



**FSA**  
ELA & Mathematics  
Assessments

**Grade 6**  
FSA ELA Reading  
Practice Test Answer Key

The Grade 6 FSA ELA Reading Practice Test Answer Key provides the correct response(s) for each item on the practice test. The practice questions and answers are not intended to demonstrate the length of the actual test, nor should student responses be used as an indicator of student performance on the actual test.

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## Passage 1: Beautiful as the Day

by E. Nesbit

1 "I say, let's take our spades and dig in the gravel-pits. We can pretend it's seaside."

2 "Father says it was once," Anthea said; "he says there are shells there thousands of years old."

3 So they went. Of course they had been to the edge of the gravel-pit and looked over, but they had not gone down into it for fear father should say they mustn't play there, and it was the same with the chalk-quarry. The gravel-pit is not really dangerous if you don't try to climb down the edges, but go the slow safe way round by the road, as if you were a cart.

4 Each of the children carried its own spade, and took it in turns to carry the Lamb. He was the baby, and they called him that because "Baa" was the first thing he ever said. They called Anthea "Panther," which seems silly when you read it, but when you say it it sounds a little like her name.

5 The gravel-pit is very large and wide, with grass growing round the edges at the top, and dry stringy wildflowers, purple and yellow. It is like a giant's washbowl. And there are mounds of gravel, and holes in the sides of the bowl where gravel has been taken out, and high up in the steep sides there are the little holes that are the little front doors of the little bank-martins'<sup>1</sup> little houses.

6 The children built a castle, of course, but castle-building is rather poor fun when you have no hope of the swishing tide ever coming in to fill up the moat and wash away the drawbridge, and, at the happy last, to wet everybody up to the waist at least.

<sup>1</sup>bank-martins: small birds that make their nests in tunnels dug in clay or sand

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- 7 Cyril wanted to dig out a cave to play smugglers in, but the others thought it might bury them alive, so it ended in all spades going to work to dig a hole through the castle to Australia. These children, you see, believed that the world was round, and that on the other side the little Australian boys and girls were really walking wrong way up, like flies on the ceiling, with their heads hanging down into the air.
- 8 The children dug and they dug and they dug, and their hands got sandy and hot and red, and their faces got damp and shiny. The Lamb had tried to eat the sand, and had cried so hard when he found that it was not, as he had supposed, brown sugar, that he was now tired out, and was lying asleep in a warm fat bunch in the middle of the half-finished castle. This left his brothers and sisters free to work really hard, and the hole that was to come out in Australia soon grew so deep that Jane . . . begged the others to stop.
- 9 "Suppose the bottom of the hole gave way suddenly," said she, "and you tumbled out among the little Australians, all the sand would get in their eyes."
- 10 "Yes," said Robert; "and they would hate us, and throw stones at us, and not let us see the kangaroos, or opossums, . . . or Emu Brand birds, or anything."
- 11 Cyril and Anthea knew that Australia was not quite so near as all that, but they agreed to stop using the spades and to go on with their hands. This was quite easy, because the sand at the bottom of the hole was very soft and fine and dry, like sea-sand. And there were little shells in it.
- 12 "Fancy it having been wet sea here once, all sloppy and shiny," said Jane, "with fishes and conger-eels and coral and mermaids."
- 13 "And masts of ships and wrecked Spanish treasure. I wish we could find a gold doubloon, or something," Cyril said.
- 14 "How did the sea get carried away?" Robert asked.
- 15 "Not in a pail, silly," said his brother.
- 16 "Father says the earth got too hot underneath, as you do in bed sometimes, so it just hunched up its shoulders, and the sea had to slip off, like the blankets do us, and the shoulder was left sticking out, and turned into dry land. Let's go and look for shells; I think that little cave looks likely, and I see something sticking out there like a bit of wrecked ship's anchor, and it's beastly hot in the Australian hole."

- 17 The others agreed, but Anthea went on digging. She always liked to finish a thing when she had once begun it. She felt it would be a disgrace to leave that hole without getting through to Australia.

Excerpt from "Beautiful as the Day" by E. Nesbit. In the public domain.

