

EQAO Grade 6 Language Test Prep

— Teacher Guide —

Written by Ruth Solski



RUTH SOLSKI was an educator for 30 years. She has written many educational resources and is the founder of S&S Learning Materials. As a writer, her main goal is to provide teachers with a useful tool that they can implement in their classrooms to bring the joy of learning to children.

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Table of Contents

TEST #1:	
The Hired Hand	3
Reading Questions	6
Writing Activity/Questions.	9
TEST #2:	
A Friendly Letter	11
Reading Questions	12
Writing Activity/Questions.	14
TEST #3:	
Dealing With Failure	18
Reading Questions	20
Writing Activity/Questions.	23
TEST #4:	
Freshwater Habitats	26
Reading Questions	27
Writing Activity/Questions.	29
TEST #5:	
The Dog and the Shadow	33
Reading Questions	34
Writing Activity/Questions.	36
TEST #6:	
The Castle that Love Built	40
Reading Questions	42
Writing Activity/Questions.	45
TEST #7:	
Local Girl Earns Medal for Volunteering	48
Reading Questions	51
Writing Activity/Questions.	53
TEST #8:	
Grandma’s Secret.	57
Reading Questions	60
Writing Activity/Questions.	63
TEST #9:	
The History of Some Popular Foods	65
Reading Questions	67
Writing Activity/Questions.	69
TEST #10:	
Early Aviators	72
Reading Questions	73
Writing Activity/Questions.	75
ANSWER KEY	79

About This Book

This book was created to help Grade 6 students prepare for the EQAO Language Assessment test. The 10 tests have been designed to be very similar to the actual test the students will be taking. Many of the questions are asked in a similar way so that students can get familiar with the questioning format. Students will encounter different types of reading experiences as they make their way through the various tests including fiction and nonfiction stories, a newspaper article, a friendly letter, poetry, and informational text. They will then be asked to answer corresponding multiple choice and open response questions.

There is also plenty of writing practice as students are asked to write sentences, paragraphs, short stories, instructions, a description, a movie review, a poem, a letter and a newspaper article. There are also multiple choice questions featuring essential grammar and writing skills.

There is no particular sequence to the tests. They can be used in whatever order you choose to fit your students needs.

The Hired Hand

Brady didn't mind living with his grandparents except for one thing – Grandpa wouldn't let him have a dog. He'd coaxed and pleaded until his grandma said, "Listen, Brady, you'd better drop the matter because your grandfather's mind is made up."

"But why does he hate dogs so much?" asked Brady. "He's a farmer."

"Brady, it's important to your grandfather that all of our farm animals have a purpose. He thinks pets are just a waste of his hard-earned money."



One hot summer afternoon a couple of weeks later, just when Brady was beginning to think that getting a dog was an absolute pipe dream, someone dropped a dog off at the end of their road. Then the car roared away in a cloud of dust.

Brady couldn't believe it! The medium-size dog was tan-coloured, with bowed legs, a long, square head, and a tuft of whiskers hanging from its chin.

A terrier! For months Brady had been reading about different breeds of dogs and studying their pictures. He knew that terriers tended to be hyper and yappy. But this particular one just sat there in the middle of the driveway looking up at him with the most curious expression.

As Brady approached the dog, it cocked its head to one side, eyeing him curiously. Brady checked for a collar. There was none.

"What am I going to do with you?" he asked sadly. "Grandpa will never let me keep you, yet you seem like such a nice dog."

Brady hesitated, and thought for a moment. "Well we might as well go and face the music." He turned and started up the driveway. The dog immediately trotted along behind him.

"You sure are good-natured," Brady admitted. "Not as yappy and hyper as the books say your breed is."

At the farmhouse Brady left the dog in the yard and found his grandmother at the kitchen counter making bread.

“Grandma, somebody dropped a dog off at the end of the driveway.”

His grandmother nodded. “I saw you bring him up here. What kind is it?”

“A terrier mix, by the look of it.”

Grandma kept kneading the dough. “What do you know about terriers?”

Brady hesitated. “They’re inclined to be a bit yappy,” he admitted.

“Not exactly an endearing characteristic.”

“I know!” said Brady. “Grandpa doesn’t even like good, quiet dogs.”

