

# 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

<b>1. B</b>	“Cats and dogs” is about how <b>HARD</b> 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.
<b>2. B</b>	The speaker is exaggerating how heavy the bag <b>FEELS</b> . A compares to others; C is about being full; D is about size — none captures the meaning of the idiom.
<b>3. B</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.
<b>4. B</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.
<b>5. B</b>	Lisa really did open a door — that is literal. The other three describe things using figurative phrases (a zoo, bursting, crawling).
<b>6. B</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.
<b>7. B</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.
<b>8. B</b>	“Danced” describes the lively twinkle. A is the opposite, C is only about brightness, D is unrelated to the verb.
<b>9. B</b>	Time cannot really fly — “flew” is figurative for “passed quickly.” The other sentences describe events as they really happened.
<b>10. B</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 Illinois IAR ELA Test Books!



Includes 5, 6, 7 & 8 Test Prep Books

### Illinois IAR 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

**Important:** All our test books contain **unique, completely different tests** from each other! Each book offers fresh practice questions — no repeats!

<b>5 Practice Tests</b>	<b>6 Practice Tests</b>	<b>7 Practice Tests</b>	<b>8 Practice Tests</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 5 complete practice tests with detailed explanations</li> <li>✓ Perfect foundation for IAR ELA prep</li> <li>✓ Builds confidence and test-taking skills</li> <li>✓ High-quality questions aligned with standards</li> </ul> <p><b>Start your practice journey!</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 6 complete practice tests with detailed explanations</li> <li>✓ <b>Unique tests</b> — different from the 5 tests book</li> <li>✓ Perfect for more practice after mastering 5 tests</li> <li>✓ Same high-quality questions aligned with standards</li> </ul> <p><b>Take your practice to the next level!</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 7 complete practice tests for deeper preparation</li> <li>✓ <b>Unique tests</b> — different from 5 and 6 tests books</li> <li>✓ Builds stamina with full-length practice</li> <li>✓ Aligned to Grade 3 IAR ELA standards</li> </ul> <p><b>Maximum preparation power!</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 8 complete practice tests — our largest book</li> <li>✓ <b>Unique tests</b> — different from 5, 6 and 7 books</li> <li>✓ Great for final review before test day</li> <li>✓ Builds true test stamina and confidence</li> </ul> <p><b>Be fully prepared!</b></p>

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