

EMC Literature and Language Arts: Exploring Literature  
7th Grade Textbook

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

1. Are you a “be-er” or a “do-er”? (Page 27)
2. What is your personality type? (Page 39, a personality survey)
3. List five personality traits belonging to someone close to you. Based on your list decide whether you think that person is a “be-er” or a “doer.” Share your findings with the person to see if he or she agrees. (Page 41)
4. Analyzing a Quiz. Look back at “What Is Your Personality Type?,” the Insights personality quiz on page 39. How many points did you tally? What do you think this indicates about your personality? How does your point total reflect whether you are a be-er or a doer? Write the answer key for this quiz, stating what each of the following ranges of point totals means: 40-48 points; 26-38 points; 10-24 points; 0-8 points. If you have time, you may want to add questions to the quiz and modify the answer key to reflect the new point totals. (Page 42)
5. What is more important—belonging to a group or standing by your beliefs? (Page 49)
6. How do you respond to new rules that seem harsh or extreme? (Page 61)
7. What would happen if your community held a “destroy the four olds” campaign? (Page 71)
8. Have you ever been so anxious about something that it made it hard for you to think or eat? Write about this experience in your journal. (Page 100)
9. Write about a dream you remember having. Then write a short analysis of your dream. What do you think the dream means, or symbolizes, about your feelings or thoughts? (Page 103)
10. Examine how Roald Dahl builds suspense in “The Green Mamba.” Compare with your classmates your experience as you read the story. In what ways did you question what would happen next? Were you shocked or sickened by the action? Were you attracted to the danger? When did you first begin to feel a little anxious, and why? Note the points in the story where you felt the suspense increase. At what point in the story did you feel the most suspense—the most fear about what would happen next? (Page 124)
11. What can humans do to lessen or reverse their negative effects on the environment? What could make it difficult to stop humans from hurting the environment? In your opinion, what will be the most difficult thing to change, and why? (Page 136)
12. Describe your dreams that have seemed the most vivid and have remained the most memorable. (Page 139)
13. As you’ve grown older, what has changed about the things you like and dislike? (Page 159)
14. How does growing up change your likes, dislikes, and dreams? (Page 169)
15. What is the scariest experience you have had? How did you handle it? (Page 204)

16. If you were to wake up one morning and find you had slept for fifty years instead of one night, how would you feel? What would you miss the most? (Page 209)
17. What would you like to be known for after your life is over? (Page 258)
18. Write a critique evaluating a friend's strengths and weaknesses in performing a certain activity. (Page 267)
19. In what ways do you push yourself to the limit? (Page 272)
20. What would you do if, on the first day of your first job, everything seemed to be working against you? (Page 357)
21. Think of a situation in your own life in which someone annoyed you. What was the person doing that you didn't like? Why do you think he or she was acting that way? How did you respond to the situation? In what other ways could you have responded? (Page 368)
22. What thoughts, ideas, or images make you feel lonely? (Page 370)
23. How long would you be willing to wait for what you really wanted in life? Would there come a time at which you would give up? (Page 379)
24. Which thing or things in the world around you most frighten or horrify you? (Page 385)
25. Write about a time in your life when you didn't feel free to be yourself in words or actions. How did this make you feel? What did you do? (Page 417)
26. Write a very brief essay about your family that reveals something about your everyday family life and that you could share at a family reunion. (Page 445)
27. Write a free verse poem for a younger family member, describing for him or her the value of freedom. (Page 452)
28. Why do you think humans fear aging and death? (Page 481)
29. What do you think of the Mesopotamian gods, as portrayed in this selection? Why do you think they treat humans as they do? (Page 487)
30. Is tricking someone a good way to get something you want? Why, or why not? (Page 491)
31. How do you feel about the way Isis went about discovering Ra's secret name? (Page 495)
32. What does greed mean to you? Write a definition of greed in your journal, and give some examples. (Page 500)
33. Do you feel that the people in this selection get what they deserve? Why, or why not? (Page 503)
34. What is your opinion about people who waste natural resources? Write a statement of belief expressing your thoughts about and responses to this issue. (Page 506)
35. Have you ever known someone who was terribly vain or boastful? If so, how did you feel about this person? (Page 507)
36. When you are upset or afraid, do you like to be alone, or do you prefer to be with others? Explain. (Page 515)
37. Can you recall a time when you were treated unfairly by your parents or felt that your sibling was favored over you? How did you handle the situation? (Page 519)
38. Think of one of your favorite places to be. In what ways does being there effect your mood? What do you do when you are there? (Page 534)