The older woman looked up from her work. “That’s not the point, Brady. I doubt if it’d make any difference to your grandfather how good-natured a dog is. He’s only interested in having them earn their keep.”

“Too bad we don’t have any sheep. I could train him to be a sheep dog.”

“Dogs were bred to be the way they are for particular reasons. Why don’t you do a little research and see what you come up with?”

Brady frowned thoughtfully. What was his grandmother trying to tell him? With a puzzled frown he ran up to his room, retrieved several of his dog books, then returned to the yard. The dog was waiting patiently by the rose bush.

Brady dropped to the ground and opened the first book to the section on terriers. Cairn terriers, Jack Russells, Scotties . . . with each breed Brady would turn to the dog beside him and compare him to the accompanying photograph.

“I think you look most like the Irish Terrier,” he finally said. The dog wagged his tail.



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“Now what does it say about the Irish Terrier? Wiry coats, little tolerance of other animals . . . hmmm.” 25

He looked again at the dog. “You seem to be a very tolerant fellow.” 26

Bred to hunt and kill vermin. Brady’s ears perked up. Irish Terriers are especially good at bringing to ground: rats, mice, and even foxes and weasels. 27

That was it! Now he knew what his grandmother had been trying to tell him. Their henhouse was so old it was becoming difficult to keep predators out – and there was no money to build a new one. Just the other day, his grandfather had complained about a weasel killing a couple of his chickens. And this past spring, a fox had killed over a dozen hens in less than 15 minutes . . . 28

Brady scrambled to his feet and raced to the kitchen. 29



“Grandma, I’ve got it! The dog can earn his keep by guarding the henhouse against weasels and foxes. Terriers were bred to kill vermin.” 30

“So they were,” his grandmother said with a faint smile. “When I was a little girl my father kept a terrier for that very purpose. I was hoping you would find out for yourself – and with a little research, you did” 31

“Thanks, Grandma,” Brady said with a big grin. “Now we just have to convince Grandpa to keep him.” 32

“Oh, I think that will be up to the dog. If he turns out to be a good guard dog, he’ll be worth his weight in gold. If not . . .” she paused and smiled. “If our little friend has found a home here, what are you going to call him?” 33

Brady thought for a minute. “I’m going to call him Handy – short for Hired Hand,” he said. “Just to remind Grandpa that this is one dog who will be out there everyday, protecting our chickens and earning his keep!” 34

The Hired Hand: Questions

1. Why won't Brady's grandfather let him have a dog?
 - He hates dogs.
 - He is allergic to dogs.
 - He thinks dogs are a waste of his hard-earned money.
 - He thinks dogs are lazy.

2. Which of the following is the best definition of a "pipe dream" (paragraph 4)?
 - a dream about pipes
 - an unattainable or fanciful hope or scheme
 - something that is easy to come by
 - a dream about not getting a dog

3. From studying about dogs, what does Brady know about terriers?
 - that they are brown with bowed legs
 - that they are calm and friendly
 - that they do not get along well with other dogs
 - that they tend to be hyper and yappy



4. What does Grandma suggest to Brady in paragraph 21?
 - She suggests that Brady train the dog to be a sheep dog.
 - She suggests that Brady should do a little research.
 - She suggests that Brady talk to his grandfather about the dog.
 - She suggests that Brady should get rid of the dog.

The Hired Hand: Questions

5. Which of the following descriptions best describes the dog's temperament?
- nervous and anxious
 - excitable and yappy
 - afraid and shy
 - good-natured and friendly
6. What kind of terrier does Brady think the dog is?
- Cairn terrier
 - Jack Russell terrier
 - Irish terrier
 - Scottish terrier
7. What does the word "vermin" mean as it's used in paragraph 27?
- poisonous plants that make people sick
 - small animals that cause trouble or harm to people
 - large animals that cause trouble or harm to people
 - small animals that are friendly and helpful to people
8. What is Grandma's attitude towards the dog?
- She wants to help Brady find a way to keep him.
 - She doesn't like the dog.
 - She thinks the dog cannot be trained.
 - She thinks he is the wrong kind of dog.
9. What does the dog have to learn to do to have any chance of staying?
- not bark very much
 - be a good companion for Brady
 - be a good guard dog and protect the chickens
 - be friendly to Grandpa