## Passage 2: Pirate Story

by Robert Louis Stevenson

- 1 Three of us afloat in the meadow by the swing,  
Three of us aboard in the basket on the lea.  
Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring,  
And waves are on the meadow like the waves there are at sea.
- 5 Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat,  
Wary of the weather and steering by a star?  
Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the boat,  
To Providence, or Babylon, or off to Malabar?
- 10 Hi! but here's a squadron a-rowing on the sea—  
Cattle on the meadow a-charging with a roar!  
Quick, and we'll escape them, they're as mad as they can be,  
The wicket is the harbour and the garden is the shore.

"Pirate Story" by Robert Louis Stevenson. In the public domain.

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1. Select the sentence from Passage 1 that supports the idea that the children are imaginative.
- Ⓐ “‘Father says it was once,’ Anthea said; ‘he says there are shells there thousands of years old.’” (paragraph 2)
  - Ⓑ “Of course they had been to the edge of the gravel-pit and looked over, but they had not gone down into it for fear father should say they mustn’t play there, and it was the same with the chalk-quarry.” (paragraph 3)
  - Ⓒ “The children dug and they dug and they dug, and their hands got sandy and hot and red, and their faces got damp and shiny.” (paragraph 8)
  - “‘Fancy it having been wet sea here once, all sloppy and shiny,’ said Jane, ‘with fishes and conger-eels and coral and mermaids.’” (paragraph 12)

*Option D: This answer is correct. In this quotation, Jane not only imagines what the place was like ages ago, she also imagines it with a mythical mermaid.*

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2. Select **three** details that should be included in a summary of Passage 1.

- A group of children go to a gravel pit to play.
- Ⓐ Each of the children has his or her own shovel.
- Ⓒ Grass and wildflowers grow around the gravel pit.
- The children decide to dig a hole through the earth.
- Ⓔ The children's father tells them the sea is a blanket.
- Ⓕ The baby is called the Lamb because of his first word.
- The children talk about what will happen if the hole reaches Australia.

Option A: **This answer is correct.** *This should be included in a summary, as it is the precipitating action.*

Option D: **This answer is correct.** *This comprises most of the action of the story and so should be included in a summary.*

Option G: **This answer is correct.** *This debate and what to do about it takes up a significant amount of the passage and influences the characters' actions later on.*

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3. Fill in the bubbles to show how different characters advance the plot of Passage 1. More than one bubble may be filled in for each character.

	<b>Anthea</b>	<b>Jane</b>	<b>Robert</b>
<b>feels nervous about the hole to Australia</b>	<input type="radio"/> A	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
<b>understands they cannot dig to Australia</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> E	<input type="radio"/> F
<b>continues digging after others quit</b>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> H	<input type="radio"/> I

Option B: **This answer is correct.** Jane worries that the hole will cave in on them and sand will get in their eyes.

Option C: **This answer is correct.** Robert has the same worry as Jane.

Option D: **This answer is correct.** Anthea knows that Australia is not actually close to their hole.

Option G: **This answer is correct.** Although Anthea knows that she cannot actually reach Australia, she likes to finish what she's started, so she continues to dig.

4. What is the effect of the personification in paragraph 16?

- Ⓐ It shows that the gravel pit is very large.
- Ⓑ It explains why the children chose to dig in the gravel pit.
- Ⓒ It explains why the children’s father wants them to avoid the gravel pit.
- It gives a picture of what caused the sea to disappear from the gravel pit.

*Option D: This answer is correct. The author uses personification to describe the physical process of the geography of the area changing over time so that the sea receded.*

5. How does the description of the setting in paragraph 5 affect the overall meaning of Passage 1?

- Describing the gravel pit as “like a giant’s washbowl” creates a sense of adventure.
- Ⓑ Mentioning the shape of the gravel pit explains that there used to be a beach there.
- Ⓒ Using words like “large and wide” to describe the gravel pit shows that the children must be careful.
- Ⓓ Giving the location of the gravel pit helps the reader understand how far the children walk to get there.

