

STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

**GRADE 7**  
**Reading Language Arts**  
**STAAR Alternate 2**

**Administered April 2023**

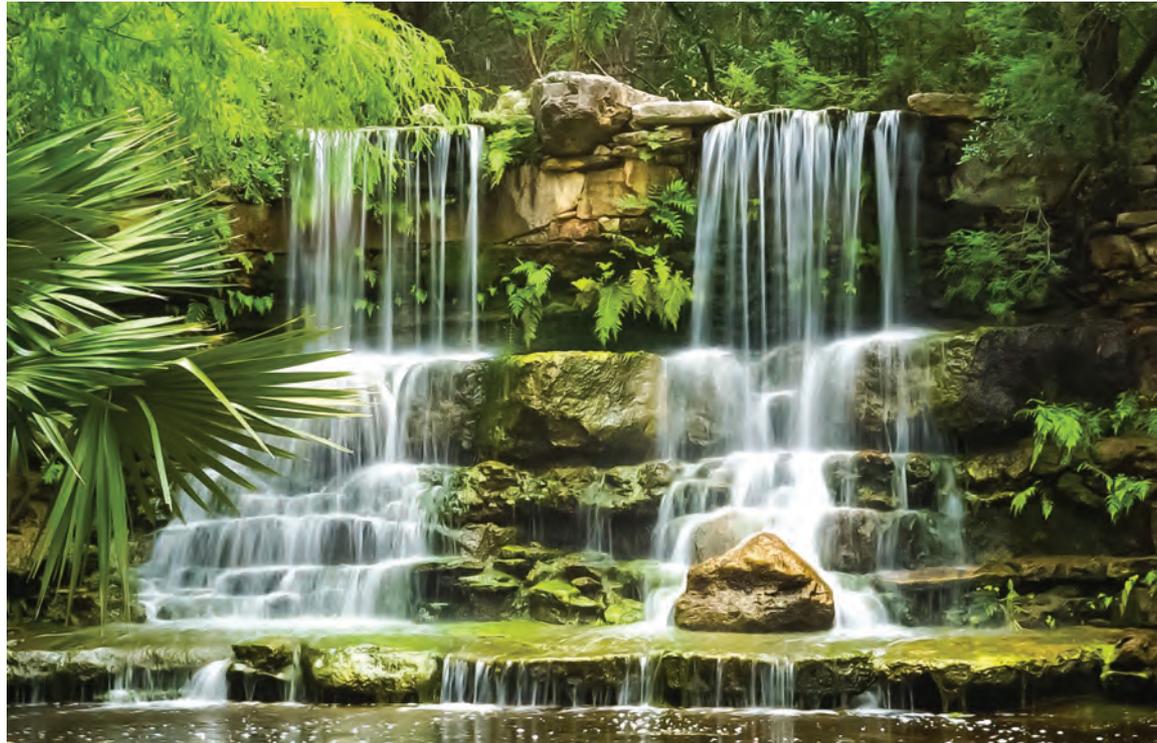
**RELEASED**



# READING LANGUAGE ARTS



# Texas Waterfalls



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The double waterfall at Zilker Botanical Garden in Austin is one of the many waterfalls throughout the state of Texas.



© Jacqueline F. Cooper/Shutterstock.com

A waterfall is a place in a stream or a river where running water falls from a high place, such as over the side of a cliff. Texas has many waterfalls in different shapes and sizes to be discovered and explored.

2b



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One popular waterfall in the Texas Hill Country is found at Hamilton Pool Preserve. Not far from where Hamilton Creek meets the Pedernales River, water rushes over a tall limestone cliff and falls into a shallow pool at the opening of a small grotto, or cave, formed by years of water erosion. Swimmers enjoy jumping from the rocky ledges into the pool of water below.

