

Literal and Nonliteral Language

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

Some words and phrases mean exactly what they say (literal). Others paint a picture but do NOT mean what they say (nonliteral / figurative — like “raining cats and dogs”). Use the rest of the sentence to decide.

PRACTICE

For each item, choose the meaning that **BEST** fits the sentence.

1. Read: *It was raining cats and dogs all afternoon.* What does this MEAN?
 - A. It rained on and off many times that afternoon.
 - B. It rained very hard for the whole afternoon.
 - C. It started to rain right after lunch.
 - D. It was the first rainy day in a long time.
2. Read: *My backpack weighs a ton today.* The phrase **weighs a ton** means —
 - A. the backpack is the heaviest one in the class.
 - B. the backpack feels very heavy to carry.
 - C. the backpack is too full to zip closed.
 - D. the backpack is the biggest one the speaker owns.
3. Read: *“Hold your horses!” Dad said as I ran toward the car.* What does the phrase MEAN here?
 - A. Be careful where you step.
 - B. Wait — don't be in such a rush.
 - C. Hold something tightly in your hands.
 - D. Try harder to do something.
4. Read this sentence from a story: *The wind whispered through the trees.* The word **whispered** shows that the wind —
 - A. was strong enough to bend the branches.
 - B. was soft and quiet that day.
 - C. carried a message from far away.
 - D. blew only when no one was looking.



5. Which sentence uses LITERAL language?
 - A. The classroom was a zoo before the bell.
 - B. Lisa opened the door and stepped inside.
 - C. His backpack was bursting at the seams.
 - D. Time crawled in the last hour of class.
6. Read: *Grandpa says his little granddaughter is the apple of his eye.* The phrase means she is —
 - A. the youngest person in his family.
 - B. very dear and important to him.
 - C. as round and bright as an apple.
 - D. the only one who eats apples with him.
7. Read: *My brother is a real couch potato on weekends.* What does **couch potato** mean?
 - A. He likes to snack on the couch.
 - B. He sits and watches TV instead of being active.
 - C. He naps better than anyone in the house.
 - D. He prefers the couch to his own bed.
8. Read: *The stars danced in the night sky.* What does **danced** tell the reader?
 - A. The stars looked sharp and steady.
 - B. The stars twinkled and seemed to move.
 - C. The stars were brighter than usual.
 - D. The stars disappeared behind clouds.
9. Which sentence uses NONLITERAL language?
 - A. The dog jumped over the small fence.
 - B. Time flew by during our class party.
 - C. We ate red apples for lunch on Friday.
 - D. It was sunny and warm at the park.
10. Read: *When I forgot my line in the play, my face turned as red as a tomato.* The phrase tells you —
 - A. the speaker was sick at the moment.
 - B. the speaker's face got very red, probably from embarrassment.
 - C. the speaker had just eaten something red.
 - D. the speaker was standing near a tomato plant.



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 A B C D
- 9 A B C D
- 10 A B C D

Explanations

1. B	“Cats and dogs” is about how HARD the rain was, not how often it started or how rare it was. A confuses pattern, C confuses timing, D confuses how unusual it was.
2. B	The speaker is exaggerating how heavy the bag FEELS . A compares to others; C is about being full; D is about size — none captures the meaning of the idiom.
3. B	Dad is telling the child to slow down and wait. A is a different kind of advice; C is the literal misread; D is unrelated advice.
4. B	“Whispered” describes a soft, quiet sound. A is the opposite; C is the literal trap (wind doesn’t really carry words); D is unrelated.
5. B	Lisa really did open a door — that is literal. The other three describe things using figurative phrases (a zoo, bursting, crawling).
6. B	“The apple of his eye” is a nonliteral phrase meaning someone is treasured. A guesses based on “little,” C takes the phrase literally, D is unrelated.
7. B	A couch potato avoids activity, usually by watching TV. A and D pick up parts of the picture but miss the meaning; C is unrelated.
8. B	“Danced” describes the lively twinkle. A is the opposite, C is only about brightness, D is unrelated to the verb.
9. B	Time cannot really fly — “flew” is figurative for “passed quickly.” The other sentences describe events as they really happened.
10. B	Comparing the face to a tomato shows it turned very red — usually from embarrassment in this kind of moment. The others give wrong reasons for the redness.



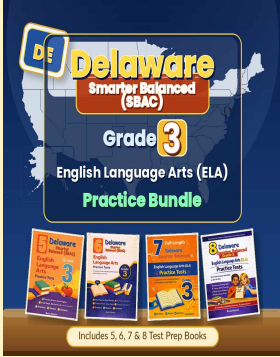
Want Even More Practice? Check Out Our Other Delaware DeSSA ELA Test Books!

Delaware DeSSA Grade 3 ELA Preparation Bundle

26 full-length practice tests across four books (5 + 6 + 7 + 8)

No repeated questions — maximum practice value!

▼ DOWNLOAD INSTANTLY ▼



SCAN ME

Point your phone camera at the code · instant access to all four books

26 Tests!
4 Books
One Bundle

5 Practice Tests

- ✓ 5 complete practice tests with detailed explanations
- ✓ Perfect foundation for DeSSA ELA prep
- ✓ Builds confidence and test-taking skills
- ✓ High-quality questions aligned with standards

Start your practice journey!

6 Practice Tests

- ✓ 6 complete practice tests with detailed explanations
- ✓ **Unique tests** — different from the 5 tests book
- ✓ Perfect for more practice after mastering 5 tests
- ✓ Same high-quality questions aligned with standards

Take your practice to the next level!

7 Practice Tests

- ✓ 7 complete practice tests for deeper preparation
- ✓ **Unique tests** — different from 5 and 6 tests books
- ✓ Builds stamina with full-length practice
- ✓ Aligned to Grade 3 DeSSA ELA standards

Maximum preparation power!

8 Practice Tests

- ✓ 8 complete practice tests — our largest book
- ✓ **Unique tests** — different from 5, 6 and 7 books
- ✓ Great for final review before test day
- ✓ Builds true test stamina and confidence

Be fully prepared!

Get the bundle at [EffortlessMath.com](https://www.EffortlessMath.com) — scan the QR code above to open the product page.

