



New York State Testing Program

English 
Language Arts

Book 2

Sample Test

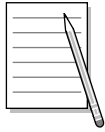
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This test asks you to write about what you have listened to or read. Your writing will NOT be scored on your personal opinions. It WILL be scored on:

- how clearly you organize and express your ideas
- how accurately and completely you answer the questions
- how well you support your ideas with examples
- how interesting and enjoyable your writing is
- how correctly you use grammar, spelling, punctuation, and paragraphs



Whenever you see this symbol, be sure to plan and check your writing.

Acknowledgments: CTB is indebted to the following for permission to use material in this book:

Adaptation of “Edith Wilson: The Secret President” by Shari Lyn Zuber from *Cobblestone’s* March 1992 issue: First Ladies, copyright © 1992, Cobblestone Publishing Company, 30 Grove Street, Suite C, Peterborough, NH 03458. Photograph of Woodrow and Edith Wilson at his desk and photograph of Edith Wilson, copyright © 1992 by The Woodrow Wilson House: An historic site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Reprinted by permission of the publisher and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Part 2: Listening

Directions

In this part of the test, you will listen to two articles: “Renaissance Cookery” and “Legacy of the Renaissance.” Then you will answer some questions to show how well you understood what was read.

You will listen to the articles twice. As you listen carefully, you may take notes on the articles anytime you wish during the readings. You may use these notes to answer the questions that follow. Use the space on Pages 2 and 3 for your notes.

These articles are about the Renaissance, a period of time in which an artistic and intellectual reawakening took place. The Renaissance began in Italy and lasted from about the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries. Here are the spellings of some Italian words and names included in the articles that may be unfamiliar to you:

- Bologna
- Genoa
- pesto
- panna
- minestrone
- Andrea Palladio
- Monticello

Go On

Notes

“Renaissance Cookery”



Notes

“Legacy of the Renaissance”

STOP

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In the chart below, describe one way that a Renaissance dinner was different from a meal served today, and one way it was similar. Use information from “Renaissance Cookery” in your answer.

	Different	Similar	

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“Legacy of the Renaissance” attributes this quotation to Samuel Johnson:

A man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority.

Use information from “Legacy of the Renaissance” to explain what the quotation means and why Samuel Johnson held this view.

How does the Renaissance remain an influence in today's world? Use information from both articles to support your answer.



Go On

Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for Number 29 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Your writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 7 and 8.



Do NOT turn this page until you are told to do so.

STOP

Part 1: Reading

Directions

In this part of the test, you are going to read an article called “American First Ladies” and another article called “Edith Wilson: The Secret President.” You will answer questions and write about what you have read. You may look back at the articles as often as you like.

Go On



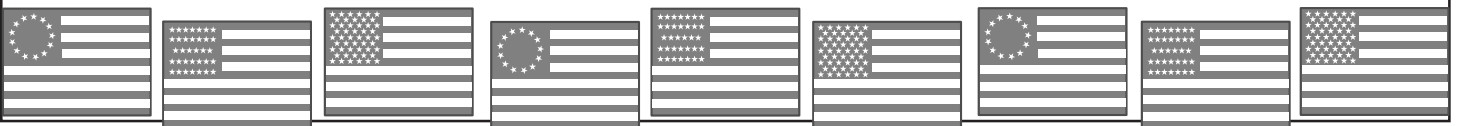
American First Ladies

When George Washington was elected the first President of the United States, there was much discussion about the role his wife, Martha, should play. “Lady Washington,” the people began to call her. But Martha did not want to be treated like royalty or aristocracy. She decided that she would be an equal partner with her husband on social occasions. By doing this, she established a very important role for the President’s wife—“hostess for the nation.”

That role was expanded by James Madison’s wife, Dolley Madison, the first woman to be called “First Lady.” During the early 1800s, women had few rights. They could not vote or take part in politics. Married women were not even allowed to own property or make a will. A woman’s education was usually limited to homemaking skills. But Dolley Madison came from a Quaker family whose community opened its schools to boys *and* girls. Dolley became an outgoing woman with strong opinions, whose influence on her husband was well known. She was also considered to be the center of society in Washington, D.C., hosting receptions at which politicians and diplomats gathered along with the general public. After her death in 1849, Dolley was honored by President Zachary Taylor, who called her “truly our First Lady for half a century.”