39. Would you describe yourself as practical, idealistic, or somewhere in between? Explain your answer. (Page 541)
40. What experiences have you had that have forced you to feel grown-up? (Page 555)
41. Identify a routine that you practice daily or weekly. In your journal, describe your routine, how long you've practiced it, how it started, why you do it, and what would happen if you suddenly couldn't keep this routine anymore. (Page 569)
42. Putting yourself in Firth's place, describe what you would do after the destruction of the lighthouse. Where would you live? How would you pass the days? What would be important to you? How would you cope with the changes that occurred? How would you deal with your memories of the snow goose and of Rhayader? (Page 594)
43. What images would you use to describe your bedroom? (Page 619)
44. Describe yourself as a pessimist or an optimist. (Page 630)
45. With what thoughts and emotions do you prepare for a new situation or an important event? (Page 632)
46. What experiences would lead you to look at things in the same way the speaker does? What experiences would lead you to look at things differently? (Page 633)
47. Have you ever lost someone or something that you cared about? Describe your experience. (Page 645)
48. How would you react if you were required to face a situation that might cost you your life? (Page 656)
49. What would you have done if you believed your orders to charge had been a mistake? (Page 658)
50. What is your favorite place to be alone? Explain your answer. (Page 664)
51. Write a haiku that reveals something about how you view the world around you. Create this poem for a person who is close to you. (Page 674)
52. How do you feel when you are unable to communicate with or express yourself to other people? (Page 687)
53. How do you face difficulties in your life? What strategies do you use? (Page 837)

#### SPIRITUALLY AND RELIOUSLY BASED

1. The importance of Dreams. Dreams are highly significant to Native American culture. Find evidence of this by going online or to the library to find Native American myths and stories where dreams are a part of the literature...As you find dreams in literature, summarize their significance and how the people in the stories respond to them. Report your findings in small groups. (Page 104)
2. Which poem comes closer to representing autumn as you would represent it? Why? How do these poems link the ideas of fall and harvest to the spiritual world? How does the Related Reading link those ideas? (Page 111)
3. Describe the thoughts and emotions you would have if you were a storm cloud. (Page 142)
4. In "Song of the Thunder," how does the storm feel...Why would a storm feel this way...How often does the storm pity itself...What do you think the storm is doing when it is not pitying itself...Identify places in the songs where the

