd
  - C people who set good examples for others
  - D people who look like Dennis Rodman
- 5 When Angelou refers to "rainbows," she is speaking --
- A literally
  - B figuratively
  - C loudly
  - D none of the above
- 6 Angelou believes children can find rainbows in all of the following places except --
- A MTV
  - B family
  - C church or temple
  - D peer group
- 7 What does Angelou consider to be one of the greatest human virtues?
- A kindness
  - B caring
  - C courage
  - D responsibility
- 8 There is enough information in this reading to know that Angelou believes all of us can best help others by --
- A writing
  - B working for human rights
  - C loving ourselves
  - D finding rainbows
- 9 A good title for this selection might be--
- A A Rainbow Named Maya
  - B Be a Rainbow
  - C Find a Rainbow
  - D Rainbow? What Rainbow?
- 10 This selection is *most* like a--
- A report
  - B biographical article
  - C a personal article
  - D fictional narrative
- 11 This selection is mostly organized by --
- A scientific presentation of researched material
  - B a series of events created by the writer
  - C a chronological presentation of the major events from Maya Angelou's life history
  - D thesis statement and supporting evidence

12 This selection contains a text within a text because it summarizes a speech. The author of the article wants the reader to think more deeply about her subject - Maya Angelou. But in her speech Maya Angelou wants to make the listener think more deeply about *her* subject, which is --

- A children
- B fame
- C speaking in public
- D human rights

13 "Wherever Maya Angelou speaks, she holds the audience spellbound."

Which of the following sentences from the article supports the above proposition?

- A "Lori Rohlk, a journalist who heard her speak recently, describes it this way:"
- B "She encouraged the audience to be courageous, noting that being a rainbow takes courage but that courage is the greatest virtue of all."
- C "Angelou had me and about 2,400 other people thinking about rainbows: those people whose lives are bright, shining examples for others."
- D "It has often been said that a single action can have undreamed-of consequences."

14 "During her career she has worked on projects at the request of Martin Luther King, Jr., President Gerald Ford, and President Jimmy Carter."

The sentence above provides support for the author's claim --

- A "Wherever Maya Angelou speaks, she holds the audience spellbound."
- B "Indeed, Maya Angelou has come a long way from the silent child Mrs. Flowers befriended."
- C Marguerite Johnson grew up to be the author we know as Maya Angelou.
- D all of the above

15 A summary of the article should include all of the following except --

- A background information not found in the article but important to the reader's understanding
- B a paraphrased statement of the author's proposition
- C a short summary of each supporting example
- D the author's underlying meaning

Marguerite Johnson is also known as Maya Angelou. Her many books have been praised for their realism, in particular her writings about growing up in a black community. She has worked in Africa. She has worked at the request of Presidents. Needless to say, she is a great speaker.

16 What is most significantly missing from the above summary?

- A where Maya Angelou was born and raised
- B the influence of "Mrs. Flowers"
- C President Clinton
- D Being a single mother

17 Putting the text of the speech within the text of this article --

- A unified the article, because it showed Maya Angelou in action rather than just talking about her
- B gave logical support because it showed how Maya Angelou is continuing to help others as Mrs. Flowers helped her
- C both of the above
- D none of the above

18 In her life and her writing, Maya Angelou "walks her talk." If her life were a book, this trait would be called --

- A internal consistency
- B unity
- C coherence
- D all of the above

## Mrs. Flowers' Crisp Sugar Cookies

1/2 cup butter or margarine  
1 cup sugar  
2 cups sifted all-purpose flour  
1 egg

1 tablespoon heavy cream  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
Extra sugar for optional topping

Cream butter or margarine with sugar in mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Add egg, cream, and vanilla. Beat well. Sift flour with salt and baking powder. Add to creamed mixture, beating until well combined. Chill dough overnight. Note: this step is essential to good cookies. If not chilled, the dough will be too sticky to roll smoothly.

When ready to bake, start oven at moderate (350 degrees F.) Grease two or more cookie sheets lightly. Dust lightly with flour to prevent sticking.

Roll out a small amount of dough at one time, very thin, on lightly floured board. Cut with round cutter. (Optional: sprinkle cookies lightly with sugar.) Place on prepared cookie sheets.

Bake 5 minutes or until done. Makes about 36 to 50 large cookies, 6 dozen or more small cookies.

## Mrs. Flowers' Lemonade

4 - 6 medium-sized lemons

1-2 cups sugar

Squeeze lemons. Add 2 quarts water. Add sugar to taste, stirring constantly until sugar is dissolved. Note: do not use chilled water, as sugar may clump instead of dissolving fully.

Chill and serve alone or over ice. May garnish with mint.

