

OCCT PREPARATION AND PRACTICE WORKBOOK



**Aligned with the Oklahoma
Reading Standards and Objectives**

GLENCOE LANGUAGE ARTS

GRADE 8

This helpful workbook provides

- **An introduction to the formats of Grade 8 Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests in reading and in writing**
- **Test-taking strategies and tips**
- **Preparation and practice lessons**
- **Full-length reading and writing practice tests**

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INTRODUCTION

The **Grade 8 Reading Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test (OCCT)** assesses your vocabulary skills, your reading comprehension skills, your knowledge of literary forms, and your ability to conduct research and organize information. The **Grade 8 Writing OCCT** assesses your ability to write appropriately in response to a writing prompt.

This workbook is designed to help you prepare for the Reading OCCT and the Writing OCCT. There are two main sections in this book—the Lessons and the Practice Test.

THE LESSONS

Lessons 1 through 15—Reading

Each of these lessons contains the types of multiple-choice questions—related to vocabulary, reading comprehension, literary forms, or research—that you may see on the Reading OCCT.

Each lesson has two sections:

- One or two short reading selections, each followed by a multiple-choice question and a step-by-step process for answering the question
- Two more selections along with questions to allow you to practice using the step-by-step process

Lessons 16 through 18—Writing

Each of these lessons focuses on one of the three crucial stages of writing an essay in response to a prompt—prewriting, drafting, and revising and editing.

Each lesson has two sections:

- A stage in the writing process and skills to use in completing the stage
- A writing prompt and space for a response so you can practice the appropriate skills in each stage of the writing process

THE PRACTICE TEST

The Practice Test is similar to the Reading OCCT and the Writing OCCT. Taking it gives you an opportunity to try out everything that you learned as you worked through the exercises. It contains a reading section and a writing section.

Completing the Lessons and the Practice Test in this workbook will help you develop strategies that are essential for any student. Having had this preparation, you will know just what to expect on the tests, and you will be ready to succeed when you take the Reading and Writing OCCT!



Test-Taking Tips and Techniques



TEST-TAKING TECHNIQUE: READING ACTIVELY

On the Reading OCCT you will be asked to read stories, essays, articles, and poems and to answer multiple-choice questions that test your comprehension of these selections.

You may think that the best approach to taking the test is to read each selection slowly, trying to absorb every detail, and then to read and answer the questions that follow the selection. This is not the best way to take the test. You will make better use of your time by using the following approach:

PREVIEW THE QUESTIONS

- Preview, or look over, the questions before you read the selection.
- See how many questions and what kinds of questions you must answer once you have finished reading the selection.

READ THE SELECTION

- Read to find the main ideas.
- Pay close attention to the title and to the first and last sentences of paragraphs.
- As you read a paragraph, ask yourself, “What is this paragraph about?”
Jot down a brief note or label—*not* a complete sentence—in the margin to show the main idea of the paragraph.
- As you read the selection, ask yourself, “What is the main idea of this selection?”
Underline key words—words that best state the main idea. Those key words are often repeated in the selection.

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

- Read each multiple-choice question and the four answer choices carefully.
- Cross out any answer choices that you know are wrong.
- Underline key words in the question and the remaining answer choices; then use your notes, labels, and underlining to find related text in the selection.
- Review the related text to find the information that will help you answer the question.
- Reread the remaining answer choices and cross out any others that you know are wrong.
- Choose the best answer from the remaining answer choices.

Always use the **process of elimination** to select the best answer choice for any questions that are difficult for you.

TEST-TAKING TECHNIQUE: PROCESS OF ELIMINATION

Most multiple-choice questions on tests have four answer choices. Only one of the choices is the *best* answer. When finding that answer is difficult, a technique called the **process of elimination** can help. Figuring out which three answer choices are wrong is just as good as figuring out which one answer choice is correct.

Here is an example of how the **process of elimination** works. Imagine that you are a contestant on a game show. The host asks you the following question: “What is the capital of the country Nepal?” If you answer correctly, you will win one million dollars. You are given the following four possible answers:

- Tokyo
- Cairo
- Beijing
- Kathmandu

Do you know the capital of Nepal? Even if you don’t, you can still win the money! Use the process of elimination by completing the following two steps:

Step 1 Eliminate the answer choices that you THINK are probably wrong.

Step 2 Choose from the remaining answer choices. The fewer answer choices you have to choose from, the better chance you have of picking the correct answer.

Let’s see how it works. Which cities above do you know are NOT the capital of Nepal? You may know that *Tokyo* is the capital of Japan, so it’s probably not also the capital of Nepal. *Cairo* is the capital of Egypt and *Beijing* is the capital of China, so neither of these is likely to be the correct answer. That leaves you with only *Kathmandu*. Kathmandu is probably the capital of Nepal. Even if you didn’t know the capital of Nepal, the process of elimination makes you a millionaire!

Now let's see how the process of elimination can help on a question you might see on the Reading OCCT. Use the example and the steps below to learn how to apply this test-taking strategy.

Laura stormed up the stairs and through the front door. She slammed the door behind her and threw her backpack onto the living room sofa. Her mother put down her newspaper and looked up in surprise. "That Roberta is so irksome!" Laura proclaimed in a loud voice.

1▶ In the passage, the word irksome means

- A kind.
- B nervous.
- C annoying.
- D friendly.

Step 1

Read the question and answer choices. This will help you know what to look for as you read the passage. The question asks you to look for the word *irksome* in the passage.

Step 2

Read the passage carefully. In the passage, Laura is obviously upset. You read that she "stormed up the stairs" and "slammed the door." Obviously Roberta has done something that Laura doesn't like.

Step 3

Review the answer choices. From your work in Step 2, you know that Laura would probably not describe Roberta as *kind* or *friendly*. Answer choices A and D must be wrong. Eliminate them.

Step 4

The process of elimination has helped, because you now have only two answer choices instead of four. Even if you don't know what *irksome* means, you have a much better chance of picking the correct answer. Of the remaining answer choices, which one seems like the best answer? Reread the passage and think about what Laura is feeling. Because she seems annoyed, answer choice C, *annoying*, is probably the best answer.

Remember to use the process of elimination on every multiple-choice question that you can't answer right away. Even if you can eliminate only one answer choice, you have increased your chances of choosing the correct answer choice.

OTHER TEST-TAKING TECHNIQUES

If you know the format of the Reading OCCT and Writing OCCT and are familiar with the types of questions you will likely find on these tests, you will probably do better on the tests. You can prepare for the tests in several ways.

BEFORE THE TEST

Here are a few things you can do before taking the Reading and Writing OCCT to help you prepare for the tests and avoid anxiety.

- **Know the test dates.** Ask your teacher to provide you with test dates for the Reading and Writing OCCT. Record the dates in a personal calendar.
- **Know why you are taking the tests.** Ask your teacher to explain the purpose of the OCCT.
- **Get a good night's sleep before each test.** Being tired on test days will slow you down and make it harder for you to concentrate.
- **Eat a normal breakfast and lunch on test days.** Eating too little or too much may make you feel sluggish during the tests.

DURING THE TEST

Here are a few things you can do during the OCCT to help you improve your performance.

- **Focus on the test.** You will be taking the OCCT in a room full of other students. Try not to be distracted by them.
- **Read the test instructions carefully.** Look at the sample questions provided in the Instructions of the Reading and Writing Tests. They will tell you what the questions will be like and how to mark your answers.
- **Use all the time you have.** If you finish a section of the OCCT early, reread the last items in that section and check your answers.



Lessons



Lesson

1

Words in Context

“She was distressed to see that the dog had eaten her homework.” If you didn’t know what the word “distressed” meant, you could figure it out by looking at the rest of the sentence (if a dog ate *your* homework, you’d be unhappy or upset). When you’re solving a word’s meaning using the clues—the words—around it, you’re looking at **words in context**. Use the examples to learn how to answer vocabulary-in-context questions.

SUPER SALE!

Sizzling Summer Savings

SUPER SALE!

Shopping got you down? Don’t sweat it. Find everything you need at Cooper’s Department Store. While the temperatures rise, our prices dive. This week only—30% off all women’s wear. Choose from a wide array of blouses, skirts, and shoes. Hot savings. Cool fashions. Unbeatable selection. Cooper’s—the store with more.

1 ▶ **What does the word array mean in this selection?**

- A** style
- B** value
- C** color
- D** range

Step 1

What phrases or sentences are context clues that provide hints about the meaning of array?

Step 2

Plug each answer choice into the sentence in place of array. For each answer choice, ask yourself, “Does this sentence make sense?”

Step 3

Which answer choice makes the most sense? Why?

When we got home after two weeks of vacation, I was hungry, so the first thing I did was open the refrigerator. I can't even describe the pungent odor that burst out at me.

"Ewwww, Mom!" I gasped. "This smell could practically burn my nose off!"

My mother rushed in from the living room. "Oh, no! We forgot to toss out the leftovers before we went on vacation. Quick! Help me take this awful stuff out to the garbage."

I held my nose with one hand as I carried the bag of offending food at arm's length in front of me with the other. "Does this mean I can order a pizza?" I asked my mother, half-teasing.

"Sure," she replied, "but while we are waiting for it, we need to power wash this refrigerator!"

2 ▶ Another word that means most nearly the same as *pungent* is

- A** pleasant. **C** sour.
B unusual. **D** old.

Step 1

Read the selection carefully. Underline the sentence that has the vocabulary word in it.

Step 2

What phrases or sentences are context clues that provide hints about the meaning of *pungent*?

Step 3

Read the answer choices again and think about how you would describe the smell of spoiled food. Eliminate the answer choices that are not supported by the context clues you found in Step 2.