- dreamer has become something or someone else...How does this help the dreamer to understand nature better...After listening to a recording of these songs, decide if the melody and rhythm suit the words. Explain your answer...Using the lyrics from these songs, compose your own music to suit the words. How does your choice differ from the originals? (Page 143)
5. Pretend you are a storm that pities itself. Write a poem that explains your feelings and your behavior...Write four or five lines of a song about an element of nature...You have just awakened from a dream about a blinding snowstorm. Describe your dream in a brief journal entry. (Page 144)
  6. Writing a song. In small groups pretend you are an animal or an act of nature. Write a song that describes your feelings, your fears, and your hopes. What are the advantages or disadvantages of being you? If possible, tape record or videotape your song to share with the class. (Page 144)
  7. In the poem, "The Listeners," you are left to come to your own conclusions about what is causing the mysterious scene. How does each type of ending affect you? (Page 226, on page 225 the book states, "The traveler in the poem ["The Listeners"] confronts the mysteries of life and the connection between the living and the dead.")
  8. Describe a time when you had a feeling something bad was going to happen. Did your feeling turn out to be an accurate prediction? (Page 327)
  9. Imagine that you are Eve and that you have just discovered Shadow for the first time out in the backyard at night looking up in the tree. Write a diary entry describing what happened. (Page 356, Shadow is dead.)
  10. Internet Research. Using the library and/or the Internet, research the topic of ghost to look for answers to the following questions: What are they? Why do they appear? What evidence suggests they are real? What evidence suggests they are real? What evidence suggests they are imagined? In your research, did you find consistent answers to each question? Did you find differing answers? Were the explanations you found based on facts? What evidence did sources have to back up their theories? Did you find all the explanations valid? Write your own theories to answer the questions about ghosts based on your research. (Page 356)
  11. Imagine you are a bird. Describe the flight that you make from home to school. (Page 447)
  12. "Feel like a Bird" and "Freedom" both link the concepts of flight and freedom, and both evoke a response from the reader. How do the poems approach these concepts in different ways? Are there any parallel ideas between the poems? How does your response to "Feel Like a Bird" differ from your response to "Freedom"? (Page 451, Flight and Freedom in the poems represent dying and the freeing of ones soul)
  13. Assyrian art depicts many kinds of winged creatures. This stone carving shows a genius (an attendant spirit to the king) with a man's body and an eagle's head and wings. He is performing a purification ritual, sprinkling water from a bucket with a pinecone. Above him is the winged god Ashur. What might a human with birdlike qualities have represented to the Assyrians...Imagine you had

- wings instead of hands. What would life be like? Make two lists—one of your new limits and one of your new freedoms. (Page 451-452)
14. According to the myth, what happens to great sinners after their deaths? To heroes? To the average person...If you were an ancient Greek and believed this myth, would you fear what comes after death? Why, or why not...Is Demeter's grief realistic? Would a real mother react as she does to her daughter's disappearance? Explain...Based on the description of the underworld and the other events in the story, analyze the characters of the Greek gods that appear in the myth. What are the main characteristics of each god...What seems to motivate the Greek gods? Describe what you think the people's relationship with their gods was like. (Page 478)
  15. Write a retelling of the myth, using simple language that a child of five or six would understand. (Page 479)
  16. Mythical Talk show. In groups of five or six students, write the script for a show similar to a popular TV talk show, with the characters from the myth acting as guests on the show. Each character should give their perspective on what occurred in the myth "Persephone and Demeter." For example, the student playing Hades could protest that he loves Persephone and that love knows no bounds, while the student playing Demeter could scold him harshly for the pain he has put herself, her daughter, and the mortals through. One student in the group should act as the talkshow host, asking questions of each guest and mediating their debate. For fun, another student could act as the guest psychologist or family therapist, giving advice to the other guest on how to resolve their difficulties. When you have finished writing a basic script, put on your show for the rest of the class. (Page 479)
  17. Choose an aspect of nature that is explained by the myth "Persephone and Demeter" (such as the nature of life after death, or the origin of grain) and conduct research to find a myth from another culture that explains this phenomenon...Compare the two myths. What are the similarities? What are the differences? Share your findings with the class. (Page 479)
  18. What events in nature does this story explain? What view of humans does this story express? What view of the gods does this story express...Do you agree with the god Shamash's statement that the "fitting concern of humans" is to "fill your belly. Make merry. Dance and feast by day and night. Look at the child who holds your hand, and make your partner happy..."? In other words, in your opinion, is the role of humans to enjoy life on earth? What other purposes do you think humans should strive to fulfill? (Page 488)
  19. Medical science has enabled humans to live longer lives. What if humans were someday able to extend their own lives indefinitely due to the use of high technology? Do you think that would be a good thing toward which to strive? Why, or why not? What might society be like if we had eternal life on earth? What might be some of the advantages and disadvantages of eternal life? (Page 488)
  20. To help Gilgamesh, write a petition to the gods formally requesting eternal life on earth for all humans. Be sure to use formal, polite language, and give several reasons why you believe your request should be granted. (Page 489)

