



New York State Testing Program

English

Language Arts Test

Listening Selection

Grade

7

January 14–18, 2008

This listening selection is to be used in administering Book 2 of the English Language Arts Test. The entire selection is to be read aloud twice to the students. For complete directions, please follow the instructions in the *Teacher's Directions*.

Remember: This is a secure test. You are not to discuss this test, show it to anyone, or photocopy these materials, as the security of the test could be breached.

Acknowledgment CTB/McGraw-Hill LLC is indebted to the following for permission to use material in this book:

“Flights of Fancy” by Jim Davis from *Highlights for Children Magazine’s* November 2003 issue, copyright © 2003 Highlights for Children, Inc., Columbus, Ohio. Used by permission.

All trademarks and trade names found in this publication are the property of their respective companies and are not associated with the publisher of this publication.



Developed and published by CTB/McGraw-Hill LLC, a subsidiary of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. 20 Ryan Ranch Road, Monterey, California 93940-5703. Copyright © 2008 by New York State Education Department. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of New York State Education Department.

Listening Selection

Flights of Fancy

by Jim Davis

Jim Davis has been writing his comic strip, Garfield, for 25 years. It is read by more than 220 million people every day. Davis is also the author of nearly 40 Garfield books.

I grew up on a small cattle farm in Indiana. This meant that I was always around dust, fur, and crops. That might have been fine for most kids, but not for me—I had asthma. All those things made it hard for me to breathe.

Back then, there wasn't good medicine for asthma. When I got sick, I'd have to stay in bed for a few days. Being cooped up became boring, so I'd use my imagination to escape.

I started drawing as a way to entertain myself. I drew our cats, the cattle, the dog, and whatever was around me. My first pictures were pretty bad, but my mom liked them, so I kept drawing. The pencil became an extension of my arm and my imagination.

Later, drawing became a form of communication for me. At my little country school, I was a shy kid who would be off to the side, daydreaming or watching others. In first and second grade, I stuttered and rarely spoke to classmates. But my teachers were wonderful. They knew I loved to draw, so they'd always choose me to make signs and posters for the classroom.

Every chance I had, I would draw. I doodled on the corners of my notebooks and carved pictures in the frost on the windowpanes.

I was also a devoted reader of comic strips. My favorites were *Peanuts*, *Beetle Bailey*, *Henry*, and *Steve Canyon*. I liked the characters, and I loved the gags. When I was in fifth grade, I started adding captions to my own drawings. I liked to draw my brother saying goofy things.

As I got older, I began to take art more seriously. I checked out some "Learn to Draw" books from the library, and I took a correspondence course in drawing.

After college, I became an assistant to the creator of the *Tumbleweeds* comic strip. Then I started my own strip, *Gnorm Gnat*. But my editors said, "Who wants to read about bugs?" I realized that there were hardly any comics about cats, so in 1978 I created *Garfield*.

Although my family had always had a barn full of cats, there was never one quite like Garfield. Garfield is a little bit of our cats, me, my dad, and other people I've known. But mostly, Garfield comes from my imagination.

As a kid, I never dreamed I'd become a cartoonist. But all those flights of fancy I took as a little boy have served me well in my life as an artist.

STOP



Grade 7
English Language Arts Test
Listening Selection
January 14–18, 2008

The McGraw-Hill Companies