Step 4

Plug each remaining answer choice into the sentence in place of *pungent*. For each answer choice, ask yourself, "Does this sentence make sense?"

Step 5

Which answer choice makes the most sense? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answer that most nearly matches the underlined word.

A Gift to the Blind

A Childhood Accident

- 1 Louis Braille was born in 1809 in the small town of Coupvray, France, where his father was a leather worker. Louis has been described as an exceptionally curious child. At age three, curious Louis slipped and fell while playing with an awl, a sharp-pointed tool. As a result of this accident, one of the child's eyes was damaged. Later, an infection in his blind eye spread to his healthy eye. By age four, Louis had lost the sight in both of his eyes.

School Days

- 2 Louis attended the local school in Coupvray with the sighted children. He learned by listening. Both the students and the instructors there expected that Louis's blindness would make him a mediocre student. However, he soon soared to the head of the class.
- 3 Later Louis attended a school for blind students. While he was there, a French soldier visited the school to share a writing system that he had developed for use on the battlefield. Called "night writing," the raised-dot system could be deciphered in the dark by passing a finger over the dots and feeling them. The school was reluctant to adopt the soldier's system, but Louis was intrigued. Led again by his curiosity, Louis studied the system intensely. Within a few years, he developed his own system.

The Braille System

- 4 The system of writing created by Louis Braille relies on characters formed by a rectangular cell containing one to six raised dots in two columns of three dot spaces each. Braille characters are assigned to letters of the alphabet and to punctuation marks. Other characters indicate symbols, capitalization, and numerals. Because the cells are generally larger than printed letters, a braille book often contains many more pages than the same book in regular type. For example, a braille dictionary can fill an entire bookshelf. Yet, for all of its bulk, the writing system is simple, streamlined, and full of subtle complexities. The braille system enables visually impaired people to read and write and, most important, to take control of their lives.

- 1** What does the word awl mean in this selection?
- A** a harness
 - B** a tool
 - C** leather
 - D** store
- 2** What does the word mediocre mean in this selection?
- A** hardworking
 - B** confused
 - C** ordinary
 - D** organized
- 3** A phrase that means the same as the word decipher is
- A** to figure out.
 - B** to identify the location of something.
 - C** to sleep soundly.
 - D** to retaliate.
- 4** What does the word reluctant mean in this selection?
- A** eager
 - B** lucky
 - C** lenient
 - D** hesitant
- 5** Another word that means the same as the word intrigued in this selection is
- A** hopeful.
 - B** disagreeable.
 - C** fascinated.
 - D** frightened.
- 6** What does the word enables mean in this selection?
- A** teaches
 - B** prevents
 - C** postpones
 - D** helps

Lesson

2

Purpose for Reading

People read for many reasons—to get information, to learn, to be entertained. You'll want to determine your **purpose for reading**—are you looking for facts, advice, or just something frightening or funny? Knowing your purpose is the first step in finding what's right for you. Use these examples to learn how to answer questions about the purpose for reading a selection.

Great Guacamole Dip

4 peeled avocados	salt
1 peeled yellow onion	paprika
1 medium-sized tomato	tortilla chips
hot pepper sauce	

Wash the tomato. Slice the avocados around the middle, separate the halves, and remove the pits. Scoop out the avocado flesh and mash it with a fork. Finely chop the onion and tomato. Mix the avocados, onion, and tomato together in a bowl. Add a pinch of salt and hot pepper sauce to suit your taste. Sprinkle with paprika. Serve with tortilla chips.

1 ▶ **The purpose for reading this selection would be to learn how to**

- A** pick, peel, and pit avocados.
- B** make a snack.
- C** peel and finely chop yellow onions.
- D** grow avocado plants from pits.

Step 1

How would you use the information in this selection?

Step 2

Which answer choices are not supported by what you wrote?

Step 3

Which choice is the best purpose for reading this selection?

Her Life's Work

Helen rushed through the front door and bounded into the kitchen, where her father was preparing dinner. Dropping her backpack, she greeted him breathlessly, saying, “Hi, Dad, I’ve decided that I am going to be an astronomer.”

“Oh, are you?” her father asked.

“Yes, definitely, and I am starting tonight, right after dinner,” Helen declared.

“Okay,” said her father, smiling to himself. “Just finish your homework before spending all night in the backyard with your telescope.”

He chuckled as he thought of all the careers that Helen had already planned—firefighting, archaeology, architecture—and now astronomy. He was proud of her. He loved her enthusiasm, her ambition, her willingness to try new things. He would have to wait, but he looked forward to discovering what Helen would ultimately choose as her life’s work.

2 ► The main purpose for reading this selection is to

- A learn ways to avoid doing homework.
- B learn how to become an astronomer.
- C gather information about the night sky.
- D enjoy an interesting story.

Step 1

Read the selection carefully. Consider how you would use the information in this selection. Did the selection entertain you, inform you, or convince you of an opinion?

Step 2

Now look at the answer choices. Use your answer in Step 1 to decide which answer choices are definitely incorrect.

Step 3

Which remaining answer choice is the best purpose for reading this selection? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

Winter Weekend

Jeanne is fourteen years old. During their winter vacation, Jeanne and her family will spend a weekend at a resort. Here is the flier that the resort sent.

High Top Mountain Resort—First in Family Fun Barnstead, Montana

Schedule of Activities

You'll never be bored at our resort. Ski, snowboard, sled, skate, toboggan, swim, and more. Fantastic activities for every age:

Snowflakes: Ages 3–5 Flurries: Ages 6–10 Blizzards: Ages 11–16 Adults

Day 1

Orientation/Buffer Luncheon—11:30 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. Spend the rest of the day exploring the facilities. A fireside get-together will be held in the evening.

Morning

Afternoon

Evening

Day 2

Snowflakes—sledding

Snowflakes—skating

Movie

Flurries—skating

Flurries—sledding

Blizzards—ski lessons

Blizzards—ski lessons

Adults—free

Adults—dance lessons

Day 3

Cross-country ski lessons

Snowboarding lessons

Games

- 1 **Jeanne's purpose for reading this information would most likely be to**
- A learn how to get to the resort.
 - B get a job at the resort.
 - C decide on her plans for the weekend.
 - D find out where her friends will be.

- 2 **The purpose of the flier is to let readers know**
- A where the resort is located.
 - B that most adult and youth activities will be separate.
 - C that pets are not allowed.
 - D what activities are available and when they are scheduled.

North American Pioneer Houses

- 1 Europeans who settled in North America used local materials and unique construction techniques to build houses of adobe, wood, and sod.
- 2 In the 1600s, Spanish settlers in New Mexico built homes made of adobe bricks. Spaniards had learned how to make adobe bricks from the people of North Africa. New Mexico's similar hot, dry climate enabled the settlers to make bricks from a mixture of mud, sand, clay, and straw.
- 3 In the 1700s, Swedish immigrants introduced the first log houses to North America. The style was quickly adopted by people on the forested frontier, where there was a ready supply of wood. Log houses were built on stone foundations to help prevent rot and termite infestation.
- 4 Because the prairie had few trees, settlers on the Great Plains in the latter half of the 1800s built their houses with blocks of sod. These blocks of prairie topsoil were unusually tough because they were packed with the dense roots of prairie grasses. Sod houses were warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Many sod houses had no windows. They were simple to build, but they did not last long. Most families stayed in sod houses only until they could build houses of wood (transported from elsewhere).
- 5 Despite the differences between these types of houses, there were similarities in their construction. All the houses were built with simple tools and local materials by friends and neighbors working together.

3 The purpose for reading this selection would be to learn

- A** about Spanish and Swedish settlers.
- B** about the building styles of early settlers.
- C** how to build a sod house.
- D** how to cooperate with friends and neighbors.

4 Who would benefit most from reading this selection?

- A** a builder of custom homes
- B** an exterminator who treats homes for termite infestation
- C** a student who needs to write a report on types of houses built by early settlers
- D** a reenactor who wants to live like an early settler on the Great Plains of North America

Lesson
3

Making Predictions

It's the fourth quarter of the football game. The score's 44 to 7. Who's going to win? When you guess what's likely to happen, you're making a **prediction**. When you read, pay attention to the writer's clues—what you're told about a character's feelings, thoughts, and actions. Based on what you've read, you can guess what a character would do. Use the examples to learn how to answer questions about predictions.

from **Oliver Twist**

by CHARLES DICKENS

Oliver, being left to himself in the undertaker's shop, set the lamp down on a workman's bench and gazed timidly about him with a feeling of awe and dread, which many people a good deal older than he will be at no loss to understand. An unfinished coffin on black trestles, which stood in the middle of the shop, looked so gloomy and death-like that a cold tremble came over him every time his eyes wandered in the direction of the dismal object: from which he almost expected to see some frightful form slowly rear its head to drive him mad with terror.

1▶ The reader might predict that

- A** Oliver will learn how to make coffins.
- B** Oliver will learn to like this place.
- C** Oliver will find the undertaker's shop humorous.
- D** Oliver will leave as soon as he can.

**Step
1**

What key words in the selection show how Oliver feels?

**Step
2**

Considering how Oliver feels, which answer choice do you think is most likely to happen? Why?

Far From Home

I was too old to be homesick! After all, I was thirteen! When I saw my friend Juanita sitting at a picnic table, I was relieved to know that she was also at camp. Then I remembered that this was her third year at this camp, so she probably was not homesick.

“Hey, Brenda,” Juanita said, waving at me to come and sit with her. “How do you like camp so far?”

I hung my head, feeling embarrassed. “I like it, but I really miss home. I even miss my brother! You probably don’t feel that way, though.”

“Not this year,” Juanita said, “but my first year here I was so homesick that I called home every other day. Hey, that’s an idea! Why don’t you call home right now? I’ll wait for you, and then we can go to lunch together.”