3a

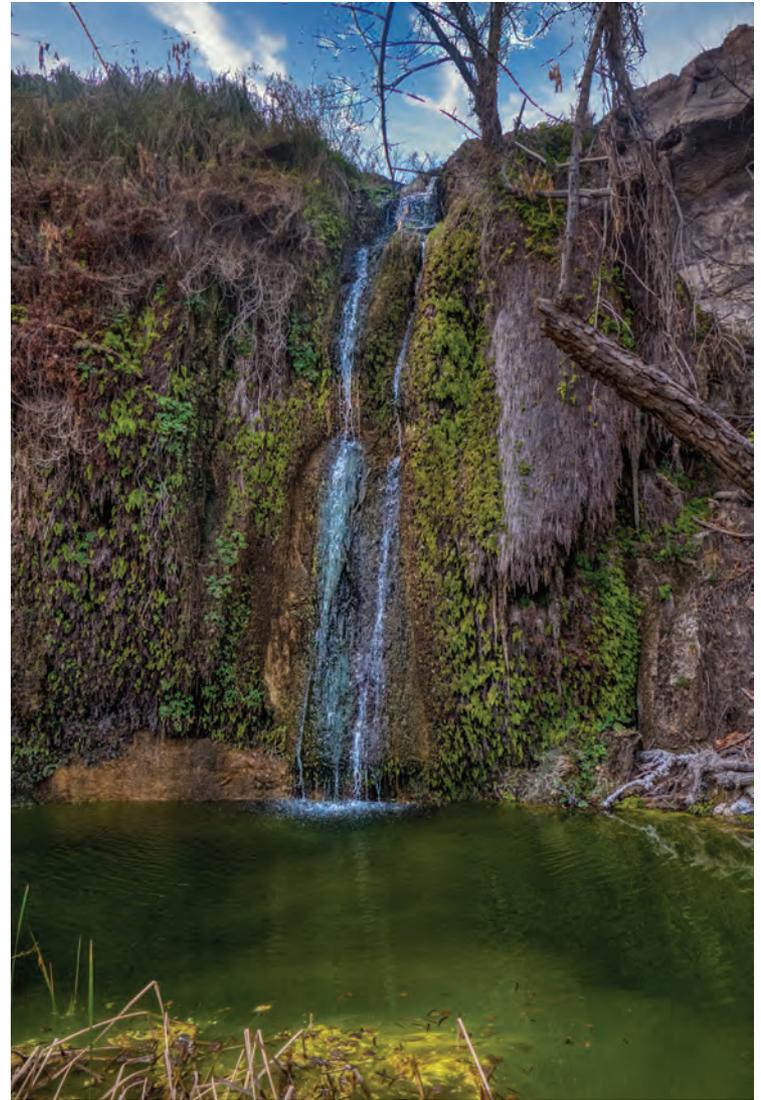
One of the most famous waterfalls in Texas is in Colorado Bend State Park. At the end of a one-and-a-half-mile hike along a steep trail is Gorman Falls, where the water falls over plant-covered rock walls. Many Texas waterfalls flow only during the rainy season. However, Gorman Falls flows even during the hot, dry summer months.



© JB Manning/Shutterstock.com

3a

West Texas may not seem like the best place to find waterfalls. But huge cliffs and deep canyons are the perfect home for some of the tallest waterfalls in the state, such as Madrid Falls at Big Bend Ranch State Park. Visitors willing to make the challenging uphill hike can see a waterfall that is over 100 feet tall and drops two levels.



West Texas has grottoes formed by years of erosion.

West Texas has huge cliffs and deep canyons.

West Texas has plant-covered rock walls.



© B Norris/Shutterstock.com

A series of smaller waterfalls along a river is called a cascade.

Boykin Springs is a cascade of waterfalls, each under 4 feet tall, that are part of the Neches River. The river water rushes by the old Aldridge Sawmill, in Angelina National Forest near Zavalla in East Texas.

4a

At Pedernales Falls, water cascades over limestone rocks and creates shallow pools where fish gather. Pedernales Falls are not tall, but they are magnificent in the way they spread across the Pedernales River. The falls are a popular swimming place during the summer, but the water currents can become very strong and dangerous.



© Tricia Daniel/Shutterstock.com

4a



ChiSci/Wikimedia

4a

Dinosaur Valley State Park near Fort Worth is best known for the fossil footprints in the rocky riverbed of the Paluxy River. People like to follow the trail of the dinosaur tracks to the huge waterfall at Wildcat Hollow to learn about life long ago.

Whether people want to be impressed by rushing water falling over a tall cliff or the wide spread of shorter waterfalls that cascade across a river, Texas has hundreds of waterfalls to be discovered and explored.



*Boykin Springs is a cascade of waterfalls, each under 4 feet tall, that are part of the Neches River.*

*The Falls are a popular swimming place during the summer, but the water currents can become very strong and dangerous.*

*People like to follow the trail of the dinosaur tracks to the huge waterfall at Wildcat Hollow to learn about life long ago.*



## The World Balloon Contest



At the World Balloon Convention, almost 900 balloon artists from around the world come together to make balloon sculptures of animals, cartoon characters, hats, and clothing.