21. Imagine that Gilgamesh had been able to gain eternal life, but only for himself, and were still alive today. Write a letter he might have written to his friend Enkidu, explaining whether he is happy with how the world has changed and how he feels now about his “gift” of immortality. (Page 489)
22. The gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt possessed both human and divine qualities. What human qualities do Ra and Isis have? What godlike qualities do they have...What do you think seeing a god at his or her weakest, or most human, had on his or her worshipers?
23. Imagine that you are Isis and you would like to share with your son how you were able to harm Ra. Write a recipe for how to make a clay snake. Refer to a cookbook for the format of a recipe, and make up the quantities of each ingredient. (Page 498)
24. Imagine that Horus has been born and is now set to take the power from Ra. Write a brief continuation of “The Secret Name of Ra,” using your imagination to describe what happens next. (Page 498)
25. Write a list of rules that Osanobua might have written for the people of ancient Benin. Use formal language that you feel is appropriate for a divine set of laws. (Page 506)
26. In what way does the story “the Instruction of Indra” reflect Hindu beliefs... What does this myth teach us about how we should live our lives... What do you think about the ideas of detachment and karma? Do you agree that people should work to become detached from worldly goods and power? Do you agree with the idea of karma, or do you believe people should work to improve their lives? Explain, referring to the Prereading if needed. (Page 513, the prereading discusses detachment, karma and dharma)
27. What role should rich and privileged people play in society? Should they give up their wealth to the poor, or should they just enjoy life, or in what other way do you think the rich should behave? Explain. (Page 513)
28. Suppose you were Indra at the beginning of the story and wanted to build the most magnificent palace for yourself. Write a design plan for your palace, describing what rooms your palace will have, and what luxury features you want it to contain. (Page 514)
29. In this story, Indra learns some important lessons. Imagine that you are taking notes for him so that he will not forget what he has learned. In your notebook, write some brief notes for him. (page 514, the story gives instruction on Hinduism)
30. With a partner, research the main principles and beliefs of Hinduism and Buddhism, and prepare a report comparing and contrasting the two religions. (Page 514)
31. To what degree is fate a factor in life? Do things happen because they are simply “meant to be.” Or can people determine what will happen in their lives?(Page 593)
32. If you could communicate with any element in nature what would it be? Why? (Page 638)
33. Write five fortune cookie inserts that might teach lessons on issues that you think are important in life. (Page 654)

34. What do you think about when you ponder the sky? (Page 661)
35. What do you hear when you sit perfectly still and listen to everything around you? (Page 669)

### INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS

1. Write a note to Miss Merrill, the teacher in “The Fan Club,” posing as the parent of one of the students in the class. Inform her of your feelings about the speech assignment. (Page 59)
2. Form small groups and briefly discuss the topics of conformity and individuality. How often do your group members feel they have to choose between conforming to the standards of others and asserting their individuality? What situations call for this choice? Which choice do members of your group usually make? Why? Are there times when it’s better to conform? Are there times when it’s better to stand on your own? Explain... (Page 60)
3. Write a few of lines of dialogue between two students arguing over a seat on the bus. Imagine the dialogue is for a role-playing exercise in conflict management. (Page 74)
4. In his own way, Jed’s grandfather helps Jed to understand and deal with his oncoming death. Write some additional dialogue between Jed and his grandfather in which Grandfather talks to Jed directly about death. (Page 103)
5. Imagine that you are Jed and want to share with others what your grandfather is like and what he has taught you. Write a tribute to Jed’s grandfather, using information you learned in the story. You may use informal language. (Page 103)
6. As you read this poem, look at the links between the abstract concepts of death and love and the concrete details to describe each concept. Below is a chart you can use to organize your ideas: Symbol: Death and Love; Concept: What does it do? How is it described? When, where, and with what does it come? (Page 105, Poems: “Under the Harvest Moon” and “Theme in Yellow”)...Look at the chart you created for “Death” and “Love.” What did you write about “Death”? about “Love”? How is “Death” linked to autumn? How is “Love” linked to autumn? (Page 112)
7. What would you do if someone told you a deadly snake had just entered your house? (Page 113)
8. Write a short story about something scary that once happened. As you write, try to stretch out the story and build suspense as much as you can. Use concrete descriptions of sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touch. Show the reactions of your characters as each new concrete experience builds upon the previous ones. (Page 125)
9. What suggestions would you make about confronting fear? Form your own statement about this subject. (Page 126)
10. What local issues and problems concern you? How did you learn of them? What is your stance? (Page 127)
11. Do you agree or disagree with the statement “We are creating a world that is hostile to wildness, that seems to prefer concrete to natural landscapes.” Explain, using examples from your own life. (Page 135)