I felt a smile coming on, my first smile in two days. When my mother answered the phone, I told her, “I really miss home, Mom, but I think everything will be okay.”

2 ► From the information in the selection, a reader might assume that

- A Brenda will be overcome by homesickness and will go home.
- B Brenda will feel less homesick and will spend some time with Juanita.
- C Brenda will go to lunch with Juanita every day.
- D Brenda will call home every day.

Step 1

What key word shows how Brenda feels in the beginning of the selection?

What key words show how Brenda feels at the end of the selection?

Step 2

In your own words, what do you think will happen to Brenda in the next few days?

Step 3

Now look at the answer choices. Which choices are definitely incorrect?

Step 4

Which remaining answer choice do you think is most likely to happen? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

Tryout Jitters

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 This was the day for tryouts for the school musical! I couldn't wait!</p> <p>2 When I got to my locker, I was so nervous that Sashia, my locker mate, had to open it for me. "Don't be nervous, Lucy," she said. "You'll do fine."</p> <p>3 I headed down the hallway to the auditorium. A friendly voice called, "Hey, Lucy!" It was Andrew. He had played the lead in our play last year. His music was under his arm.</p> <p>4 "Andrew, what are you going to sing?"</p> <p>5 "'Trouble,' from <i>The Music Man</i>. I practiced the song all weekend," he laughed. "What about you?"</p> <p>6 "'Climb Every Mountain,' from <i>The Sound of Music</i>."</p> <p>7 "Wow!" Andrew replied. "You must be really good to sing that song!"</p> <p>8 "Well, my voice teacher said it was difficult, but she thinks I can handle it. I thought so, too, but I'm very nervous!"</p> <p>9 "I get nervous before auditions too," he replied. "But I just remember to take deep breaths and try to enjoy the music."</p> | <p>10 "Thanks, Andrew," I replied, but still I felt a little shaky.</p> <p>11 Mr. Getz called each of us to the stage to sing. When Andrew sang "Trouble," he did a great job.</p> <p>12 Then it was my turn. I walked up, remembered to have fun, and smiled at the audience. I took a deep breath and got ready to sing. I wasn't nervous anymore. It was show time!</p> <p>1 From the information in the selection, a reader might predict that Lucy will</p> <p>A be too frightened to finish her song.</p> <p>B sing her best at the audition.</p> <p>C decide that she does not want to be in the play.</p> <p>D audition for a different play.</p> <p>2 From the information in the selection, a reader might assume that Andrew will</p> <p>A decide not to perform in this play.</p> <p>B not be given a role in this play.</p> <p>C learn how to sing "Climb Every Mountain."</p> <p>D get a role in this play.</p> |
|---|---|

Batter Up

- 1 It was a hot and dusty afternoon. The summer drought had left the softball field nearly brown and the grass crisp. Bright Owl had been the best batter for her middle school's softball team, but now, as she assessed the bleak field, she felt uncertain. She had thought playing high school softball would not be that much harder, but several of the batters from her team had struck out. This team's pitcher was formidable; she had a variety of pitches and knew the best times to use them.
- 2 While Bright Owl waited her turn to bat, she rested on the bench, giving herself a few moments to prepare her thoughts. Bright Owl had encountered pitchers like this before. She quickly glanced at the field—one runner had reached second base. Her coach had always said, "Know your opponents." Since that advice had always helped, she tried to remember how she had handled other strong pitchers. She would watch the pitcher closely, note the pitcher's tricks, review her coach's batting tips, and then—just before swinging—clear her mind and rely on her well-practiced muscles to guide her. Using this method, Bright Owl often had managed to knock the ball out of the field and into the bleachers.
- 3 Suddenly there was a loud crack. Bright Owl looked up. She realized she had been daydreaming while a gentle rain fell. The rain had ended, the sky now held small fluffy clouds, and a light breeze was blowing. While Bright Owl was distracted, her team had managed to get runners on first, second, and third. Now it was Bright Owl's turn at bat. As she left the bench, her teammates whispered, "Grand Slam. Grand Slam. Grand Slam." Bright Owl calmed herself and methodically reviewed what she had seen the pitcher do and what her old coach had told her to do. She steadied herself, gripped the bat, and tapped the plate. The rain and the breeze had refreshed her. Bright Owl lifted her eyes to meet the pitcher's glare, and then she focused.

3 The next event will most likely be that

- A the game will be canceled because of the rain.
- B the pitcher will throw a fast, difficult pitch.
- C Bright Owl's old coach will congratulate her.
- D the pitcher will use only one type of pitch for the rest of the game.

4 A reader might predict that Bright Owl will

- A quit softball.
- B learn how to pitch.
- C hit the ball.
- D join the opposing team.

Lesson

4

Drawing Conclusions

“Karen left the stadium proudly, trophy in hand.” From this sentence, you can conclude that Karen won a game or sporting event . . . and was awarded a trophy. In a story or article, authors don’t tell us everything. They expect us to **draw conclusions**—to figure things out or fill in the blanks—based on clues the author provides. Use these examples to learn how to answer questions about drawing conclusions.

A Hot Topic

Josh tried to pay attention as the tour guide explained how a cactus is able to survive in the desert with so little water. A drop of sweat rolled down Josh’s nose and fell into the sand. How could his parents listen so attentively to the tour guide? He found the topic boring, so his mind slipped back to the cool water of the motel pool in Kirklin. To Josh, nothing could feel better right then than a dip in that pool. Why, he wondered, was he standing in an overheated desert on his break from school?

Josh tried to refocus his attention as the tour guide pointed out that cacti grow so slowly in the harsh desert environment that even a modest-sized plant could be very old—maybe even a hundred years old.

Suddenly Josh remembered that he had been trying for weeks to think of a project for the school science fair. “This is it—Life in the Desert!” he thought. “Mom,” he whispered, “Do you have a pen and something to write on? I need to take some notes.”

1 ► Which of the following is the best conclusion you can draw based on the information in the selection?

- A** Josh and his family are close to home.
- B** Josh and his family live in Kirklin.
- C** Josh likes the desert.
- D** Josh and his family *don’t* live in Kirklin.

**Step
1**

What does Josh seem to be doing?

**Step
2**

Which answer choice is best supported by the details in the selection? Why?

Too Much Rain

During a typical rainfall, some rainwater evaporates, some is absorbed in the soil or in the vegetation, and some runs into rivers and streams. But during an unusually heavy rainfall, there is little time for evaporation and absorption, and the runoff becomes a flash flood. Because flash floods occur quickly and without warning, they often damage property and threaten the lives of people and animals. Floods negatively impact the spawning grounds of fish, cause soil erosion, and knock down structures in their paths. Nationwide flood damage costs millions of dollars every year.

Floods can be controlled or even prevented through the planting of trees (whose roots help prevent soil erosion) or through the construction of dams, levees, reservoirs, and floodways. However, these preventive measures don't always work. Because of unusually heavy rains in the spring of 1993, the Mississippi overran its banks, causing one of the worst floods in U.S. history.

2 ► Which of the following is the best conclusion you can draw based on the information in the selection?

- A** The Mississippi River has not flooded since 1993.
- B** Rainwater is what we drink.
- C** Living near a river or stream can be risky.
- D** Planting trees will stop flash floods.

**Step
1**

Now look at each answer choice. Does the fact that the Mississippi flooded in 1993, as stated in **A**, mean it hasn't flooded since? Is there evidence to support **B**—"rainwater is what we drink"? Can we infer **C** from the selection—living near a river can be risky? The selection notes that "Floods can be controlled or even prevented through planting of trees... However, these preventive measures don't always work." Is this proof for **D**?

**Step
2**

Which answer choice is best supported by the details in the passage? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

The Right Place

- 1 The snow and ice crunched beneath Fadra’s feet as she walked from her apartment building to the school bus stop. As she walked, she made plans for finding a job for the holidays. During her three-week break from school, she could earn extra money that her family could use.
- 2 Fadra made a mental list of the places that she could try—the music store, the new Ethiopian bakery, the antique bookseller. In her head, Fadra practiced the speech she would make: “Hi. Do you have a minute? My name is Fadra Cormel, and I was wondering if you were looking for extra help for the holiday season.” Fadra’s mind was spinning as she kept imagining doors being slammed in her face.
- 3 After school, Fadra bundled up and began her walk around town. Her pulse was racing as she approached the bakery. Inside, the smell of cookies was so sweet and rich that it made her feel nauseated. Fadra retreated hastily to the refreshing cold air of the street.
- 4 Fadra decided to try the bookseller’s shop next. Once inside, Fadra noticed a thin layer of dust on every object in the store. As she tried to muster the strength to approach the woman behind the counter, Fadra pretended to study an old book, but the dust raised by flipping through its pages aggravated her allergies and brought on a violent fit of sneezing. Out she went, back into the blustery afternoon.
- 5 The music store was her last resort. Fadra paused outside the door for a moment, remembering that she had been inside only once, as a young child, to look for an album with her father. The man in the store had told Fadra’s father that they were out of the album that she wanted. However, while Fadra was busy moping around the store, feeling disappointed, the man found the album and gave it to Fadra’s father without her noticing. When they got outside, Fadra’s father pulled the album out of his bag. Fadra listened to that album nonstop for two weeks, memorizing the lyrics of every song. She never forgot that day or the man who worked in the record store.
- 6 Fadra went inside. Music was playing in the background. The store was brightly lighted, and its checkered floor was shining. The man she remembered was behind the counter, talking excitedly with a young customer about a new jazz CD. Fadra felt good. She took a deep breath and approached the counter.

