

2018 STAAR Grade 8 Reading Rationales

Item #		Rationales
11	Option B is correct	The author emphasizes the idea that speech-recognition systems are constantly improving. In paragraph 2, the author states that the technology has advanced since the 1950s. The author provides numerous details regarding the capabilities of speech-recognition systems and concludes with the statement that “the continuing evolution of speech-recognition softm

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15	Option D is correct	This sentence expresses the author’s opinion about speech-recognition technology. The idea that the progress being made is “thrilling” is not an objective fact that can be measured or proved.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the claim is not supported with definitions or statistics in the selection, this is a measurable fact that likely could be verified.
	Option B is incorrect	While the idea that machines “will take over functions that were traditionally performed by humans” is an opinion held by some people, it is not established as the author’s own opinion.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the idea that people’s digital trails might result in “data mining” may seem speculative, the author presents it as a factual claim and supports it by explaining that people leave an “audio track” of their speech behind and that speech can be “saved to a remote server for processing.”
16	Option H is correct	Anthony is surprised by the difference in Grandpa Joe’s appearance, particularly how he lets his hair “run wild.” This detail, along with the description of Grandpa Joe’s “muddy work gloves, rumpled jeans, and lime-green garden shoes,” supports the a

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19	Option C is correct	Anthony's first-person description of events in paragraphs 12 through 15 reveals why he enjoys Grandpa Joe's homemade pesto sauce despite the taste. Anthony describes Grandpa Joe "proudly" serving the sauce and Grandpa's "sparkling" eyes when he asks Anthony's opinion of the sauce. In paragraph 14, Anthony reveals how he associates the sauce with all the other fun details of his day with Grandpa Joe. Finally, Anthony describes how happy Grandpa Joe is when he hears how much Anthony loves the sauce and how this makes Anthony truly love the sauce after all.
	Option A is incorrect	Anthony does not describe or think about t! he A pa M M



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27	Option C is correct	Anthony did not expect Grandpa Joe to look so different, and this surprise carries over to dinner, when Grandpa Joe talks about making homemade Italian food. Anthony's surprise contrasts with the speaker in the poem, who seems completely familiar with her mother's process of making hot sauce. In this way Anthony differs from the speaker in the poem.
	Option A is incorrect	There is no evidence to suggest Anthony finds Grandpa Joe's actions particularly amusing. And, while the speaker in the poem describes her mother's behavior, there is no evidence to suggest the speaker feels concerned.
	Option B is incorrect	Anthony reveals in paragraphs 14 and 15 that he does appreciate his grandfather's efforts. However, the detailed description of Mother making hot sauce does not support the conclusion that the speaker in the poem feels indifferent towards her mother's efforts.
	Option D is incorrect	When Grandpa Joe says to Anthony, "if I remember correctly, you like pasta with pesto sauce," Anthony eagerly nods, which encourages Grandpa Joe's interest in preparing homemade food. However, the speaker in the poem appears impressed, not concerned, about Mother's traditional ways.
28	Option J is correct	Details in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the story show that Grandpa Joe just recently became interested in growing and preparing his own food. Furthermore, Grandpa pulls recipes off the internet and his blender appears to have had little use. In contrast, Mother has been hunting for "prime" ingredients at the same market year after year. The step-by-step description of Mother's process suggests experience in preparing her own sauce, as does the fact that she does not consult a recipe.
	Option F is incorrect	Grandpa Joe prepares a homemade dinner of pesto sauce and pasta for himself and Anthony the same night. However, Mother's hot sauce needs to ferment in the "Puerto Rican sun," suggesting it will not be ready to consume right away.
	Option G is incorrect	While Mother does make her hot sauce from fresh produce she selects at the market, Grandpa uses freshly picked basil and garlic from his garden. This is a similarity between the two characters, not a difference.
	Option H is incorrect	While Mother does use "her wooden mortar and pestle" to make her hot sauce, Grandpa uses a pasta maker and a blender, which could be considered special equipment as well. Therefore this does not show how the characters differ.
29	Option B is correct	Both Anthony and the speaker in the poem take comfort in observing a family member doing something with love. In paragraph 12 of the story, Anthony notes Grandpa Joe's pride in serving his meal. In paragraphs 14 and 15, Anthony fondly recalls the day he shared with his grandfather and Grandpa Joe's warm smile. In the second stanza of the poem, the speaker compares her mother's preparations to a "concert," where "the hanging pictures over the dinner table all dance to her cooking drum," suggesting that Mother makes the sauce with love.
	Option A is incorrect	Both parts of this option are untrue. Anthony does help Grandpa Joe make homemade pasta with pesto sauce, and making the pesto sauce and pasta is not portrayed as a routine chore. In the poem, there is no evidence that the speaker wants to help, nor is the process portrayed as a routine chore.
	Option C is incorrect	Anthony does help Grandpa Joe make pesto sauce, suggesting that he may learn how to make the sauce. However, the speaker in the poem does not help her mother make hot sauce, so there is no evidence that she has learned to make the sauce on her own.
	Option D is incorrect	The speaker in the poem refers to Mother's "concoction" fermenting under "a Puerto Rican sun," suggesting that she understands the cultural tradition in Mother's process. However, Anthony does not address the significance of any cultural tradition at the end of the story.



