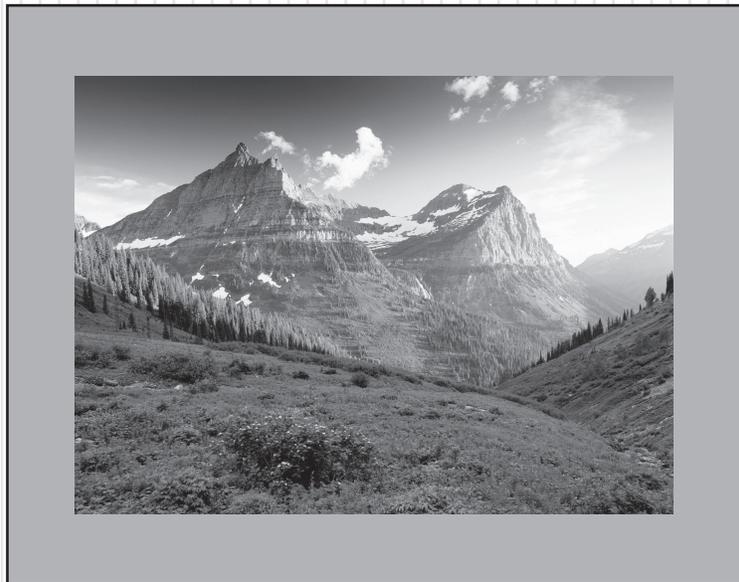


Montana
Comprehensive Assessment
System (MontCAS, Phase 2)
Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT)

COMMON CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ITEM RELEASE
READING, GRADE 4
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OPI

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Reading

Session 1

Paul Bunyan is a larger-than-life folk hero. Read this story about Paul Bunyan and then answer the questions that follow.

Paul Bunyan Digs the St. Lawrence River

by Dell J. McCormick

One summer Paul decided to leave the North Woods and go back to Maine to visit his father and mother. When he arrived, they talked about old times, and Paul asked about Billy Pilgrim, the biggest man in that part of the country.

“What is this Billy Pilgrim doing?” asked Paul.

“He is digging the St. Lawrence River between the United States and Canada,” said Paul’s father. “There was nothing to separate the two countries. People never knew when they were in the United States and when they were in Canada.”

Paul Bunyan went to see Billy. He found that Billy Pilgrim and his men had been digging for three years and had dug only a very small ditch. Paul laughed when he saw it.

“My men could dig the St. Lawrence River in three weeks,” said Paul.

This made Billy angry for he thought no one could dig a large river in three weeks.

“I will give you a million dollars if you can dig the St. Lawrence River in three weeks!” said Billy Pilgrim.

So Paul sent for Babe the Blue Ox, Ole the Big Swede, Brimstone Bill, and all his woodsmen.

Paul told Ole to make a huge scoop shovel as large as a house. They fastened it to Babe with a long buckskin rope. He hauled many tons of dirt every day and

emptied the scoop shovel in Vermont. You can see the large piles of dirt there to this day. They are called the Green Mountains.

Every night Johnnie Inkslinger, who did the arithmetic, would take his large pencil and mark one day off the calendar on the wall.

Billy Pilgrim was afraid they would finish digging the river on time. He did not want to pay Paul Bunyan the million dollars, for at heart he was a miser. So he thought of a plan to prevent Paul from finishing the work.

One night Billy called his men together and said, “When everybody has gone to bed we will go out and pour water on the buckskin rope so it will stretch, and Babe the Blue Ox will not be able to pull a single shovelful of dirt!”

The next day, Babe started toward Vermont with the first load of dirt. When he arrived there, he looked around and the huge scoop was nowhere to be seen. For miles and miles the buckskin rope had stretched through the forests and over the hills.

Babe didn’t know what to do. He sat down and tried to think, but everyone knows an ox isn’t very bright; so he just sat there.

14 After a while the sun came out and dried the buckskin and it started to shrink to normal size.

Babe planted his large hooves between two mountains and waited. The buckskin rope kept shrinking and shrinking. Soon the scoop shovel came into view over the hills. Then Babe emptied it and started back after another load.

In exactly three weeks the St. Lawrence River was all finished, but still Billy Pilgrim did not want to pay Paul the money.

“Very well,” said Paul, “I will remove the water!” So he led Babe the Blue Ox down to the river, and Babe drank the St. Lawrence River dry.

18 Billy Pilgrim only chuckled to himself for he knew that the first rain would fill it again. Soon it began to rain, and the river became as large as ever.