- 1 What can you conclude from the following sentence, “The snow and ice crunched beneath Fadra’s feet as she walked from her apartment building to the school bus stop”?**
- A** Fadra does not normally take the bus to school.
 - B** Fadra is thinking about getting a job.
 - C** The story takes place in the winter.
 - D** Fadra is walking slowly.
- 2 Why is Fadra’s pulse racing as she approaches the bakery?**
- A** She is out of breath from her long walk.
 - B** She wants to begin working at the bakery.
 - C** She is about to be ill.
 - D** She is nervous about asking for a job.
- 3 What tells you that Fadra is serious about getting a job?**
- A** She leaves her apartment on a cold day.
 - B** She notices a thin layer of dust on every object in the bookseller’s shop.
 - C** She tries three places, even though she finds job hunting difficult.
 - D** She keeps looking without stopping for lunch.
- 4 What can you conclude from the last paragraph?**
- A** Fadra is going to buy a new record for her father.
 - B** Fadra is going to ask the man for a job.
 - C** Fadra is tired from walking in the snow.
 - D** Fadra is relieved to be inside where it is warm.
- 5 What can you conclude about Fadra from the selection?**
- A** Fadra is nervous but determined.
 - B** Fadra is cheerful and relaxed.
 - C** Fadra is moping and disappointed.
 - D** Fadra is distracted and silly.
- 6 From the information in paragraphs 3 and 4, which of the following is a reasonable conclusion?**
- A** Fadra continues to feel nauseated from the smell of the cookies in the bakery.
 - B** Jobs at the bakery and the bookseller’s shop are not right for Fadra.
 - C** Fadra cannot find anything she wants to buy at either place.
 - D** Fadra thinks the bookseller’s shop is too cluttered.

Lesson

5

Main Idea

Whenever someone tells you the plot of a book or movie, he or she probably starts with the **main idea**—the heart of the story. When you read a passage, ask yourself, “What point is the author trying to make? What does he/she want me to understand, do, or believe?” Then sum it up in a few words. That’s the main idea. Use the examples to learn how to answer questions about the main idea of a selection.

From Tasteless to Tasty

An important factor in maintaining health is getting regular medical checkups. Another is adhering to a healthful lifestyle. This involves eating healthful food. Just about every food—from meat to mushrooms—has some health benefits. The goal is to learn to select and eat foods that build strong bones and muscles and provide sustained energy.

The meal that comes to mind when people think of healthful food is a colorless rice cake garnished with a stalk of celery. However, this is not the meal that comes to mind when people think of flavorful, satisfying food. If people don’t like the way food tastes, they won’t eat it—no matter how healthful it is.

This problem is being addressed in modern books on nutrition and health. Experts want to do away with the idea that eating a healthful diet requires a person to spend a lifetime dining on tasteless food. Their approach is to replace bland diets with healthful—but tasty—alternatives!

1 ▶ The main idea of this selection is that

- A** doctors know the most about healthful foods.
- B** healthful diets don’t have to be dull diets.
- C** healthful diets do not taste good.
- D** almost all foods have some health benefits.

Step 1

Read the selection carefully. Be sure to read the title. In your own words, write what this selection is describing.

Step 2

Which answer choices are not supported by the descriptive words you found in Step 1? _____

Step 3

Which answer choice is probably the main idea of the selection? Why? _____

In these days of refrigerators and freezers, it is hard to imagine a time when people had no way of preventing food from spoiling. Early humans learned the hard way that eating spoiled food made them ill. Therefore, whenever fresh food was available, they ate as much as they could.

Finding methods of preventing spoilage and preserving food was a slow process. Eventually people learned that food dried in the sun lasted longer than fresh food. They also discovered that salting certain foods, such as red meat and fish, preserved them. Today many methods are available for preserving food. Refrigerator and freezer units can keep certain foods fresh for great lengths of time. The airtight packaging of food cans and jars preserves food for months or years. Food may also be packaged in dried or powdered form to prevent spoilage.

2▶ Which would be the best title for this selection?

- A** Keeping Food Fresh
- B** Healthful Eating Habits
- C** A Slow Process
- D** Food for Humans

**Step
1**

Read the selection carefully. Write down in your own words what this selection is describing.

**Step
2**

Now look at the answer choices. Which answer choices are not supported by what you wrote in Step 1?

**Step
3**

Which remaining answer choice is probably the best for this selection? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

Front Range Frenzy

- 1 In an area along the foothills of Colorado’s Rocky Mountains called the Front Range, more and more countryside is being developed for residential use. Residential expansion in the Front Range is rapid but not well planned. Traffic between cities is now bumper to bumper at rush hours. In some areas, wells have gone dry because of the increased water demands created by the new developments.
- 2 The rapid residential development is impacting the animals of the Front Range. Numerous elk are killed by cars each year because the development is encroaching on traditional elk feeding grounds. In addition, because land in the mountains is limited, development is increasing in the valleys—critical winter habitat for many migrating mammals, especially elk and deer. Where will these animals go if their habitat is eaten up by development?
- 3 Although there are no obvious solutions to these problems, there are ways to minimize the damage caused by residential development. For example, some researchers are recommending the building of multi-unit homes as one way to decrease the amount of land required to accommodate the growing population.

1 Which of the following statements is the key concept in this selection?

- A** Development along the Front Range is causing serious problems.
- B** More and more countryside is being developed for residential use.
- C** Wells have gone dry in some areas along the Front Range.
- D** Land available for development in the mountains is limited.

2 What lesson can be learned from this selection?

- A** Hunting in valleys is a bad practice.
- B** The Front Range area is a bad place to build houses.
- C** Environmental damage can be lessened when development is properly planned.
- D** Animals should be moved from development areas.

Foot Fancy

- 1 We put them on in the morning and usually don't take them off until night. During the rest of the day, we seldom give a thought to our shoes. However, shoes have an interesting history. Shoelike coverings made their first appearance in the last Ice Age, around 10,000 B.C. At that time, people living in rugged and cold terrains began strapping animal skins around their feet to protect them. Later, during the Bronze Age (3,500 B.C. to 1,500 B.C.), Native Americans created leather moccasins, Egyptians created leather sandals, and Europeans created leather boots for the same reason—to protect their feet.
- 2 During the Middle Ages, shoes became a distinguishing feature of class status in Europe. Common people wore animal-skin wrappings or hard leather shoes, while the nobility enjoyed the comfort of cloth and soft leather around their feet. Around the fourteenth century, nobles began wearing shoes with long pointed toes, called crakowes. Shoemakers, called cobblers, constructed these shoes. They were almost impossible to walk in. Less wealthy people also wore crakowes, but their shoes had shorter points.
- 3 During the mid-1800s, shoe manufacturing shifted from cobblers to factories. This transition encouraged changes in shoe style as well. Men began to wear laced shoes, and women wore low-heeled slippers. In the late 1800s, shoe designers offered a rubber-soled sport shoe, the sneaker, for the first time.
- 4 Today shoe designers and manufacturers offer a vast array of shoes to fit every foot and suit every taste—boots, mules, slippers, sandals, platforms, sneakers, and high heels. Shoes have always been and will continue to be a vital part of every culture.

3 What is the main idea of this selection?

- A Shoes are good indicators of class status.
- B Shoes are important and they have an interesting history.
- C Celebrities and sports heroes promote certain kinds of shoes.
- D Shoes were made by hand until the mid-1800s.

4 When summarizing this selection, which of these facts would be most important?

- A Shoes play an important role in every culture.
- B In the fourteenth century, the nobility wore shoes with long pointed toes.
- C Shoes have been used by humans since the last Ice Age, about 12,000 years ago.
- D In the Bronze Age, Native Americans created leather moccasins.

Lesson

6

Supporting Details

“You won’t find a better bicycle than Brand X.” If an ad made that claim, you’d want evidence to back it up; you’d want **supporting details**. When somebody makes a claim, ask for proof or, better yet, do your own research. Be sure to find out the details—the truth—before you make any decisions. Use these examples to learn how to answer questions about supporting details.

Copying Nature

Some brilliant inventions have been inspired by things that already exist in nature. One example is Velcro. Velcro was invented by George de Mestral after he took a walk in the countryside near his home in Switzerland. When he returned home, de Mestral found that burrs—round seed coverings that have flexible, hooklike points—were stuck to his cloth jacket. The burrs gave him an idea.

De Mestral copied the design of the burr. He made two squares—one was full of tiny hooks and the other was full of tiny loops. The two squares resembled a patch of burrs and a patch of cloth. When pressed together, they formed an amazingly strong bond, yet, with enough force, they could be pulled apart again. Today, de Mestral’s fastener, Velcro, is used on items from shoes to spaceships.

1 ► Burrs stick because

- A their points grow long in the Swiss weather.
- B their round shape helps them attach to anything.
- C they have prickly, hooked tips.
- D they have tiny, clothlike loops.

Step 1

What details are given about burrs?

Step 2

Which answer choices are not supported by the details you wrote down in Step 1?

Step 3

Which answer choice is the best? Why?

From the Pen of Jane Austen

The novels of British author Jane Austen are admired for their keen representation of human strengths and weaknesses, their piercing and humorous descriptions of everyday life, and their elegant prose style.

Austen's first novel, published in 1811, was *Sense and Sensibility*. It follows the lives of two sisters with different personalities. Austen's second novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, is her most famous. Published in 1813, the novel features a feisty heroine. In 1814 Austen published *Mansfield Park*. Its heroine is mistreated by her relatives, but she manages to maintain her integrity. In *Emma*, published in 1816, the heroine's matchmaking plans come close to ruining her chances for happiness. Two more of Austen's novels were published after her death in 1817: *Northanger Abbey* (a satire of Gothic tales of romance and terror) and *Persuasion* (a book about a couple whose love survives many challenges.)

Perhaps the best testimonial to Austen's work is that almost two hundred years after her novels were written, people can still relate to their characters and plots.