*Option A: This answer is correct. The passage focuses on the children’s use of creativity and imagination to create a kind of alternate world to play in, and this description of the setting enhances that.*

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6. Select **two** lines from Passage 2 that develop the speaker's desire for adventure.
- Ⓐ "Three of us afloat in the meadow by the swing," (line 1)
  - Ⓑ "Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring," (line 3)
  - Ⓒ "And waves are on the meadow like the waves there are at sea."  
(line 4)
  - "Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the boat," (line 7)
  - "Quick, and we'll escape them, they're as mad as they can be,"  
(line 11)

*Option D: This answer is correct. With this line, the speaker begins to address the question of how or where to seek adventure within the game that the friends are playing.*

*Option E: This answer is correct. With this line, the speaker shows how the game the friends are playing results in a sense of adventure.*

7. This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

**Part A**

Which sentence states a theme that is shared by both Passage 1 and Passage 2?

- Ⓐ Creativity helps children learn.
- Ⓑ Safety is more important than having fun.
- Ⓒ Imagination makes everyday life more exciting.
- Ⓓ It is important to work at a task until it is complete.

**Part B**

Select **two** quotations that support the answer in Part A.

- Ⓐ "The gravel-pit is not really dangerous if you don't try to climb down the edges, but go the slow safe way round by the road, as if you were a cart." (Passage 1, paragraph 3)
- Ⓑ "Cyril wanted to dig out a cave to play smugglers in, but the others thought it might bury them alive, so it ended in all spades going to work to dig a hole through the castle to Australia." (Passage 1, paragraph 7)
- Ⓒ "Cyril and Anthea knew that Australia was not quite so near as all that, but they agreed to stop using the spades and to go on with their hands." (Passage 1, paragraph 11)
- Ⓓ "Three of us afloat in the meadow by the swing," (Passage 2, line 1)
- Ⓔ "Winds are in the air, they are blowing in the spring," (Passage 2, line 3)
- Ⓕ "Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat," (Passage 2, line 5)

7.

**Part A**

Option C: **This answer is correct.** Both passages focus on using one's imagination to make life more adventurous.

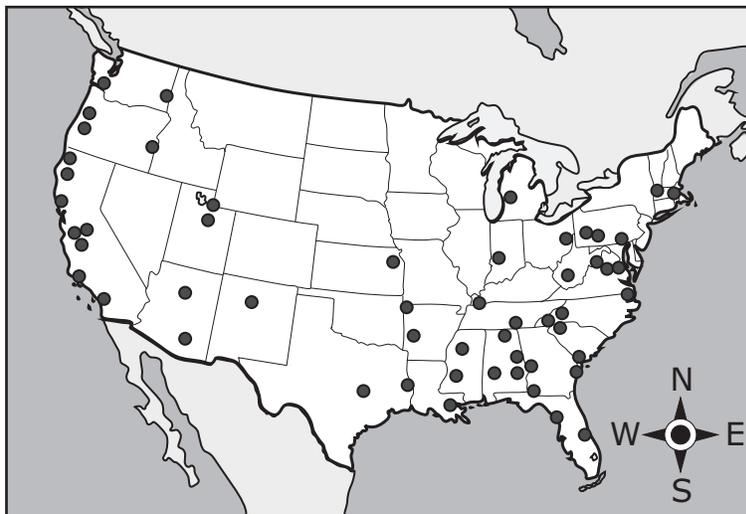
**Part B**

Option B: **This answer is correct.** This sentence from Passage 1 shows the main characters using their imaginations to make playtime more exciting.

Option F: **This answer is correct.** This line from Passage 2 shows the speaker using imagination to make everyday life more exciting.

## What on Earth are Moon Trees?

by Elaine M. Marconi



• Location of Moon Trees in the US

- 1 Anything having to do with the moon is still an unfolding mystery. And “Moon Trees” are part of that lunar mystique.
- 2 Are there actually trees on the moon? Not really . . . but tree seeds flown into space by NASA astronaut Stuart Roosa on the Apollo 14 mission in 1971, now grow strong and tall out of the Earth’s soil.
- 3 It all began after Roosa was selected to pilot the Apollo 14 command module. As a former smoke jumper with the U.S. Forest Service, he was contacted by then chief of the Forest Service, Ed Cliff, and asked if he would be willing to take tree seeds into space.
- 4 As his way of paying tribute to the Forest Service, Roosa agreed and packed hundreds of seeds from redwood, loblolly pine, sycamore, Douglas fir and sweet gum trees into his personal travel kit. Roosa and his seeds orbited the moon 34 times while stationed in the command module “Kitty Hawk.”