12. Imagine that you are Princess Sophia Maria Lousia at the end of “The Serial Garden,” and you are wondering why Rudolf has not arrived. Write a journal entry from her point of view, going over the possibilities and resigning yourself to a life without true love. (Page 195)
13. Write about an unforgettable journey you have taken or an experience you have had that has helped you grow as a person. (Page 197)
14. If you were Maijue Xiong, how would you react to each of the following: Earning a poor grade; a younger sibling who shunned his or her cultural heritage; and insensitive remark about your ethnicity; a request by your parents to quit school and care for them full time; a plea by your mother to quit school, get married, and have children. (Page 206)
15. Evaluate the motives of the innkeeper for playing the trick on Tokubei and Zenta. Why do you think he made up such a scheme? Do you think the innkeeper felt he was justified in trying to swindle the two travelers? Do you think he felt guilty? Explain your answers. (Page 226)
16. Write a tribute to Roberto Clemente for people visiting the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. (Page 313)
17. A eulogy is a formal statement of praise made at a funeral. Imagine you are Willie Beavers, one of Lester’s coworkers on the Pullman cars. Write a eulogy, or tribute, you would deliver at Lester’s funeral. (Page 339)
18. If you lost a pet or pets the way Eve did, would you ever want to have pets again? Why, or why not? (Page 353)
19. Evaluate the conversations Eve has with her family. How much exchange is there between people? Who does most of the talking? How do Eve’s mother, her father, and her brother each respond to the comments she makes about her cats and ghost? What effect do you think the reactions of her family have on Eve... What are some situations you’ve experienced in which you felt like a block of communication occurred? How did this affect you? What did you do, or how did you respond? (Page 354)
20. Write epitaphs for Eve to add to the gravestones of Angel, Shadow, and Chase. (Page 356)
21. What does McDunn mean by the following passage: “That’s life for you? Someone always waiting for someone who never comes home. Always someone loving some thing more that that thing loves them. And after a while you want to destroy whatever that thing is, so it can’t hurt you no more”? How does his statement foreshadow the events that follow... Why may have caused McDunn to make this statement? What in McDunn’s own life might have caused him to reflect on love and destruction in this way? How might events in McDunn’s life have led him to sympathize with the creature? (Page 382)
22. Using the list of moods you wrote while reading “The Foghorn,” complete the graphic organizer below for each mood. As the example shows, write the mood in the center circle. Then go back and reread the story to find examples of concrete details that help create that particular mood, and write each example in a circle connected to the center circle. Do a similar graphic organizer for each mood on your list. Example: Loneliness: sea stretching away into nothing and nowhere; lonely ships; “...few rare ships passed.” (Page 383)