2▶ Which of these statements supports the idea that people enjoy reading Austen's novels?

- A** Austen's novels feature realistic settings and larger-than-life heroes.
- B** Austen's novels are satires that are based on frightening plots.
- C** Austen's novels contain accurate descriptions of early American life.
- D** Austen's novels are well written and timeless in their appeal.

**Step
1**

Why do people enjoy reading Austen's novels? Write down the reasons.

**Step
2**

Which answer choices are not supported by the details you wrote down in Step 2?

**Step
3**

Which answer choice best supports the idea that people enjoy reading Austen's novels? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

-
- 1 Trees that you see in your yard or in the woods all grew from fertilized seeds. Once a fertilized seed germinates, the roots begin to grow. These roots perform two major functions for the new tree: they anchor it to the ground, and they absorb water and minerals through tiny hairs on their surfaces. No matter how old a tree becomes, its roots never stop growing. Root cells in the tip of each root continuously divide, creating more and more cells. When the roots are growing rapidly, a loose collection of cells (called a root cap) often develops to protect the root as it expands further into the soil.
 - 2 After the roots have begun to grow, the tree sprouts from the soil. The most substantial part of the tree is the trunk. It is composed of several layers, including a thin outer layer called the bark and three inner layers called the phloem, the cambium, and the xylem. The bark protects the tree. The phloem layer transports food in the form of sugar from the leaves to all parts of the tree. The cambium, which is inside the phloem, is the layer of growing cells. The xylem is the woody central part of the trunk. It transports water and minerals from the roots to the leaves.
 - 3 Limbs, which grow from the trunk of the tree, sprout leaves. With the aid of sunlight, the leaves use water pulled from the roots and carbon dioxide removed from the air to manufacture energy-producing carbohydrates. This process is called photosynthesis. Some of the carbohydrates are used by the leaves for energy, but most are transported to other parts of the tree.
 - 4 Once a tree has reached maturity, the reproductive cycle begins. In some trees, the reproductive organs can be found in the flowers. In needle-bearing trees, such as evergreen trees, reproductive organs are found in the cones. Regardless of the reproductive system, flowers or cones are fertilized by means of wind, animals, or insects bringing sex cells together.

- 1 Details in paragraph 2 support which of these ideas?**
- A** The trunk is the thin outer layer of a tree.
 - B** The cambium alone causes a tree to grow.
 - C** The xylem transports fluids to the leaves from the roots.
 - D** The tree gets carbon dioxide from the air.
- 2 Which of these statements does not support the idea that the trunk is the most important part of the tree?**
- A** The trunk supports branches from which energy-producing leaves sprout.
 - B** The trunk is anchored by the roots, which absorb water and minerals from the soil.
 - C** The outer layer of the trunk, the bark, protects the tree.
 - D** The three inner layers of the trunk nourish the tree and help it grow.
- 3 Details in paragraph 3 support all of these ideas except**
- A** carbohydrates provide energy for many parts of a tree.
 - B** photosynthesis takes place in a tree's limbs.
 - C** photosynthesis takes place in the presence of sunlight.
 - D** energy for growth is produced in a tree's leaves.
- 4 Which of these details would be least important to include in a summary of this selection?**
- A** A tree's leaves use carbon dioxide, water, and sunlight to create energy.
 - B** A tree's roots absorb water and minerals from the soil.
 - C** A tree's limbs support its leaves and flowers or cones.
 - D** A tree's trunk provides protection, growth, and food and energy transportation.

Lesson

7

Fact and Opinion

Fact: something you can prove. **Opinion:** what someone believes. It's important to understand the difference between **fact and opinion**. In judging information, always ask, "Is that something you believe or do we know it to be true?" If you mistake opinion for fact, you could reach the wrong conclusions. Use the examples to learn how to answer questions about facts and opinions.

Here's to Goats!

Around the world, many people raise goats. Goats can thrive in a wide variety of climates from deserts to mountains. Goats are valued not only for their meat and skin but also for their milk. Goat's milk and the cheese made from goat's milk taste wonderful! They taste much better than cow's milk and the cheese made from cow's milk. It's no wonder goats are appreciated around the world!

1 ► Which of the following is an opinion expressed in the selection?

- A** Around the world, many people raise goats.
- B** Goats live in desert regions.
- C** Goat's milk tastes much better than cow's milk.
- D** Goats live in mountain regions.

**Step
1**

Which of the answer choices are facts (can be proven or verified)? **A**—"many people raise goats"? **B**—"goats live in desert regions"? **C**—"goat's milk tastes better than cow's milk"? **D**—"goats live in mountain regions"? You'll find that superlatives—words like *worse*, *better*, *best*—are often used when someone is judging or expressing his or her feelings . . . not stating a fact.

**Step
2**

Which answer choice is an opinion expressed in the selection?

Baseball's Major Leagues

Baseball is often called “the great American pastime.” There is nothing more fun than watching a baseball game. The first professional baseball league, the National Association of Professional Base Ball Players, was formed in 1871. It was replaced by the National League in 1875. Twenty-six years later the American League was formed. These two leagues are referred to as the “major leagues.”

There are thirty teams in the major leagues: sixteen in the National League and fourteen in the American League. Twenty-eight of the teams are in the United States, and two are in Canada. Everyone knows that the teams in the National League are much better than the teams in the American League. It doesn't really matter whether you are a National League or American League fan, though, because everybody knows that St. Louis has the best team in all of baseball.

2▶ Which of the following statements from the selection is a fact?

- A** There is nothing more fun than watching a baseball game.
- B** Everybody knows that St. Louis has the best team in all of baseball.
- C** The teams in the National League are much better than the teams in the American League.
- D** Twenty-eight of the teams are in the United States, and two are in Canada.

**Step
1**

Look at the answer choices. Words like *nothing* and *everybody* are very broad—it's difficult to prove that “everybody does X.” Words like these should put you on guard: the speaker or narrator is probably offering an opinion. Also, remember what was said on the preceding page: words like *worse*, *better*, or *best* are often used when someone is sharing their feelings or beliefs, rather than stating a fact.

**Step
2**

Which answer choice from the selection is a fact? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

On the Canyon's Rim

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 On their first trip to the Grand Canyon, Lisa and Martin were enjoying the day as they hiked in the sun and listened to their father tell them about the canyon's history.</p> <p>2 "The Grand Canyon was formed by the Colorado River, which has been carving the landscape for more than six million years. It's one of the most awe-inspiring sights on earth. The trees along this trail are piñon pines and junipers."</p> <p>3 "The scent of piñon pine is so exotic!" said their mother, inhaling deeply.</p> <p>4 "In 1869 John Wesley Powell and his crew explored the river in rowboats," their father observed.</p> <p>5 "That sounds like fun," said Lisa.</p> | <p>6 "It is now, but it wasn't when Powell did it," explained her father. "This was unexplored territory. The explorers were unprepared for the river's brutal challenges. They had no life jackets, and their heavy boats were poorly designed for the huge rapids. Worst of all, there was no turning back."</p> <p>7 The hikers had come to an overlook. "Can you see that huge motorized raft shooting the rapids?" asked their father. "Rafts like that carry tourists downriver in seven days. That's the same trip that took Powell twenty-five days."</p> <p>8 "Imagine that!" exclaimed Martin. "Powell's nightmare is now a dream vacation. Let's do <i>that</i> next year, Dad."</p> |
|---|---|

1 Which of the following statements in the selection is a **fact**?

- A The scent of piñon pine is so exotic!
- B The Grand Canyon was formed by the Colorado River.
- C Powell's nightmare is now a dream vacation.
- D [The Grand Canyon is] one of the most awe-inspiring sights on earth.

2 Which of the following statements in the selection is an **opinion**?

- A The trees along this trail are piñon pines and junipers.
- B John Wesley Powell and his crew explored the river in rowboats.
- C Rafts carry tourists downriver in seven days.
- D There was no turning back.

Camp Idlewild

Hidden Hills, Oklahoma

Dear Camper,

Congratulations on being selected as a camper for the upcoming summer at prestigious Camp Idlewild! We know you will have a great experience.

Camp Idlewild is located on eighty-seven acres in eastern Oklahoma. We have every activity a camper could wish for, including swimming, horseback riding, archery, arts and crafts, and computers. We also go on regular field trips to movies, museums, and other area attractions.

Campers stay in air-conditioned cabins, with six campers in each cabin. These cabins are far superior to the cabins found at most other camps.

Three all-you-can-eat meals are served each day. Our cooks are top-notch, so you will certainly find something you like at every meal.

Counselors at Camp Idlewild are all college students. Each counselor has had two years of experience at other camps. Counselors must also participate in Camp Idlewild's specialized training program for a week before campers arrive. You and your parents can trust that you will be in good hands!

You are among the lucky ones to have a spot at camp this year. Because most of our campers return to us year after year, we have only a few slots for new campers. This year we had two hundred applications for only fifty spots!

Once again, welcome to Camp Idlewild, the best camp west of the Mississippi! We look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely yours,

Beggs Stigler
Owner, Camp Idlewild

3 Which of these statements from the selection is a **fact**?

- A** Three all-you-can-eat meals are served each day.
- B** You are among the lucky ones to have a spot at camp this year.
- C** Camp Idlewild is the best camp west of the Mississippi.
- D** We know you will have a great experience.

4 Which of these statements from the selection is an **opinion**?

- A** Campers stay in air-conditioned cabins, with six campers in each cabin.
- B** Counselors at Camp Idlewild are all college students.
- C** We have every activity a camper could wish for.
- D** This year we had two hundred applications.