So Paul picked up a large shovel.

“If you do not pay the money you owe me I will fill the river up again,” said Paul.

He threw in a shovelful of dirt. He threw in another and another, but still Billy Pilgrim would not pay him the money.

“I will pay you half your money,” said Billy.

Paul again picked up his shovel and tossed more dirt into the river.



“I will pay you two thirds of your money,” said Billy.

Paul kept throwing more dirt into the river until he had thrown a thousand shovelfuls.

“Stop! I will pay you all your money!” cried Billy.

So Paul Bunyan was finally paid in full for digging the St. Lawrence River. The thousand shovelfuls of dirt are still there.

They are called the Thousand Islands.

67. Explain why Paul Bunyan is an unusual character. Use information from the story to support your answer.

Scoring Guide

Score	Description
4	Response provides a thorough explanation of why Paul Bunyan is an unusual character. Explanation is well-developed and includes relevant information from the story as support.
3	Response provides an explanation of why Paul Bunyan is an unusual character. Explanation lacks some development and/or relevant information from the story as support.
2	Response provides a partial explanation of why Paul Bunyan is an unusual character. Explanation is limited or lacks development and relevant details from the story as support.
1	Response is vague/minimal.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response.

Why Paul Bunyan is an unusual character:

- He is a larger-than-life folk hero.
- He is shown doing superhuman tasks that no normal man could do, such as digging the St. Lawrence River.
- He gets credit for creating national landmarks like the Green Mountains and the Thousand Islands.
- He is an honest man and does not cheat.
- He is able to outwit bad guys like Billy Pilgrim.
- He does all this without really hurting anything or anybody.
- Even nature is on his side and fixes the buckskin rope that Billy Pilgrim has caused to stretch beyond use.
- He has brave and loyal sidekicks who can do special things in their own right, like Babe the Blue Ox and Johnnie Inkslinger with his large pencil.

Score Point 4

Sample 1

Paul Bunyan is an unusual character because he thinks he can dig a river in three weeks. He has some unusual characters helping him also including Babe the Blue Ox, Ole the Big Sledge, Brimstone Bill, and all his woodsmen. Paul think of unique ways to make it possible to dig the St. Lawrence River like making a large shovel and attaching it to Babe. Billy says he will pay Paul 1 million dollars but when Paul achieves his goal will not pay him. Paul does many odd things to get this money such as remove the water and fill the river back up with dirt. Finally Billy pays Paul the million dollars he promised. I think it ended up being a very interesting story that I could read again and again.

Score Point 4

Sample 2

Paul Bunyan is so unusual because he is so big. In real life a man can't be so large or dig a river. Rivers are very wide and deep, so it would be almost impossible for a man and a ox to dig in 3 weeks. If a man were to be so powerful, strong and huge he would probably be on the news. And how can someone own a giant blue ox. Paul is very unusual for the things he does. Like digging a river. Or for digging up so much dirt he made mountains. And if someone were to own a blue ox that could drink a river, he would have to be very big. How could a man dig a border between the United States and Canada in three weeks?! That person would have to be awfully big. That's why he, Paul Bunyan, is so unusual.

Score Point 3

Sample 1

Well one thing is that he can dig a river in 3 weeks. He has an ox that is big & blue & can carry tons & tons of dirt. Paul is also unusual because he is tall & if he didn't get the thing he ~~deserved~~ he'd do something bad. Like pour dirt into the river.

He is unusual because he is so big. Plus, he has a blue ox for his pet. He also wears the same clothes every day. He does not have a place to live or a place to sleep.

He also is trying to make a million dollars by making a river in 3 weeks. Plus, nobody can throw one thousand piles of dirt into a river.

Score Point 2

Sample 1

Paul Bunyan is bigger than a regular person. He's as big as a giant. Now one day the St. Lawrence river. There were never any giants back in those years, just regular sized people.

Score Point 2

Sample 2

Paul Bunyan is unusual because he's large. And Paul Bunyan was said to dig the St. Lawrence river. His ox Babe made Greer Mountains which were made from piles of dirt.

Score Point 1

Sample 1

Paul is an unusual person because he has a pet ox, and is really big.

Score Point 1

Sample 2

Paul Bunyan is unusual because he is bigger than everybody.

Score Point 0

Sample 1

Because he decided to visit his father and
mother.

Score Point 0

Sample 2

Because he is first unusual

Acknowledgments

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