Many other First Ladies had strong influences on their husbands, but a woman who really made the job her own was Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Just two days after her husband’s inaugural in 1933, Eleanor held the first press conference ever given by a presidential wife. During FDR’s presidency, Eleanor was always there with suggestions, proposals, and ideas. Sharecroppers,¹ garment workers, students, and other people whom she had encountered on her travels were brought to Washington to meet the President.

¹ **sharecropper:** tenant farmer



Travel she did—some 38,000 miles in her initial year as First Lady. FDR, weakened by polio, which he had contracted in 1921, was not able to travel easily. Eleanor became the “eyes and ears” of her husband, often making fact-finding trips for him. She saw and inspected everything from prisons to hospitals during those years of the Great Depression.² She also traveled across the country on lecture tours, wrote articles for magazines, and even wrote a daily newspaper column. During World War II, she became FDR’s ambassador to the troops overseas. After her husband’s death in 1945, Eleanor was appointed U.S. delegate to the United Nations, where she helped to create the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

To honor Eleanor Roosevelt’s life of service, President Harry Truman called her “The First Lady of the World.” At her funeral in 1962, Eleanor Roosevelt’s remarkable career was summed up by former presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson: “She would rather light a candle than curse the darkness.”

² **the Great Depression:** a period of tremendous economic hardship in the United States and other countries during the 1930s.

Some Famous First Ladies in History



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division (LC-USZ62-3833 DLC)

Martha Washington (1731–1802)



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division (LC-USZ62-38173 DLC)

Dolley Madison (1768–1849)



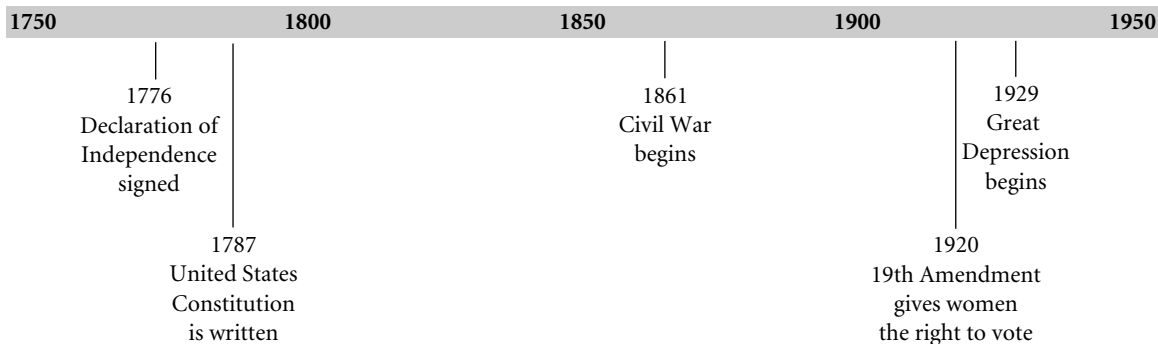
Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division (LC-USZ62-25838 DLC)

Edith Wilson (1872–1961)



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division (LC-USZ62-25812 DLC)

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884–1962)



Go On

How was Martha Washington’s role as First Lady different from that of Eleanor Roosevelt? Use information from “American First Ladies” in your answer.

Edith Wilson

The Secret President

by Shari Lyn Zuber

Frantically, the presidential train sped back to the nation's capital, covering seventeen hundred miles in two days. On board, a gravely ill Woodrow Wilson was being attended by his physician and his devoted wife, Edith. Wilson had been on a nationwide tour, hoping to win American support for a United States-led global peace organization called the League of Nations.

Ahead of Mrs. Wilson lay the monumental¹ tasks of nursing her partially paralyzed husband back to health out of the national spotlight, and convincing a doubting Congress that the President was still fit to govern. If any First Lady was up to the challenge, it was Edith Bolling Galt Wilson.

Born in Wytheville, Virginia, on October 15, 1872, Edith grew up in a large, poor southern family. Able to go away to school for only two years, she obtained most of her education from her invalid² grandmother, whom she tended.

At age eighteen, she met Norman Galt in Washington, D.C., while visiting her sister. After a four-year courtship, they married in 1896. Galt died suddenly in 1908, leaving her the family-owned jewelry shop. With the aid of the store's manager, Edith learned how to run the business.



ABOVE: Edith Wilson was a constant companion and able assistant to her husband, President Woodrow Wilson.