- 1 A recipe is *most* like --
- A a contract
  - B a warranty
  - C an instruction manual
  - D a product information sheet
- 2 The goal of a recipe is --
- A to predictably and reliably produce the desired product
  - B to require a company to consider consumer safety
  - C to be sure the consumer is not taken advantage of
  - D to describe what is contained in the package
- 3 The written structure of a recipe is decided by its --
- A ingredients
  - B instructions
  - C both of the above
  - D none of the above
- 4 Which of the following items is *not* used in Mrs. Flowers' recipes?
- A flour
  - B salt
  - C nutmeg
  - D vanilla
- 5 "Cream butter or margarine with sugar in mixing bowl until light or fluffy." In the above sentence, cream means--
- A a rich form of milk suitable for baked goods
  - B to win a game by a huge margin
  - C mix
  - D one who is the best
- 6 How much sugar should be on hand to complete *both* recipes?
- A 1 cup
  - B 2 cups
  - C 3 cups
  - D 3+ cups
- 7 "They were flat, round wafers, slightly browned on the edges and butter-yellow in the center."
- According to the description above, what ingredient or step did Mrs. Flowers probably leave out?
- A the flour
  - B the butter
  - C the vanilla
  - D the extra sugar on top
- 8 Marguerite was surprised that Mrs. Flowers had ice for lemonade, but her recipes suggest that Mrs. Flowers had ice because she also needed--
- A to keep cream and butter fresh overnight
  - B to chill the cookie dough
  - C to keep the sugar from clumping
  - D to cool off the baked cookies
- 9 According to these recipes, Mrs. Flowers probably needed to start preparations for Marguerite's visit--
- A a week ahead of time
  - B the day before
  - C that morning
  - D an hour before
- 10 Flour is used in the cookie recipe for all of the below except--
- A making the dough
  - B coating the pans
  - C keeping the board from sticking
  - D as a topping on the finished cookies
- 11 The lemonade recipe suggests that--
- A everyone likes lemonade
  - B varying amounts of sugar can be used in lemonade
  - C clumped sugar in lemonade is nice
  - D lemonade is best served at room temperature

- 12 Ideally, in a well-written recipe, the ingredients are listed in the order in which they will be handled, which means all of the following *except* --
- A butter and sugar are listed first
  - B whatever comes to mind is listed first
  - C other dry ingredients are listed together
  - D wet ingredients are listed together
- 13 Considering the above, is flour in the right place in this list of ingredients?
- A yes
  - B no
  - C it doesn't matter
  - D none of the above
- 14 If not, where should flour be listed? --
- A with salt
  - B with baking powder
  - C with both salt and baking powder
  - D no change is necessary
- 15 A recipe proposes that if you --
- A gather all the right ingredients
  - B and measure them correctly
  - C then you can accomplish a result
  - D all of the above
- 16 The instructions in a recipe are like supporting sections in an essay because they detail --
- A where to get the ingredients
  - B how to handle the ingredients
  - C how to substitute with other ingredients
  - D none of the above
- 17 Following a recipe is something like doing math in that you must --
- A go step by step
  - B measure accurately
  - C both of the above
  - D none of the above
- 18 If chilling the dough is the *cause* what would be the *effect* of chilling the dough?
- A a sticky dough
  - B a smooth-rolling dough
  - C a clumped dough
  - D a heavier dough
- 19 If the *effect* is a cookie that does not stick to the cookie sheet, then the *cause* is--
- A heating the oven to 350 degrees
  - B adding flour and milk alternately
  - C beating until smoothly blended
  - D greasing and flouring the cookie sheet
- 20 Presumably if sugar and water are combined at room temperature, the ingredients that were once dry will now --
- A melt
  - B liquefy
  - C both of the above
  - D none of the above
- 21 A recipe is like a summary because --
- A it sums up peoples' experimenting over time with how to accomplish making a particular product
  - B it contains the main ideas but can be refined by the individual
  - C both of the above
  - D none of the above
- 22 If you compared the story ""Mrs. Flowers"" to the cookie and lemonade recipes, the story would be more easily summarized because --
- A a story usually centers on one or two major ideas, and these can usually be given in shortened form
  - B a recipe is already made as short as possible, so what would you leave out?
  - C a story contains many details that help the reader see the characters and situation but can be left out without losing the main idea
  - D all of the above

- 23 A scientific textbook article about the chemical changes which occur in baking cookies would differ from the recipe in its treatment of the subject because --
- A a scientific article exists to allow the reader to produce a product, in this case sugar cookies
  - B a scientific article exists to allow the reader to understand a process, in this case chemical changes caused by heat
  - C a scientific article would never be written on the subject of baking cookies
  - D a scientific article would *not* differ from the recipe in its treatment of the subject
- 24 A scientific textbook article about the chemical changes which occur in baking cookies would differ from the recipe in its scope in that --
- A the scientific article would have to be much longer than the recipe because it would contain more information
  - B the scientific article would have to be much longer than the recipe because it would cover many more subjects than just cookies
  - C the scientific article would have to be much shorter than the recipe because it wouldn't be giving any directions for an experiment
  - D a scientific article would *not* differ from the recipe in scope
- 25 A scientific textbook article about the chemical changes which occur in baking cookies would differ from the recipe in its organization of ideas in that --
- A the scientific article would be most like an instruction manual
  - B the scientific article would be most like an essay
  - C the scientific article would be most like a story
  - D the scientific article would be most like a contract
- 26 The structural pattern of any good recipe is logical if it --
- A follows a first-things-first ordering
  - B mentions unnecessary ingredients
  - C has links to other sites
  - D leaves you guessing about what you are making
- 27 People who claim that their recipe for sugar cookies is *the best* are making a --
- A correct statement
  - B biased statement
  - C scientific statement
  - D factual statement
- 28 But with any recipe, when all is said and done, the proof is in --
- A the tasting
  - B whether people have seconds
  - C the amount of leftovers
  - D all of the above