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- 5 Scientists were curious to know if the seeds, after their journey into the microgravity of space, would sprout and look the same as Earth-grown trees. In the early 70s there were very few experiments done in space.
- 6 Unfortunately, after returning to Earth the seed canister burst open during the decontamination process<sup>1</sup> and all the different species of seeds, not only were mixed together, but thought to be no longer useful and able to germinate.
- 7 After being shipped to the Forest Service labs, it was found that most of the seeds did survive and ultimately were planted.
- 8 After 20 years of growing side-by-side with their Earth-bound equivalent as controls, no one could tell the difference.
- 9 The seedlings, now known as Moon Trees, were planted across the United States and throughout the world. Many were planted as part of the nation’s bicentennial celebration in 1976 and grow at national landmarks, such as the White House, Independence Square in Philadelphia, state capitols and university campuses.
- 10 There also was a “Moon Tree 1976” planting ceremony at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida on June 25 during the center’s Bicentennial Expo on Science and Technology. That tree still thrives at the center.
- 11 Second-generation trees, called “half-moon” trees, have been planted from seeds or cuttings from an original Moon Tree and are thriving as well.
- 12 Roosa passed away in December of 1994, but the Moon Trees continue to flourish—a tribute to our first visits to the moon and a memorial to Roosa.
- 13 A moon sycamore graces Roosa’s grave at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

<sup>1</sup>decontamination process: the procedure through which astronauts (and some objects) were cleansed of any potentially harmful material they may have carried back from space

“What on Earth are Moon Trees?” by Elaine M. Marconi. In the public domain.

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8. Read this sentence from the passage.

"After 20 years of growing side-by-side with their Earth-bound equivalent as controls, no one could tell the difference." (paragraph 8)

What does the word "equivalent" suggest about the two groups of trees?

- Ⓐ They were mixed together.
- Ⓑ They had similar characteristics.
- Ⓒ They were both experimented on.
- Ⓓ They came from the same collection of seeds.

*Option B: This answer is correct. The "Moon Trees" grew next to the same type of trees; however, the Earth-bound trees had not been to space. The word "equivalent" suggests the trees are similar in all other ways.*

9. Fill in the bubble **before one** sentence that supports the inference that Stuart Roosa had a positive experience with the U.S. Forest Service.

- 3      Ⓐ It all began after Roosa was selected to pilot the Apollo 14 command module.    Ⓑ As a former smoke jumper with the U.S. Forest Service, he was contacted by then chief of the Forest Service, Ed Cliff, and asked if he would be willing to take tree seeds into space.
- 4      Ⓒ As his way of paying tribute to the Forest Service, Roosa agreed and packed hundreds of seeds from redwood, loblolly pine, sycamore, Douglas fir and sweet gum trees into his personal travel kit.    Ⓓ Roosa and his seeds orbited the moon 34 times while stationed in the command module "Kitty Hawk."

*Option C: This answer is correct. Roosa's desire to pay tribute suggests that he had a positive experience with the U.S. Forest Service.*

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**10.** This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

### Part A

How does the passage introduce the importance of the “Moon Trees”?

- Ⓐ by discussing the challenges faced by the scientists after returning
- Ⓑ by listing the types of seeds that were chosen for this experiment
- Ⓒ by presenting how rare experiments in space were at the time
- Ⓓ by describing the process of getting the seeds into space

### Part B

Which paragraph from the passage supports the answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ paragraph 4
- Ⓑ paragraph 5
- Ⓒ paragraph 6
- Ⓓ paragraph 7

### Part A

Option C: **This answer is correct.** The passage illustrates the importance of the “Moon Trees” by describing how unusual space experiments were and by showing how people in the US and around the world responded to their introduction.

### Part B

Option B: **This answer is correct.** This paragraph mentions how rare experiments in space were at the time and supports the answer in Part A.

11. This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

**Part A**

What is the author's purpose for writing the passage?

- Ⓐ to argue that scientists should make more journeys into space
- Ⓑ to explain that the effect of seed contamination is still uncertain
- to describe an interesting experiment involving seeds in space
- Ⓓ to share information about why people should protect Moon Trees

**Part B**

Which detail from the passage supports the purpose in Part A?