Lesson

8

Patterns of Organization

There are many ways to organize a text. You can arrange information by time (X happened first, followed by Y), cause and effect (X caused Y), problem and solution (X was a problem so we did Y), and order of importance (X is most important, then Y). The **pattern of organization** is the approach used for conveying information. Use the examples to learn how to answer questions about patterns of organization.

The Pay Off

“How lovely!” my teacher Ms. Silko exclaimed, as she approached my easel. “You’ve done a wonderful job, Kim. Your hard work has paid off,” she added, still studying my painting.

This was the first art class I’d ever taken. I was nervous when the class began, so I worked extremely hard.

Stepping back from the canvas, Ms. Silko asked in a more serious tone, “Kim, would you like to display your work at the community center?”

“That would be an honor. Thanks!” I said, beaming.

“Don’t thank me,” she laughed. “You did all the hard work.”

1▶ How has the author organized this selection?

- A order of importance
- B problem and solution
- C cause and effect
- D chronological (time) order

Step 1

Look at each answer choice. Is the most important element of the selection presented first (**A**)? Has Kim solved a problem (**B**)? Did the first action described result in another (**C**)? Or does the selection detail events in the order in which they occurred (**D**)?

Step 2

Which answer choice is the best description of the way the text is organized? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

How to Do Your Best on a Test

The big test is tomorrow. You've spent all day studying but, still, you're nervous. Is there anything else you can do? Sure. Follow these simple steps:

1. Get a good night's sleep before the test.
2. Eat a healthy breakfast.
3. Come prepared, with any supplies you'll need.
4. When you get the test, skim through it to plan your time.
5. For passages with questions, read through the questions first so you know what to look for in the passage.
6. If you're done early, check over your answers.

We can't promise you an A but, following our process, you'll be in great shape on test day.

1 These tips are presented in which type of order?

- A** cause and effect
- B** chronological
- C** problem and solution
- D** order of importance

2 When you come to a reading passage with questions, you should

- A** read the passage first.
- B** answer the questions without reading the passage.
- C** read the questions first.
- D** skip that section.

Mr. Fix-it

- 1 Carmella sat gloomily in her car. She turned the ignition key again. *Urrr. Urrr. Urrr.* Then nothing. Why wasn't the car starting?
- 2 "Engine trouble?" It was her neighbor, Mr. James.
- 3 "Yeah."
- 4 "Pop open the hood," Mr. James said. Carmella opened the hood, then joined Mr. James in front. One by one, Mr. James removed the cables leading from the distributor, checking one end, then the other. "Sounds like you're not getting electricity."
- 5 Then: "Yep." Mr. James held up the end of a cable. "See—it's corroded. Bad connection. Current couldn't get through. I'll drive you to the auto shop so you can get a new one."
- 6 Carmella smiled. "Thanks, Mr. James."

3 What problem does Carmella face?

- A She's going to be late for work.
- B She needs a new car.
- C She has a nosy neighbor.
- D Her car won't start.

4 What solution does Mr. James offer?

- A He'll drive her to all her appointments.
- B He'll take her to the store so she can buy a new cable.
- C He'll sell her a new cable.
- D He'll drive her to the store, but she'll have to walk back.

Campers' Alert

“Listen up,” the camp counselor barked. The roomful of students grew quiet.

“While you’re at Camp Wachikeechee, there are three rules you have to follow:

- “1. Most importantly, never slip on your shoes without looking in them first. You never know what might have climbed in overnight.
- “2. Never go swimming right after you’ve eaten. There are no exceptions to the ‘wait an hour before getting in the water’ rule.
- “3. Finally, if there’s a lump in your bed and it’s not yesterday’s laundry, come to me. We believe in getting close to the wildlife, as long as the wildlife doesn’t get too close to us.”

A student shyly raised her hand. The counselor nodded for her to proceed.

“What kinds of animals would we find . . . ?”

“Snuggled up on our pillow,” a boy completed.

“Raccoons. Chipmunks. Lizards.” The counselor smiled. “And snakes. Snakes love our beds.”

5 The information in this selection is presented in which type of order?

- A** chronological
- B** problem and solution
- C** order of importance
- D** cause and effect

6 If a students see a lump in his or her bed, the student should

- A** find out what it is.
- B** go to the camp counselor.
- C** tell everyone.
- D** sleep in a different bed.

Lesson

9

Genres

There are many kinds or categories of literature—each with its own rules, styles, and structure. Here are some **genres** you already know:

- Nonfiction—writing that deals with real people and experiences
- Fiction—writing about people and events invented by the author
- Poetry—literature that uses the line, not the sentence, for expression
- Drama—literature (like plays) meant to be performed for an audience

Use the examples to learn how to answer questions about literary genres.

At the Bottom of the Sea

Seafloor exploration tells geologists a great deal about the way our planet works. In the 1800s, most geologists assumed that the seafloor was a lifeless expanse of mud, sediment, and decaying remains of organisms. In the middle of the 1900s, scientists planning a trans-Atlantic telephone cable discovered that the ocean floor was made up of mountain ranges and deep valleys. Other studies have found rich stores of minerals such as iron, copper, zinc, silver, and gold and have discovered exotic bottom-dwelling creatures, many of which had never been seen before.

1 ▶ Where might a selection like this be found?

- A in a book of poetry
- B in a book of plays
- C in a magazine
- D in a local newspaper

Step 1

Read the selection carefully. Is it fiction or nonfiction?

Step 2

Which answer choice is the best? Why?

Look at Me!

Eleanor took her little brother Johnny to the park one afternoon, hoping for some time to read her new book while Johnny climbed on the jungle gym. She settled down on a bench where she could keep an eye on Johnny and opened the book. She could hardly wait to start.

“Look at me!” Johnny called from the top of the jungle gym. Eleanor looked, smiled, and tried to read again.

“Watch this, Ellie!” Johnny called again. When he was sure she was watching, Johnny hesitatingly made his way from one side of the jungle gym to the other on the horizontal ladder.

“That’s great, Johnny,” Eleanor said indifferently. She returned to her book. Just then a picture flashed into her mind of the day she had first climbed that high on the same jungle gym. She remembered how proud she had been. She remembered how wonderful it was to see her dad smiling up at her and telling her what a great job she was doing. Eleanor tucked her book into her bag.

“I think you’ve climbed higher today than I ever have, Johnny. Good work!” Eleanor called out enthusiastically as she hurried over to the jungle gym. She smiled up at her brother. “Show me what else you can do, Johnny.” Her book would have to wait. She had more important things to do right now.

2► This selection is written in the form of

- A a play.
- B how-to directions.
- C a persuasive argument.
- D a short story.

Step
1

Read the selection carefully. What is it about?

Step
2

Is it fiction or nonfiction?

Step
3

Look at your answers to Steps 1 and 2. Which answer choices can be eliminated?

Step
4

Which remaining answer choice is the best? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

Arrival

- 1 Planet X. There it was. Orange and white. A radiant wafer in the blackness of space.
- 2 Kayla stared out the portal. She could hardly believe it. After three months on the *Thylacine*, they were finally here. Now the real challenge would begin: searching an unmapped world, learning what had happened to the Ross expedition and all those archaeologists.
- 3 The spaceship neared—the planet looming, wrapped in clouds. Kayla’s wrist transmitter beeped, then spoke: “Exploratory team to the shuttle bay.” Heart thumping, Kayla left her seat. The wait was over. Duty called.

1 The selection is an example of which type of literature?

- A** an essay
- B** a myth
- C** science fiction
- D** historical fiction

2 How do you know?

- A** The selection provides factual information.
- B** The selection addresses a universal theme.
- C** The selection is about the impact of science and is set in the future.
- D** The selection is about a past period in history.

The Fox and the Grapes

There was once a fox that happened to be walking outside the walls of a vineyard. He saw a juicy, delicious bunch of purple grapes dangling over the wall. He thought to himself, “What a wonderful snack those grapes would make!” He stood on his hind legs, leaned against the wall, and craned his neck to try to reach the grapes. He was close, but the grapes still dangled just a little beyond his reach. Then he tried standing on his hind legs and jumping. He came within a whisker of reaching the grapes, but he missed and fell flat on his back on the dusty trail. This hurt his pride more than his back. He stood up, shook his head, and said, “I didn’t want those grapes anyway. They were probably sour.” With that, he trudged along on his dusty way.

- 3 Where might a selection like this be found?**
- A** in a book of myths and folktales
 - B** in a wildlife rescue guidebook
 - C** in a brochure for a state park
 - D** in an animal researcher’s notebook
- 4 All of the following reveal that this selection is a fable, except**
- A** the story teaches a lesson about human nature.
 - B** the main character speaks and acts like a human.
 - C** the story is a short, simple tale.
 - D** the story contains only one main character.

Lesson
10

Author's Purpose and Point of View

Why does someone write an article, a story, a play? What is the author trying to tell you? All authors have a distinct **purpose** and **point of view**. (Note that the author's point of view refers to his or her opinion on a subject, unlike the point of view—the first-person *I* or third-person *he*—of a narrator telling a story.) Use these examples to learn how to answer questions about an author's purpose and point of view.

On the Trail

Many people enjoy taking long walks or hiking in the woods. Because hiking is so popular, hiking trails have been set up in many places around the country. One of the most famous of these is the Appalachian Trail. This unique trail, completed in 1937, stretches all the way from Katahdin in Maine to Springer Mountain in Georgia, a distance of 2,160 miles. Many people use the trail to get away for just a day or two, but some serious hikers, known as “thru-hikers,” have spent months walking the trail from one end to the other. Along the trail, shelters where hikers can sleep are set up about a day's walk apart. Volunteers keep the trail clear and well marked so that hikers can find their way easily.

- 1▶ The author probably wrote this selection to**
- A** describe the mountains in Maine and Georgia.
 - B** communicate information about trails.
 - C** persuade hikers to walk 2,160 miles.
 - D** convince volunteers to mark the trails more clearly.

