

Grade 6 Reading Achievement Test - March 2006
Annotated Item 19

Standard and Benchmark Assessed:

Standard: Reading Applications: Informational, Technical and Persuasive Text
Benchmark: E. Explain the treatment, scope and organization of ideas from different texts to draw conclusions about a topic.

Multiple Choice Question:

19. Which statement best describes how the selection is organized?
- A. The selection describes Ella Fitzgerald's awards later in life and then flashes back to important moments in her career.
 - B. The selection describes Ella Fitzgerald's first appearance at the Apollo Theater and then provides career highlights.
 - C. The selection describes Ella Fitzgerald's early life in New York and the beginning of her career.
 - D. The selection describes Ella Fitzgerald's life and career in chronological order.

Commentary:

This multiple-choice question asks students to identify the method of organization used by the author in the selection which requires students to draw conclusions about the topic. Choice A is incorrect because the selection does not begin with Fitzgerald's later life. Choice B is correct because the first paragraph focuses on Fitzgerald's first appearance at the Apollo Theater and then proceeds to provide career highlights. Choice C is incorrect because the passage does not focus solely on Fitzgerald's early life and career. Choice D is incorrect because the passage is not linear.

Performance Data:

The percent of public school students selecting answer choice B for question 19 on the March 2006 Ohio Grade 6 Reading Achievement was 41%.

Keywords: organization, draw conclusion

Passage:

Ella Fitzgerald
Author unknown

Her first dream was to be a dancer. Growing up in New York, she was inspired by "Snake Hips" Tucker, studying his serpentine moves and practicing them constantly with friends. Then, one fateful night at the Apollo Theater in 1934, the headlining Edwards Sisters brought down the house with their dancing. Amateur Hour began immediately after, and a 16-year-old Ella Fitzgerald stepped on stage, but was too intimidated to dance. Instead, she sang "Judy," silenced the awestruck crowd, and won first prize. It was the beginning of one of the most celebrated careers in music history.

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Born in Newport News, Virginia in 1917, Ella Fitzgerald moved with her mother to New York after the death of her father. Living in Yonkers, Fitzgerald attended public school, where she sang in the glee club and received her musical education. After her early success at the Apollo, and as a popular performer at a number of other amateur venues, Fitzgerald was invited to join Chick Webb's band. Within a short while she was the star attraction, and had made a number of hits including her trademark "A-tisket, A-tasket" (1938). After Webb's death in 1939, Fitzgerald led the band for three years.

During her time with Webb's band, Fitzgerald recorded with a number of other musicians, including Benny Goodman. By the time she began her solo career in the mid-1940s, she was a well-respected figure throughout the music industry. Her vibrant and energetic voice showed an exceptional range and control. Performing with "Jazz at the Philharmonic," her popularity grew beyond the music world. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, she continued to perform as a jazz musician, but concentrated primarily on popular music. Rivalled only by Frank Sinatra, her recordings of work by Cole Porter, Ira and George Gershwin, and Rogers and Hart were incredibly successful.

One of the early "scat" performers,¹ Fitzgerald found a place among the growing jazz innovators, making recordings with such greats as Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, and Louis Armstrong.

¹"scat" performers: singers using syllables and nonsense words to sound like musical instruments