



# ***New York State Testing Program***

English   
Language Arts

Listening Selection

**Sample Test**

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This listening selection is to be used in administering Session 2, Part 1 of the English Language Arts Test. The selection is to be read aloud twice to the students. For complete directions, please follow the instructions in the *Teacher's Directions*.

## Listening Selection

### *Waldo's Up and Down Day*

Waldo almost tripped on his shoelaces as he ran down the street behind his sister, Alicia. As he bent down to retie his sneakers he saw a shiny new penny on the sidewalk.

"Hey, Alicia, look what I found," he called out, holding out the penny.

"Oh, Waldo," Alicia said, "it is just an old penny."

They reached the bus stop just as the school bus did, and climbed on.

"Hey, good timing, Waldo. I guess maybe finding your penny means that you will have a good day." Alicia grinned.

Waldo knew that Alicia was making fun of him, but he liked the idea of a good-luck day. At least, it was lucky to find a penny. Maybe everything would go perfectly that day . . . he smiled and put the penny in his pocket and then forgot about it.

The school day didn't start well. When Waldo sat down in homeroom, his chair collapsed under him. Everybody laughed, even Mr. Menendez, his homeroom teacher, although he did help Waldo up.

In math class, the teacher divided the class into pairs, and gave each team member a math puzzle to solve. If each team member got the correct answer, their answers together would form a "secret message."

"Cool," thought Waldo, until he saw who his partner was. Eddie! Eddie was a good friend, but he liked to clown around so much that he never finished any assignment. So of course Eddie didn't solve his part of the math puzzle and Waldo never found out what the secret message was.

At lunchtime, Waldo was ready to eat! But when he opened his lunchbox, instead of his bagel and cream cheese, he found Alicia's peanut butter sandwich. Waldo hated peanut butter sandwiches. He sighed. Too late now to look for Alicia. He ate the crusts off the sandwich and ran off to get ready for gym class. They would be playing softball and Waldo was sure he would play well today. He had been playing well all week.

The last inning found the other team ahead 3-2. Waldo's team had one last chance to win the game. The first batter struck out, then the next. Then it was Waldo's turn at bat.



“C’mon, Waldo!” his teammates yelled. “Get us a hit! You can do it!”

Waldo marched to the plate. He didn’t even have time to swing the bat. One, two, three strikes—and he was out. The other team had won. All of Waldo’s teammates were disappointed but they were nice about it. Somehow that made it worse.

Waldo decided to walk home from school by himself. He took the road that led down past the park and over the creek. When he got to the creek, he stopped on the bridge and leaned over.

“What a rotten, lousy, stinking day,” he said to no one in particular.

Then he remembered the penny he had found that morning. Ha! It didn’t mean anything after all. Waldo threw the penny off the bridge.

“Goodbye and good riddance!” he called out.

“OUCH!” came a voice, as if in reply. “What did you do that for?”

Waldo looked all around, wondering who was talking to him. Then he saw a girl about his age pull herself up over the railing of the bridge. Her dark eyes flashed at Waldo.

“Is that how you welcome new kids to town, or something?” she asked. She had Waldo’s penny in one hand and was rubbing her head with the other hand.

Waldo had never seen her before. “You just moved here?” he asked.

She nodded. “Today. UNFORTUNATELY, I guess.”

Waldo started to apologize, but instead he started to giggle. He couldn’t stop. The girl looked angry, but then she started to grin. Waldo caught his breath long enough to tell her everything that had happened that day, ever since he picked up the penny, and soon the girl was laughing as hard as Waldo.

When they finally stopped laughing, Waldo said, “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to hit you. What’s your name?”

“Sylvia.”

“Do you play softball, Sylvia?”

“Yeah. And I pitch really well.”

“Really? Can you help me get better at bat? Want to come over and play?”

Sylvia smiled. “Okay. Sounds like fun.”

As they started to walk off together, Sylvia said, “Hey, what about your penny? You want it back?”

“Nah,” Waldo said, “who needs it?”

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**English Language Arts**  
**Grade 4**

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