

Word Choice, Figurative Meaning, and Tone

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

Word choice creates tone. Look beyond the dictionary meaning and ask what feeling, image, or comparison the author is building.

PART 1 — READ

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Rain at the Theater Door

The rain did not fall; it auditioned. It tapped the theater awning, whispered along the ticket window, and then burst into applause against the alley cans. Theo stood under the lights with his trumpet case, pretending not to read the cast list taped inside the glass.

His name was not there. The empty space where he had expected it seemed to glow. Around him, students shrieked and hugged, their happiness bright enough to make him feel ungrateful for needing to look away.

Then Mara, who had earned the lead, stepped outside. She did not offer the easy comfort of saying the judges were wrong. Instead she said, I heard you practicing the bridge after everyone left. No one works like that by accident.

Theo listened to the rain soften from applause to a steady hush. He picked up the trumpet case and followed Mara back inside for rehearsal, where the understudy list waited beneath the first page.

PART 2 — PRACTICE

Use the passage to answer each question. Choose the best answer and support short responses with evidence.

1. Which sentence from the passage BEST supports the inference that Theo is disappointed but trying not to show it?
 - A. The rain tapped the theater awning.
 - B. Theo stood under the lights with his trumpet case, pretending not to read the cast list taped inside the glass.
 - C. Mara had earned the lead.
 - D. He followed Mara back inside for rehearsal.



2. Which statement BEST expresses the central idea or theme of the passage?
 - A. A setback can hurt deeply while still leaving room for persistence and dignity.
 - B. Auditions are never judged fairly.
 - C. Friendship matters only when people win.
 - D. Music is easier than acting.
3. What does the word 'auditioned' most nearly mean as it is used in the passage?
 - A. asked a formal question
 - B. stopped suddenly
 - C. seemed to perform as if trying for a role
 - D. hid from notice
4. How does the structure or key detail identified in the passage contribute to meaning?
 - A. It shows the weather has become dangerous.
 - B. It explains why the theater closes early.
 - C. It proves Mara controls Theo's feelings.
 - D. The shift from rain as applause to rain as hush mirrors Theo's movement from public disappointment toward quiet resolve.
5. Which conclusion is BEST supported by the whole passage?
 - A. Mara wants Theo to quit the theater.
 - B. Mara comforts Theo by recognizing his effort honestly rather than pretending the loss did not happen.
 - C. Mara thinks the judges made a mistake.
 - D. Mara is embarrassed by receiving the lead.
6. Which choice is the BEST objective summary of the passage?
 - A. After Theo does not receive the role he wanted, Mara acknowledges his work, and he returns to rehearsal with a quieter kind of determination.
 - B. Theo celebrates getting the lead role while Mara waits outside.
 - C. A storm damages the theater before auditions can be posted.
 - D. Theo decides never to play trumpet again after seeing the cast list.
7. Which answer should be rejected because it goes beyond what the passage supports?
 - A. A setback can hurt deeply while still leaving room for persistence and dignity.
 - B. Mara comforts Theo by recognizing his effort honestly rather than pretending the loss did not happen.
 - C. Auditions are never judged fairly.
 - D. The shift from rain as applause to rain as hush mirrors Theo's movement from public disappointment toward quiet resolve.



8. Which detail would be MOST useful to quote in a written response about the passage?
- A. The rain tapped the theater awning.
 - B. Mara had earned the lead.
 - C. He followed Mara back inside for rehearsal.
 - D. Theo stood under the lights with his trumpet case, pretending not to read the cast list taped inside the glass.

9. In 2-3 sentences, explain how one quoted detail supports the idea that Theo is disappointed but trying not to show it..

10. Write a one-sentence analysis of the passage's message or main idea. Then name one detail that supports it.



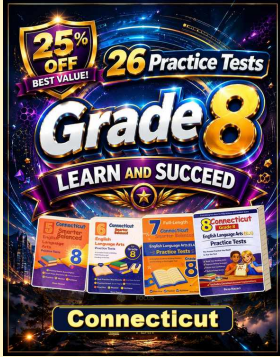
Answer Keys

<p>1 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>2 <input checked="" type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>3 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input checked="" type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>4 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input checked="" type="radio"/> D</p> <p>5 <input type="radio"/> A <input checked="" type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p>	<p>6 <input checked="" type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>7 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input checked="" type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> D</p> <p>8 <input type="radio"/> A <input type="radio"/> B <input type="radio"/> C <input checked="" type="radio"/> D</p> <p>9 <input type="text" value="See below"/></p> <p>10 <input type="text" value="See below"/></p>
---	--

Explanations	
1. B	The correct evidence directly proves the stated inference rather than merely mentioning the same topic.
2. A	The correct answer covers the whole passage, while the distractors are too narrow, too extreme, or unsupported.
3. C	The context around the word points to this meaning in this passage.
4. D	The correct answer explains the role the detail plays in the development of the text.
5. B	The correct conclusion follows from multiple details, not from a single isolated word.
6. A	A strong summary includes the main conflict or idea and the outcome without personal opinion.
7. C	This choice overstates or invents an idea that the passage does not prove.
8. D	This detail is specific enough to support analysis in a written response.
9.	Answer: A strong response quotes or closely paraphrases: Theo stood under the lights with his trumpet case, pretending not to read the cast list taped inside the glass. Then it explains how that detail proves the inference instead of only repeating it. Use exact wording from the text or task, then explain your reasoning.
10.	Answer: A strong response states: A setback can hurt deeply while still leaving room for persistence and dignity. It supports the statement with a precise detail such as: Theo stood under the lights with his trumpet case, pretending not to read the cast list taped inside the glass. Use exact wording from the text or task, then explain your reasoning.



Want Even More Practice? Check Out Our Other Connecticut Smarter Balanced ELA Test Books!




Connecticut Smarter Balanced Grade 8 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!

5 Practice Tests	6 Practice Tests	7 Practice Tests	8 Practice Tests
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 5 complete practice tests with detailed explanations ✓ Perfect foundation for Smarter Balanced ELA prep ✓ Builds confidence and test-taking skills ✓ High-quality questions aligned with standards <p>Start your practice journey!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 <p>Take your practice to the next level!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 8 Smarter Balanced ELA standards <p>Maximum preparation power!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 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 <p>Be fully prepared!</p>

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