- Ⓐ "It all began after Roosa was selected to pilot the Apollo 14 command module." (paragraph 3)
- "Scientists were curious to know if the seeds, after their journey into the microgravity of space, would sprout and look the same as Earth-grown trees." (paragraph 5)
- Ⓒ "Unfortunately, after returning to Earth the seed canister burst open during the decontamination process and all the different species of seeds, not only were mixed together, but thought to be no longer useful and able to germinate." (paragraph 6)
- Ⓓ "A moon sycamore graces Roosa's grave at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia." (paragraph 13)

**11.**

**Part A**

*Option C: **This answer is correct.** The author opens the passage by declaring that all things related to the moon are mysterious, and then goes on to describe one interesting experiment which led to the Moon Trees.*

**Part B**

*Option B: **This answer is correct.** This explains why the experiment was interesting and what scientists hoped to learn from it.*

12. Read this sentence from the passage.

“Are there actually trees on the moon?” (paragraph 2)

How does this sentence help develop the author’s explanation of “Moon Trees”?

- It introduces the definition of the trees.
- Ⓐ It shows where the trees originally grew.
- Ⓑ It describes the experiments that were done with trees.
- Ⓓ It gives an example of trees that were included in experiments.

*Option A: This answer is correct. This rhetorical question leads into the author’s definition of “Moon Trees” in the following sentence.*

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- 13.** Which **two** sentences from the passage support the claim that “Moon Trees” are part of what makes the moon mysterious?
- Ⓐ “Roosa and his seeds orbited the moon 34 times while stationed in the command module ‘Kitty Hawk.’” (paragraph 4)
  - “Scientists were curious to know if the seeds, after their journey into the microgravity of space, would sprout and look the same as Earth-grown trees.” (paragraph 5)
  - “In the early 70s there were very few experiments done in space.” (paragraph 5)
  - Ⓓ “After being shipped to the Forest Service labs, it was found that most of the seeds did survive and ultimately were planted.” (paragraph 7)
  - Ⓔ “Many were planted as part of the nation’s bicentennial celebration in 1976 and grow at national landmarks, such as the White House, Independence Square in Philadelphia, state capitols and university campuses.” (paragraph 9)

*Option B: This answer is correct. This option is correct because it addresses things that scientists did not know about the moon that their experiments with “Moon Trees” answered.*

*Option C: This answer is correct. This option is correct because it helps explain why so much about the moon was seen as an “unfolding mystery.”*

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14. Which idea from the passage does the graphic emphasize?

- Ⓐ how Moon Trees grew best in warm places
- Ⓑ how popular the Moon Trees became with Americans
- Ⓒ how Moon Trees were only planted in the United States
- how many different places the Moon Trees were planted

*Option D: This answer is correct. The image shows that the Moon Trees currently grow throughout the United States.*

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- 15.** Select **three** details that should be included in a summary of the passage.
- Ⓐ The seeds were shipped to labs at the U.S. Forest Service.
  - Ⓑ Stuart Roosa was a smoke jumper for the U.S. Forest Service.
  - Ⓒ “Moon Trees” were planted all over the United States and the world.
  - Ⓓ The vehicle that the seeds orbited the moon in was called “Kitty Hawk.”
  - Ⓔ NASA astronaut Stuart Roosa took a collection of tree seeds around the moon.
  - Ⓕ Scientists wanted to see how the seeds might be affected by the gravity in space.
  - Ⓖ There was a “Moon Tree” planting ceremony at NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

*Option C: This answer is correct. This describes the legacy of the Moon Trees and should be included in a summary.*

*Option E: This answer is correct. The story of the seeds’ journey is the centerpiece of the passage.*

*Option F: This answer is correct. This detail provides the crucial rationale for why the seeds traveled into space in the first place.*

**Read the passage and then answer Numbers 16 through 18. There are four underlined words or phrases in the passage to show which word or phrase may be incorrect.**

When people see a bird land on a branch or telephone wire, they may not think about where that bird is going. Birds are some of the most well-traveled species on Earth. Some migratory birds, like the painted bunting, travel as little as a few hundred miles per year. Others, like the Arctic tern, travel up to 22,000 miles annually.

Birds do not make these long and tiring journeys just to avoid cold weather. They travel for food, which can be hard to find in winter. Some birds even fly to another hemisphere to make sure they'll have enough to eat. Most do not return north until the spring or summer, when it is much more abundant. That is when there are new caterpillars, insects, and tree blossoms to eat.