The most exciting part of every World Balloon Convention is the balloon sculpture contest. Teams of artists have 27 hours to work together using their skills and imagination to create amazing works of art. These artists work with balloons in different sizes, shapes, and colors to make giant sculptures and beautiful costumes.

6b



© Erik Svoboda/Shutterstock.com



© 2018 World Balloon Convention

In 2018 the winning team for the large sculpture competition traveled all the way from Taiwan. The team of artists used more than 50,000 balloons to build a giant standing tiger. The 15-foot-tall tiger wore colorful jewel-covered armor and looked like it was walking across the roof of a building.



7a

A team from the United States won third prize in the large sculpture competition for its giant sculpture of Ursula the Sea Witch from *The Little Mermaid*.

Ursula's evil smile and black tentacles were all made of balloons. So was the underwater scene around her, filled with balloon rocks, plants, and sea creatures.





Teams spend time during the competition counting the balloons needed for a large balloon sculpture.

The team from Taiwan won first place because it created a taller balloon sculpture than the team from the United States did.

Members of each team of balloon artists work together to create a large balloon sculpture.

Other competitors at the 2018 World Balloon Convention used balloons to create things to wear. The first-place winner in the fashion and costume category used balloons to create a cloak and pair of boots that looked like they came straight out of a *Star Wars* movie. The second-place winner created a dress made mostly out of pink balloons.



© 2018 World Balloon Convention



© 2018 World Balloon Convention

8a

Some teams of artists created amazing balloon hats. One of the winning teams created a black-and-silver hat decorated with balloon flowers. Another winning team made a fairy-tale crown with bright balloon jewels.



The balloon designs created at the convention are not meant to last forever. So, when the convention ends, participants must pop the balloons. Small pieces of the burst balloons cover the floor like confetti. And even though this party is over, the balloon artists are already beginning to imagine the fantastic designs they might want to create for the next World Balloon Convention.

It is difficult for the artists to take the sculptures home without popping the balloons.

The artists want to reuse the balloons at the next World Balloon Convention.

The artists want to use the small pieces of popped balloons to create other works of art.



The Texas State Capitol is a tall building.



The Texas State Capitol in Austin, Texas, today is taller than the nation's capitol in Washington, D.C.



The Texas State Capitol was completed in 1888. It take more than six and a half years for workmen to build the capitol.

takes

took



The current Texas State Capitol is the third version of the building. The first was a wooden building that was the national capitol of the Texas Republic until Texas became a state. The governor of Texas has an office in the Texas State Capitol. The second Texas capitol was built in 1853, on the same site as the present capitol in Austin. It was destroyed by fire in 1881, but plans had already been made to replace it.

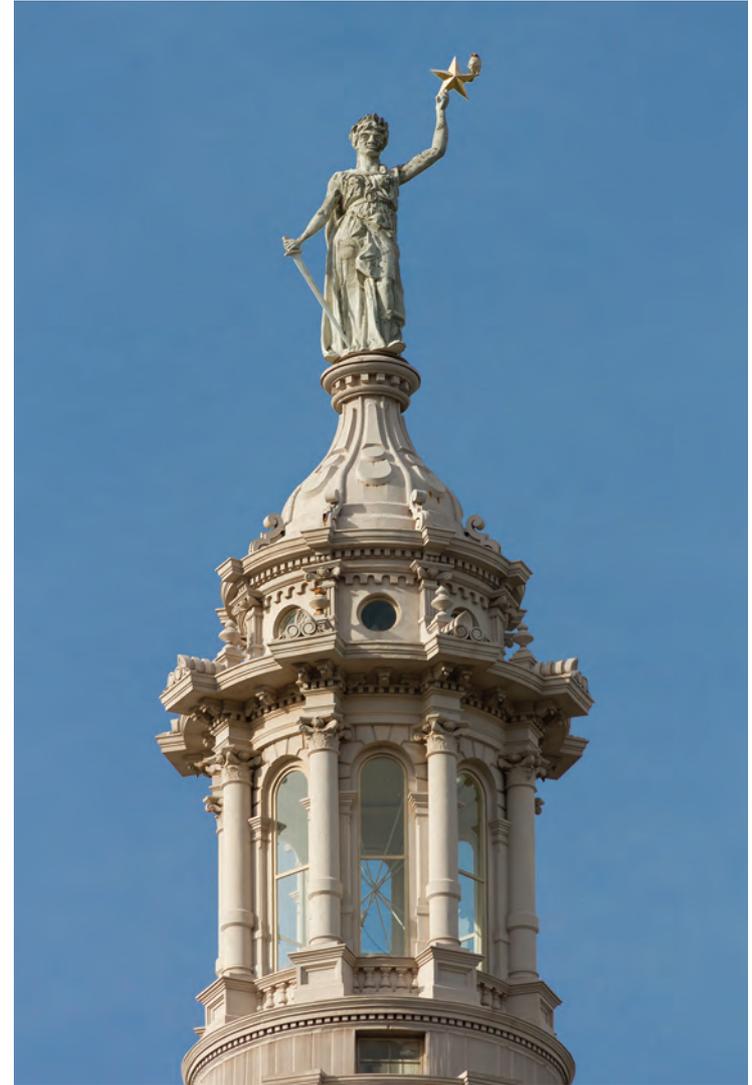
*The current Texas State Capitol is the third version of the building.*