23. What characteristics of the narrator make him seem sane? What characteristics of the narrator make him seem insane...what do you think the narrator's mental state is in the beginning of the story? What do you think the narrator's mental state is by the end of the story? Has the narrator changed? Has he remained the same? Explain your answer. (Page 392)
24. From the point of view of the police officers, write a police report explaining their findings at the old man's home. (Page 393)
25. Write a literary review of "The Tell-Tale Heart," explaining what you liked about the story and/or what you did not like about the story. Either recommend the story to readers or advise them not to read it. (Page 393, a man murders a sick and dying man)
26. Staging a mock trial. As a class, try the narrator of "The Tell-Tale Heart" in a mock trial. (Page 393)
27. Imagine that you are the narrator's lawyer and that a trial is set for the murder of the old man. Write a letter advising your client how to plead (guilty, not guilty, or guilty by reason of insanity). Try to persuade your client by explaining why your advice is the best possible course of action to take. (Page 393)
28. In small groups, divide "The Tell-Tale Heart" into as many sections as people in the group. Take turns among group members, each reading his or her section of the story...(Page 393)
29. Form small groups. Within your group, share opinions on the fate of the hummingbird...(Page 415, the story of the hummingbird introduces the idea of reincarnation)
30. Provide brief examples of freedom and imprisonment. (Page 422)
31. If a national tragedy occurred, would you want to talk about it with your family and friends? Why, or why not? (Page 424)
32. What might you have said to comfort the families of the [Challenger] crew members? (Page 426)
33. A motive is a reason for acting in a certain way. What is Isis's motive for harming Ra? Do you think her motive can be justified? Why, or why not? (Page 497)
34. In what major ways do the people of ancient Benin disobey the will of Osanobua? Order their crimes from least harmful to worst, according to how they are presented in the story...What consequences do the people experience? What punishments do they receive for their crimes? What lesson does this story intend to teach...Do you agree with the story's interpretation of each crime's seriousness? Which crime do you think is the worst, and why? Explain...Do you think the lesson taught in this story is still a valuable one in our society? What modern laws and rules can you think of that are similar to the "laws" or wishes of Osanobua? In your opinion, who are the people most likely to break such laws, and why would they do so? (Page 505, the story alludes to the story of the Israelites and God's providence of manna, and greed)
35. Which do you think is the better course for Indra, withdrawing from the world to become a holy man or remaining active in the world? Why? (Page 511)
36. What does Susanoo do when he is angry? What happens when Amaterasu goes into the cave? What natural occurrences might cause these results...what might

- this story be trying to explain about the natural world...How do you think people who first told this story felt about Susanoo? How can you tell? Do you agree with the gods' opinion of Susanoo, and their decision to throw him out of heaven? Why, or why not? (Page 52)
37. If you were in Susanoo's place, how would you feel about not being able to see your mother and about being chosen as god of the sea rather than god of the sky? In what way would you handle the situation? Explain. (Page 520)
  38. Imagine you are a politician running for office in Michigan, where this story is set. Write a position statement describing your thoughts about the welfare system and your ideas for improving it. (Page 567)
  39. Write a short eulogy for Pierre to be read at his funeral. (Page 576)
  40. Write song lyrics based on *The Snow Goose*, recreating the novella's mood and theme. Imagine that the song is to be performed during a memorial ceremony for artists, for animal advocates, or World War II heroes. (page 595)
  41. Write the message for a memorial plaque for Rhayader that will stand on the site of the abandoned lighthouse. (Page 595)
  42. Make a list of words you associate with war. Then write a short story using those words...Write a letter from a survivor of the Battle of Balaklava to his family at home, telling of the event...Write a narrative poem about a conflict you have experienced. (Page 660)
  43. In what way does this poem describe a universal experience that all people could share? In what ways is it more a personal statement? How would you describe a similar experience in a different way? (Page 667)
  44. Write a lyric poem describing a secret hideaway that you have or wish to have. (Page 668)
  45. In what ways are Helen's behavior problems similar to those of a typical, sighted and hearing child? Explain whether you think Helen deserves to be treated differently because of her disability. (Page 710)
  46. Evaluate the tactics Annie uses to teach Helen in the dining room. Are these normal teaching methods? Do you think Annie makes wise choices about teaching Helen...What would happen if your teacher used some of the methods Annie Sullivan used with Helen? (Page 734)
  47. Write an imaginary love letter or poem from a suitor for Elizabeth. Your letter or poem can be funny, serious, or overly sentimental. (Page 779)
  48. What sacrifices have you made for another person? Why did you make them? (page 812)