In March 1915, while visiting her friend Helen Bones (President Wilson's cousin) at the White House, she met the President. Edith became a regular guest at the White House, and within two months, Wilson proposed. When she accepted his proposal in September 1915, the President's advisors objected. The following year was an election year, and they believed that Wilson would lose the election if he remarried.

Despite these doubts, the couple wed on December 18, 1915. Although Edith had no political interests before her marriage, the President immediately took her into his confidence, seeking her opinion on national and international affairs. Knowing Edith's influence, officials often

consulted her before presenting their ideas to the President. In the end, the public accepted Wilson's marriage, and he was reelected.

The war in Europe was going badly for the Allies, and the United States was slowly being drawn into the conflict. Increased German submarine attacks on American ships could no longer be tolerated. On April 6, 1917, the United States entered World War I.

¹ **monumental:** impressively large

² **invalid:** disabled by illness or injury

Go On

During the war, Edith worked as a Red Cross volunteer, sewing and knitting clothing for soldiers and providing food and conversation for servicemen at the local canteen. She kept a flock of sheep on the White House lawn, freeing the gardeners for wartime jobs. She sold the wool and gave the money to the Red Cross.

As First Lady, she participated in Liberty Loan drives, christened newly built ships, and entertained foreign ministers. She also learned to decode secret messages coming into the White House that conveyed vital war plans.

Following the Allied victory in November 1918, President and Mrs. Wilson sailed to France to bring “a just and lasting peace” to the world. Edith worked hand in hand with her husband to convince the leaders of the Versailles Conference to accept Wilson’s Fourteen Points peace treaty, which included the establishment of a League of Nations.

Getting the isolationists³ in Congress to ratify⁴ the treaty proved to be difficult. The President believed that the American people would agree with his vision of peace, so he decided to appeal directly to them. In the searing heat of September 1919, the presidential train zigzagged across the country, with Wilson traveling eight thousand miles and making forty speeches in twenty-two days. The grueling schedule took its toll on the president, and the remainder of the tour was canceled.

On October 2, 1919, Wilson suffered a stroke and was partially paralyzed. Edith suggested to the doctors that her husband resign from office, but they told her that doing so might kill him. They advised her, however, that he must not be burdened by government problems. Edith felt she was the only person who knew the President’s mind and could act as he would wish.

For the next six weeks, she became the power behind the presidency, although she claimed, “I, myself, never made a single decision regarding the disposition⁵ of public affairs. The only decision that was mine was what was important and what was not.”

Government officials and the public were never told how ill the President was. Cabinet members, members of Congress, and ambassadors who

wished to speak to the President had to consult Edith first. Whenever possible, she convinced an official to solve a problem within his own department. Somehow she always found a clever way to preserve the President’s secret.



Speculation about the President’s illness and questions about who was running the country swept the nation. Wilson’s opponents in Congress and the press claimed the United States was a “petticoat government” run by an “acting ruler.” Yet some journalists admired her, claiming, “No suggestion is heard that Mrs. Wilson is not proving a capable ‘President.’ ”

Although Edith was successful in keeping the government functioning, she was unable to get Congress to approve the League of Nations. The President resumed limited activities by mid-November, but Edith continued to shield him from his political enemies until he left office in March 1921.

Even after her husband’s death in February 1924, Edith Wilson continued to fight for the League. Finally, after World War II, President Wilson’s dream was fulfilled when the United Nations was created.

In her final years, she worked for any cause that honored her husband’s memory. She also remained active in the Democratic Party until her death on December 28, 1961.

Throughout the past two hundred years, many First Ladies have indirectly influenced the presidency, but Edith Wilson was the only one who felt she had to take the reins of power into her own hands. Yet her motives were completely unselfish. She believed that “Woodrow Wilson was first my beloved husband whose life I was trying to save.”

³ **isolationist:** believer in noninterference in world politics

⁴ **ratify:** approve

⁵ **disposition:** arrangement

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Complete the chart below by writing three character traits that best describe Edith Wilson. Then provide a detail from the article to support each trait.

Character Trait	Supporting Detail
1.	
2.	
3.	

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Is “Edith Wilson: The Secret President” an appropriate title for this article? Why or why not? Use details from the article to support your answer.

Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for Number 33 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Your writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 19 and 20.



Part 2: Writing

*D*irections

In this part of the test, you will be writing an original essay. Follow the directions on the next two pages and begin your writing on Page 23.

Go On

Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for Number 34 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Your writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 23 through 25.



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Book 2
English Language Arts
Grade 8

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