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41	Option C is correct	This comment reveals Teresa's overestimation of her talent, which is a theme throughout the story as she insists on a tryout at an Olympic training facility. Teresa objects to her coach's suggestion of practice and also asserts that she has Olympic potential, despite her limited experience. She does not recognize her mistake until she sees elite athletes outperforming her.
	Option A is incorrect	Teresa's comment demonstrates a lack of maturity, but it does not influence the theme of the story. Teresa's failure at the tryouts is not related to her lack of knowledge about her chosen sport.
	Option B is incorrect	The theme of the story is not centered on the usefulness of the coach's advice. Furthermore, Teresa is not critical of the advice; she simply ignores it as she overestimates her own talent.
	Option D is incorrect	Teresa's comment implies that she does not feel the need to prove her abilities; she assumes she will make the Olympic team ("When I'm on the Olympic team, you'll see what I mean.").
42	Option F is correct	Teresa reevaluates her talent as a long jumper when she witnesses another athlete jump "6.27 meters." She reflects on her own jumps, realizing she cleared "barely more than 5 meters" and suddenly understanding "why no one had measured her jump" (paragraph 21).
	Option G is incorrect	While Teresa's mother encourages additional practice before the tryout, her urgings do not inspire reevaluation but instead prompt Teresa to respond "But this is my big chance!" in paragraph 11.
	Option H is incorrect	While Coach Jennings is unimpressed with Teresa's first jump, this does not prompt Teresa to reevaluate her talent; instead, she thinks "I just need to stretch" (paragraph 16).
	Option J is incorrect	Teresa does decline the opportunity to jump a second time. However, this event occurs after Teresa reevaluates her talent.
43	Option D is correct	In paragraph 27, Teresa's mother states that Teresa "refused to listen" to Coach Wilson's advice, suggesting that Teresa is not being honest with herself about her current skill level. This conclusion is further supported in paragraph 31, when Teresa's mother urges Teresa to be "realistic" about her skill level.
	Option A is incorrect	Although Teresa's mother drives Teresa to a tryout with the Olympic long-jump coach, their conversation afterward does not suggest she believes that Teresa can make the Olympic team if she practices enough. Rather, she thinks Teresa needs to be more "realistic."
	Option B is incorrect	Teresa's mother voices reservations before the tryout, but the story does not suggest that she knows the trip was a waste of time. Teresa's mother hopes Teresa will return to her routine with a more "realistic" assessment.
	Option C is incorrect	Nothing in the story suggests that Teresa's mother tries to "trick" her daughter into taking practice seriously. She expresses her hope that Teresa will be "a successful long jumper" as well as a "realistic" one.
44	Option H is correct	The story's third-person limited point of view reveals Teresa's thoughts regarding her performance at h