Birds may fly different distances and at a variety of speeds. The red knot spends spring and summer in northern Canada where its breeding grounds are located and winters as far south as the southern tip of South America. It is a shore bird and can fly up to 60 miles an hour. The wood thrush a type of songbird, travels from Central America to the Mid-Atlantic States, such as Maryland and Virginia. Songbirds fly at a speed of about 10–30 miles per hour.

Now answer Numbers 16 through 18. Choose the correct word or phrase for each of the following.

16. Some migratory birds, like the painted bunting, travel as little as a few hundred miles per year.

- (A) migretory
- (B) migritory
- (C) migrotory
- correct as is

**Option D: This answer is correct.**  
*The word is spelled correctly in the paragraph, so it does not need a change.*

17. Most do not return north until the spring or summer, when it is much more abundant.

- food is
- (B) winter is
- (C) that is
- (D) correct as is

**Option A: This answer is correct.**  
*This answer removes the ambiguous pronoun, making clear that it is food that will become more plentiful.*

**18. Part A**

The red knot spends spring and summer in northern Canada where its breeding grounds are located and winters as far south as the southern tip of South America.

- (A) Canada, where its breeding grounds are located
- (B) Canada where its breeding grounds are located,
- Canada, where its breeding grounds are located,
- (D) correct as is

**Part B**

The wood thrush a type of songbird, travels from Central America to the Mid-Atlantic States, such as Maryland and Virginia.

- (A) wood thrush, a type of songbird
- wood thrush, a type of songbird,
- (C) wood thrush a type of songbird
- (D) correct as is

**18.**

**Part A**

Option C: **This answer is correct.** Commas are needed on either side of the additional information.

**Part B**

Option B: **This answer is correct.** Commas are needed on either side of the additional information.

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**Read the passage and then answer Numbers 19 through 22. There are four underlined words or phrases in the passage to show which word or phrase may be incorrect.**

19 From ancient Greece to Broadway, live performances have been part of society for thousands of years. While theater doesn't fascinate everyone, many people love them. Drama can help people learn about themselves and others.

20 Performing involves both teamwork and individuel practice. Most shows require auditions, meaning that actors must try out in front of the director or judges in order to be cast in a production. Actors rehearse their scenes together before the first performance of their shows. Once  
21 actors are on stage, they need to avoid mistakes because they will have to think on their feet. . . to fix them. There are no second chances in front of a live audience. It may be a lot of pressure, but that is part of the fun of theater.

The Florida Children's Theatre is an organization founded in 1952 that teaches drama and musical performance. Children and teens make up  
22 most of the actors. Both the classes and the teachers are popular, and they are experts in their field. Students learn a range of skills from acting basics to advanced methods. Programs like this can be found across the United States. As old as theater is, people will always try to make it fresh and exciting.

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**Now answer Numbers 19 through 22. Choose the correct word or phrase for each of the following.**

**19.** Choose the sentence that uses pronouns correctly.

- While theater doesn't fascinate everyone, many people love it.
- While theater doesn't fascinate everyone, many people love these.
- While theater doesn't fascinate everyone, many people love those.
- correct as is

**20.** Choose the correct spelling.

- indeividual
- individual
- individule
- correct as is

**21.** Choose the correct way to complete the sentence.

- mistakes because they will have to think on their feet to fix them.
- mistakes. Because they will have to think on their feet to fix them.
- mistakes, because they will have to think on their feet to fix them.
- correct as is

**22.** Choose the sentence that corrects the unclear pronoun.

- Both the teachers and the classes are popular, and who are experts in their field.
- Both the teachers and the classes are popular, and both are experts in their field.
- Both the teachers and the classes are popular, and the students are experts in their field.
- Both the teachers and the classes are popular, and the teachers are experts in their field.

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**19.**

Option A: **This answer is correct.** "It" refers to theater, and is therefore the correct pronoun to use at the end of this sentence.

**20.**

Option B: **This answer is correct.** This is the correct spelling of the word.

**21.**

Option C: **This answer is correct.** The comma correctly punctuates the nonrestrictive information.

**22.**

Option D: **This answer is correct.** The specific nouns here help to clarify the meaning of the sentence and the paragraph, avoiding an unclear pronoun.

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