Step 1

Consider each answer choice. What is the *entire* selection about? The mountains (**A**)? The trails (**B**)? Are we urged to walk the full length of the trail (**C**)? Does the author argue that more volunteers are needed to mark the trail (**D**)? Which is the *subject* of the selection and which are just *supporting details*? What's the main idea? Remember: *trail* appears in both the title and (seven times) in the selection.

Step 2

Which answer choice best explains why the author wrote this selection? Why?

Ehu's Dream

Ehu and his family lived on the outskirts of a tiny village. Ehu had no brothers or sisters, and only rarely did he spend time with other children his age. Although Ehu loved living in the country and playing outdoors, he was lonely. He dreamed of having lots of friends or, best of all, a brother or sister.

One day at the beginning of summer, Ehu and his mother sat on the porch shucking corn for dinner. As Ehu worked, he was thinking about how his mother had changed. Lately she had been ill in the mornings and unable to eat breakfast. She seemed very tired, and she needed to rest often during the day. One day he was so worried about her that he blurted out, “Mama, is something wrong with you? Are you sick?”

His mother put her arm around him, grateful for his concern. “No, Ehu,” she smiled, “almost everyone who is going to have a baby has a little sickness early on. It happened when I was going to have you too. It’s a small price to pay for such a wonderful gift.”

“A baby! You’re going to have a BABY!” exclaimed Ehu as he hugged his mother. “And I’m going to have what I’ve always wanted—a brother—or a sister—or maybe one of each!” Ehu’s eyes took on a faraway look. In only a few months, his dream would come true. Ehu could hardly wait!

2 ► The author’s purpose in this selection is

- A** to persuade the reader to be like Ehu.
- B** to provide instructions for shucking corn.
- C** to entertain readers with a brief story.
- D** to inform readers about village life.

Step 1

Look at the question another way: Why might you reread this selection? To learn how to act more like Ehu (**A**)? To follow a step-by-step process (**B**)? To pleasantly pass the time (**C**)? Or would you reread the selection to broaden your understanding of village life (**D**)?

Step 2

Which answer choice best explains why the author wrote this selection? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

An Unlikely Pet

Would you consider keeping a skunk in your house? Probably not. Unfortunately the skunk has gotten a bad reputation because of the terrible odor it produces when frightened or attacked. But the skunk is an intelligent animal that can make a wonderful pet. Like a cat, a skunk can be taught to use a litter box and to scratch at the door to be let out. A skunk loves to be petted and enjoys snoozing in someone's lap. This does not mean that you should go out and catch a wild skunk. That would be courting disaster! However, if you are lucky enough to be able to adopt a baby skunk that has had its scent glands removed, you can expect to enjoy the company of a friendly but unusual pet.

- 1 The author's purpose in this selection is**
 - A** to describe an unsolvable problem.
 - B** to persuade readers that a skunk can make a great pet.
 - C** to explain how to catch a wild skunk.
 - D** to convince readers that a skunk makes a better pet than a cat.

- 2 The author of this selection probably**
 - A** can't stand skunks.
 - B** has a pet skunk.
 - C** has no interest in skunks.
 - D** would not go near a skunk.

- 3 Which saying best describes the author's attitude in this selection?**
 - A** One good turn deserves another.
 - B** If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.
 - C** You can't tell a book by its cover.
 - D** Think before you speak.

The Fabulous Fruit in the Perfect Package

- 1 The banana—what a fantastic fruit! People love the banana for its sweet flavor and its convenient “carrying case.” In addition, the banana’s health benefits make it a food superstar. Those monkeys really know their stuff!
 - 2 The banana’s greatest gift is potassium. The banana is jam packed with this important mineral that helps reduce blood pressure. Potassium also assists other nutrients in keeping nerves and muscles functioning and in helping the body store energy and fight off muscle cramps.
 - 3 In addition to supplying potassium, the banana provides other important health benefits. It is a significant source of fiber, which aids in digestion and helps lower cholesterol. A bit of vitamin C, which helps the body produce certain proteins and absorb iron, is also found in the banana.
 - 4 Yes, the banana is the fruit with everything—vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Perhaps instead of saying “an apple a day keeps the doctor away,” we should say “a banana a day keeps the doctor away.”
- 4 What is the author’s opinion of bananas?**
- A** Bananas should be eaten only for their nutritional value.
 - B** People eat too many bananas.
 - C** Bananas should be eaten for their taste and their nutritional value.
 - D** Doctors should tell patients to eat more bananas regularly.
- 5 The author’s purpose in this selection is**
- A** to entertain readers with a story about monkeys’ favorite food.
 - B** to discuss the benefits of potassium.
 - C** to persuade readers to eat plenty of bananas.
 - D** to sell bananas to readers.
- 6 Which saying best describes the author’s attitude in this selection?**
- A** An apple a day keeps the doctor away.
 - B** A stitch in time saves nine.
 - C** All is well that ends well.
 - D** You are what you eat.

Lesson
11

Literary Elements

Whenever we read a story, we expect certain elements—characters (who’s in the story), conflict (what characters want and what gets in their way), setting (where the story takes place), plot (what happens), mood (what the story wants us to feel), and theme (the message or moral of the story). These are called **literary elements**. Use the examples to answer questions about literary elements.

The Reluctant Camper

“I am NOT going to do any goofy camp stuff,” I announced loudly as I got off the bus. Then, as I unpacked, I kept grumbling to myself about how much I didn’t want to be at camp. All I wanted to do was go home, swim in our neighborhood pool, and play pick-up basketball at the park.

Just then a friendly looking guy with a booming voice planted himself in front of me. “Hey, I’m glad you made it. Mario, right? I’m Chris, your counselor. C’mon out. I’ll show you around.” I followed him grudgingly.

“Everybody goes swimming over there,” said Chris, pointing to a beach on a sparkling, blue lake. “Also, if you’re interested, we play basketball every day—on the outdoor courts or, if it’s raining, in the gym.”

Interested? *Swimming—basketball*—the words were music to my ears! That meant there were other kids like me around. Suddenly my attitude made a U-turn. Camp might not be so bad after all. It might even be fun!

1 ▶ The theme of this selection is

- A** learning to accept new experiences.
- B** traveling to a new town.
- C** looking for love.
- D** facing strong competition and winning.

Step
1

How does Mario’s attitude change in the selection?

Step
2

Which theme takes into account Mario’s change?

Homecoming

Maria woke up to the sound of pots and pans clattering in the kitchen. For a second she thought, “What’s going on in there?” Then she remembered. Her father was making all of her mother’s favorite foods—meatloaf, mashed potatoes with gravy, and a big chocolate cake. Maria’s mother was coming home today. She was in the army. She had been in Bosnia for more than a year, but now she was coming home to Somerset Drive. Maria leaped out of bed and bounded into the kitchen.

“Where is Mom now?” Maria asked.

“Well, she left Bosnia two days ago,” her father replied, “and she had to stop at Ft. Hood in San Antonio to get her discharge papers.”

“When will she be home?”

“I don’t know exactly, but it’s supposed to be sometime today.”

Maria and her father cooked and worked nervously until finally everything was ready.

“I can’t stand this anymore,” said Maria. “I’m going outside to wait.”

She was almost to the front door when she heard the doorknob being turned. Maria opened the door. “Mom!” she screamed. Her father ran from the kitchen. Maria and her father were about to get the biggest hug of their lives.

2 ► What is the setting of this selection?

- A a kitchen in Bosnia
- B a bedroom in San Antonio
- C a home on Somerset Drive
- D a home on an army base

Step
1

Read the selection carefully. Write down details that tell something about where the story takes place.

Step
2

Based on your answer in Step 1, which answer choices are definitely incorrect?

Step
3

Which answer choice is the best? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

Weather or Not

- 1 Keith stood like a snowman on the sidewalk, staring down the street. Still no bus. Probably held up by the weather—the bitter cold, the blowing snow. He couldn't wait any longer. Chess Club would be starting in 20 minutes.
- 2 “If I leave now,” he reasoned, “I can just make it.” With a sigh, he began trudging toward the community center, out of sight, a mile away.
- 3 One block. Two. Every step a struggle against the whipping wind, the blinding snow. Keith stopped at an intersection, catching his breath, his back to the blast. “Maybe I should just go home,” he thought. “I love Chess Club but it's not worth *this*.”

1 The conflict in this selection is between

- A** Keith and the bus.
- B** Keith and the weather.
- C** the bus and the community center.
- D** the members of the Chess Club.

2 Based on his thoughts and actions, we can tell that Keith is

- A** logical.
- B** irresponsible.
- C** angry.
- D** athletic.

from **Casey at the Bat**

by ERNEST LAWRENCE THAYER

The outlook wasn't brilliant
for the Mudville nine that day:
The score stood four to two
with but one inning more to play.

And then when Cooney died at first,
and Barrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell
upon the patrons of the game.

- 3** Which word best describes how the crowd at the baseball game is feeling?
- A** joyful
 - B** confused
 - C** hopeful
 - D** discouraged
- 4** The words “wasn’t brilliant,” “died,” and “sickly silence” are important because they help to convey the
- A** setting of the poem.
 - B** mood of the poem.
 - C** climax of the poem.
 - D** point of view of the poem.

Lesson
12

Character

Every story has **characters**. Without characters, there is no story, no action, no conflict. Pay attention to how characters think, look, and act. The best characters are ones we can relate to—people (or animals) who are, in some way, like us. When you read, think about the character’s problem or challenge. How does the character solve or overcome it? Use the examples to learn how to answer questions about characters.