*The governor of Texas has an office in the Texas State Capitol.*

*It was destroyed by fire in 1881, but plans had already been made to replace it.*



The dome of the Texas State Capitol rises above the roof and sits on top of the four-story capitol that is made of thick stone walls. The Goddess of Liberty is on top of the capitol dome. The Goddess of Liberty watches over the state of Texas. The Goddess of Liberty holds the sword of justice in one hand and a gold Lone Star in the other.



The Goddess of Liberty holds the sword of justice in one hand and a gold Lone Star and stands on top of the capitol dome and watches over the state of Texas.

On top of the capitol dome, the Goddess of Liberty watches over the state of Texas with the sword of justice in one hand and a gold Lone Star in the other.

Watching over the state of Texas from the top of the capitol dome and the Goddess of Liberty holds a sword and a gold Lone Star.



Peacocks are large birds.



© cynoclub/Shutterstock.com

Peacocks are large, colorful birds with beautiful tail feathers.

The tail feathers spread out in a fan that reaches across the peacocks back and touches the ground on both sides.



peacock's

peacocks'

The word for this kind of bird is "peafowl."  
Only the males are "peacocks." The females are  
"peahens." And the babies are called  
"peachicks." A peacock lives in the wild for  
about 20 years. A family of peafowl is called a  
"pride."

15a



© Yan/stock.adobe.com



*Only the males are "peacocks."*

*A peacock lives in the wild for about 20 years.*

*A family of peafowl is called a "pride."*

A peacock's tail feathers can grow to be five feet long. A peacock has feathers that are larger than its body. A peacock can fly, but not very far.



**Even though** a peacock has feathers that are larger than its body, it can fly, but not very far.

**Even if** a peacock has feathers that are larger than its body, it can fly, but not very far.

**Even when** a peacock has feathers that are larger than its body, it can fly, but not very far.



## Football and Fine Art



Katrina is painting a large watercolor at the kitchen table. Katrina's dad comes to the doorway and calls out, "Let's go, Katrina. Jackson is already in the car, and we want to arrive at the stadium before kickoff."



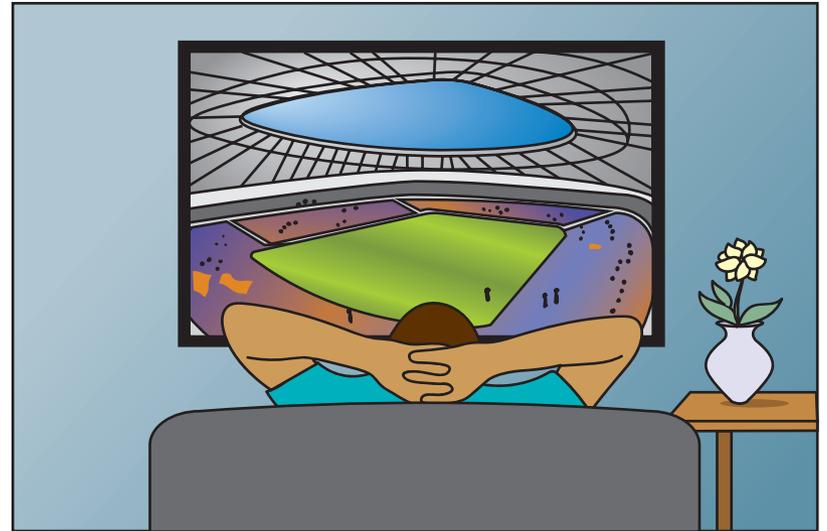
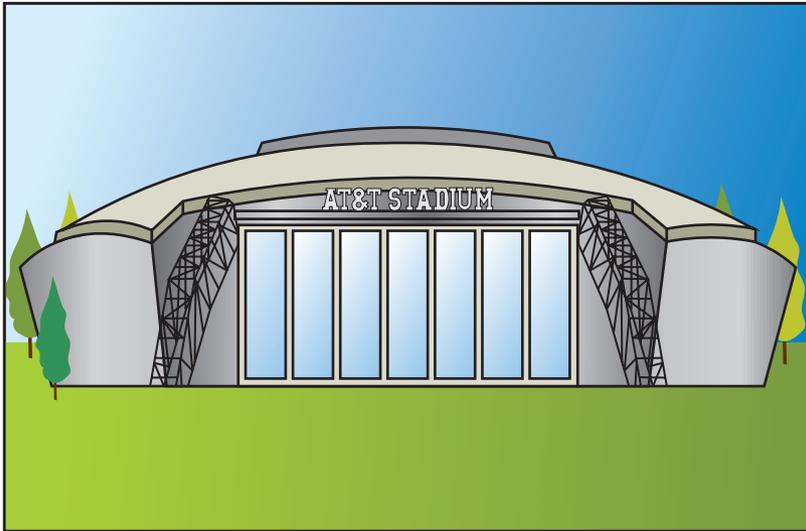
Katrina's dad is thrilled when a coworker gives him tickets to the Dallas Cowboys football game. He is especially excited about watching the game in the AT&T Stadium. And Katrina's older brother Jackson is just as excited as her dad.

"Can't I stay home?" Katrina asks. "You know sports just aren't my thing."

18a

Her father smiles and says, "Katrina, I promise, you are going to love this!"





For Katrina, watching football is about as exciting as watching paint dry—although if she was watching the paint on her newest piece of art, it actually would be exciting. She puts a small sketch pad and a pencil in her purse, hoping that she might see something for a future art project while she is at the football game.

As the car gets closer to the stadium, Katrina is completely surprised by the building she sees.



"It's really something, isn't it?" Jackson asks.  
"The AT&T Stadium is supported by the two largest single-span arches in the world."

19a

Katrina's dad parks the car, and as the family enters the stadium, Katrina sees a huge polished ball that is three stories high mounted on an enormous black granite base.



Tony Gutierrez/AP/Shutterstock

"That's by Anish Kapoor, and it's called 'Sky Mirror,'" her father says.

The side that tilts upward reflects the blue sky with puffy white clouds. When Katrina walks around to the other side of the mirror, she sees all the people waiting to enter the stadium. Katrina waves at herself in the huge mirror.

"That sculpture cost ten million dollars," her father says, "and it's just the beginning of what I want to show you."



The stadium is more beautiful than Katrina expected.

The two arches are longer than Katrina pictured.

The "Sky Mirror" is taller than Katrina imagined.

As they walk through the levels inside, Katrina is stunned to see so many gigantic artworks on display. There are sculptures, paintings, photographs, and graphic pieces.

20a

On the way to their seats, Katrina sees hundreds of mirrored glass cubes on an aluminum background, making Katrina feel as if she is in another galaxy. "Starfield" by Teresita Fernández, the sign reads.



Courtesy Teresita Fernández and Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, and London. Photo by Tom Fox.

20a

When the family finally sits down in their seats, Katrina finds herself caught up in the excitement of the football game and the ability to see instant replays on one of the two huge video screens.



AP Photo/Tim Sharp

As they both watch the big screen, her brother elbows her in the side and says, "That's a little bigger than our television at home, wouldn't you say?"

20a

“Everything's bigger here,” Katrina admits with a laugh, “and really cool. Who could have imagined a football stadium and an art gallery all under one roof?”



AP Photo/Tim Sharp

"And the roof over the field opens up to let the sunshine in," her father points out.

"Hey," he says to Katrina, "the first half is almost over, so do you want to take some time to walk around and look at more of the art?"

"I could spend forever here," she answers. "In fact, could we stay awhile after the game ends? I never want to leave."



Katrina thinks watching the large screens inside the stadium is like watching their big-screen TV at home.

Katrina is surprised when the roof of the stadium opens, and she can see the sky.

Katrina wants to stay after the game to look at more of the artwork in the stadium.



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**April 2023**

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Printed in the USA

ISD37526