Lost in the Woods

- 1 It was getting dark. I was scared, hungry, and tired. Glancing over at my older brother, Johan, I could tell that he was scared too. Johan had made me eat all of our trail mix. He had saved nothing for himself.
- 2 It started snowing, and Johan said that we should start walking again because we shouldn’t let ourselves get cold. Suddenly Johan tilted his head, listening. Then I heard it too—voices calling faintly in the distance. We walked toward the voices. Finally we saw them—Mom and Dad! “Where were you?” Our worried father asked angrily. “You were supposed to be back hours ago! Johan, did you hike farther than we agreed and get lost?”
- 3 Johan started to answer, but I interrupted him because I couldn’t stand to see our parents angry with Johan after everything he had done for me. “We weren’t lost. I got tired and had to rest a lot on the way back.”

1 ► Why does the narrator say that he and Johan weren’t lost?

- A** He didn’t believe that he and his brother had been lost.
- B** He wanted to keep Johan out of trouble.
- C** He was embarrassed that they had been lost.
- D** He wanted his parents to pay attention to him.

Step
1

What does the narrator say about his feelings for his brother when they see their parents?

Step
2

Which answer choice best matches the detail you wrote in Step 1?

A Good Neighbor

- 1 Jane Addams was born in 1860 to a wealthy family in the small town of Cedarville, Illinois. When Addams was two years old, her mother died. Addams’s father raised Jane and her siblings to work hard and to be generous to others. When Mr. Addams remarried, he and his new wife encouraged all of their children to pursue excellence in whatever they did.
- 2 During the era in which Addams lived, women rarely pursued careers. They were expected to marry and stay at home to care for their children. Nonetheless, Addams had goals for her life. She decided to make a career of helping people in need.
- 3 Addams moved into a house in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Chicago, where she lived among new immigrants. This house (which Addams named Hull House) became the most famous settlement house, or “neighborhood center,” in the United States. It provided people with an employment bureau, an art gallery, a library, and art and music classes. At Hull House, which she supported with her inheritance, Addams talked with her neighbors, listened to their needs, and did whatever she could to help them.

2 ► Which sentence best describes Jane Addams?

- A She was ashamed of her family’s wealth.
- B She was a shy and lonely person.
- C She preferred small-town life to city life.
- D She cared for other people.

Step 1

Read the selection carefully. Write down details from the selection about Jane Addams.

Step 2

Now look at each answer choice. Which answer choices are not supported by the details you found in Step 1?

Step 3

Which answer choice best describes Jane Addams? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

Taking the Plunge

- 1 Rob dropped his goggles and towel into his pool bag and took a quick look out his bedroom window. The sky was full of rain clouds and looked as gray as an old rag. Rob scowled when he saw that Mr. Santiago's car was already in the driveway. His friend Juanita had jumped out of the car and was walking toward the house to ring the doorbell. Wishing that he could disappear, Rob moped down the stairs to say goodbye to his mother. Then he walked outside and climbed quietly into the back seat of Mr. Santiago's car for the drive to the college where he and Juanita were taking summer swimming classes.
- 2 Rob's silence was unusual. Normally he was talkative before swimming class. Juanita and her father glanced at each other. Juanita tried to lighten the mood. "Hey, Rob, I have to tell you about the funny movie I saw last night!" Rob tried hard to listen to Juanita's story, but he was too distracted.
- 3 At the college, the swim instructor asked everyone to line up along the edge of the pool. This would be Rob's first day of diving instruction and the idea of going into the water headfirst was more than he could take. He was an excellent swimmer who could do all the strokes: crawl, breast, butterfly, back. He could jump into the water. He could tread water. He could lie on his back and float. But as for diving . . .
- 4 Rob whispered to Juanita, "I can't do this. I just can't dive—not now, not ever. I have a diving phobia. If I have to dive, I'll panic."
- 5 Juanita smiled at him. "Rob, when I started diving, I was nervous too. Learning to dive was mostly about conquering my fear of going into the water headfirst. It can be pretty hard to do. Let's ask the instructor whether we can stay after class to get special help. I'm willing to stay after practice to dive with you, if you want to try."
- 6 "That would be great," said Rob. He couldn't believe how well Juanita understood his fear. He was already starting to feel better. Rob knew it would take time, but he was sure that with the instructor's help—and Juanita's—he could conquer his fear of diving.

- 1 Why is Rob reluctant to go to swimming practice?**
- A** He doesn't want to go outside in the rain.
 - B** He doesn't enjoy long car rides.
 - C** He is scared of diving.
 - D** He is afraid of the swim instructor.
- 2 Which word best describes Juanita?**
- A** sensitive
 - B** attentive
 - C** demanding
 - D** swimming
- 3 In paragraph 5, why does Juanita smile at Rob?**
- A** She is afraid that Rob is going to get sick.
 - B** She understands why Rob is afraid to dive.
 - C** She thinks that Rob is being funny.
 - D** She is afraid to dive into the pool too.
- 4 Which characteristic best describes Rob?**
- A** stubborn
 - B** gloomy
 - C** brave
 - D** changeable
- 5 Juanita's goal is**
- A** to let Rob know that she is not angry with him.
 - B** to let Rob sit in the front seat of the car on the way home.
 - C** to keep Rob in the pool after swimming class.
 - D** to help Rob overcome his fear of diving.
- 6 Why do Juanita and her father glance at each other during the ride to practice?**
- A** They think that it is strange for Rob to be so quiet.
 - B** They are thinking about a funny movie they saw.
 - C** They are worried about driving to class in the rain.
 - D** They think that they will be late for swimming class.
- 7 At the end of the selection, how does Rob probably feel about overcoming fears?**
- A** People should handle all of their fears without the help of others.
 - B** No one should ever dive into a swimming pool.
 - C** Caring people can help you overcome your fears.
 - D** Never try something that you are afraid of.

Lesson
13

Figurative Language and Sound Devices

“The angry wind.” “Clouds like cotton.” “Sea as clear as glass.” All are examples of **figurative language**—language that sets a mood and makes a story come alive. Figurative language includes:

- Idioms – commonly used phrases: “don’t go overboard,” “in a nutshell”
- Metaphors – comparisons of two unlike things: “a blanket of snow”
- Similes – comparisons using “like” or “as”: “shaking like a leaf,” “fast as a cheetah”
- Personification – giving human characteristics to an animal, object, or concept: “the angry sky”

Writers use figurative language along with **sound devices** (onomatopoeia like “whir” and “murmur” that mimic the sounds they describe, alliteration like “swift, silent scavenger,” and rhyme) to pull us into the story. How does the author create an image or picture of what he or she is describing? What words make us feel and see the story? Use the examples to learn how to answer such questions.

Power Trip

It was almost time for my favorite television show, *To Space and Beyond*. As I careened around the corner into the living room and lunged for the remote control, I tripped over my own feet. When I crashed to the floor, the remote control flew out of my hand and hit the wall, bumping the power button and bringing the television to life. My face turned red as a beet when I discovered that my grandmother had seen the whole silly ballet.

1 ► The phrase red as a beet describes

- A** the color of the embarrassed narrator’s face.
- B** the color of the angry grandmother’s face.
- C** the color of a dark vegetable.
- D** the color of the narrator’s bloody face.

Step 1

Consider each answer choice.

- (A): Is an embarrassed face the same color as a beet? _____
- (B): Is the grandmother angry? _____
- (C): Does the phrase describe a vegetable? _____
- (D): Is the narrator’s face bloody? _____

Step 2

Which answer choice is the best? Why?

Big Plans

As soon as the county fair competition was announced, Tyrone began thinking about what type of cheesecake would make the best entry. In the lunchroom at school, Tyrone told his friends, “No matter what kind I make, I’ll win first prize.” The others at the table scowled at Tyrone’s arrogance. Tyrone’s friend Ruth elbowed him gently and said, “I think somebody I know has a slightly swelled head.”

2 ▶ In the last sentence, to what does the idiom swelled head refer?

- A** Tyrone’s rudeness to his friends
- B** swelling of Tyrone’s head due to an allergy
- C** Tyrone’s exaggerated opinion of his cooking skills
- D** a bump on Tyrone’s head caused by Ruth’s elbow

**Step
1**

Consider each answer choice.

(A): Does Tyrone treat his friends rudely? _____

(B): Do we have evidence that Tyrone has an allergy? _____

(C): Is Tyrone extremely proud of his cooking skills? _____

(D): Does Ruth elbow Tyrone hard enough to hurt him? _____

**Step
2**

Which answer choice is the best? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

Recipes for Success

- 1 When Tyrone got home, he took out his recipes and spent the evening looking them over. He decided that he would make an orange crunch cheesecake *and* a New York-style cheesecake with raspberry topping. He also decided he would have more fun if he baked with a friend. At lunch the next day, he brought up the cheesecake contest again, but this time his attitude was different.
- 2 “I think I’d really have my hands full trying to bake two cheesecakes by myself,” said Tyrone. “Would anyone like to lend a hand? I think it’ll be fun.”
- 3 At first his friends looked skeptical, but then Dana leaned forward and said, “Sure, Tyrone. That New York cheesecake sounds tasty. I’ll help.”
- 4 “Great!” Tyrone replied. “With the two of us, baking two cheesecakes will be as easy as . . . well, as easy as pie!” Tyrone grinned at Dana.
- 5 The evening before the contest, Tyrone and Dana met at the store. They filled their cart with eggs, sugar, oranges, raspberries, cream cheese, and graham crackers. The store was crowded, so they had a long wait in the checkout line. “Whew! I’m glad to be out of that squirrel cage,” said Dana as they hurried away from the supermarket.
- 6 When they got back to Tyrone’s house, they started preparing the cheesecake batter. “Easy does it there!” Dana warned as she watched Tyrone add grated orange rind.
- 7 “Don’t worry,” Tyrone said. “That’s what makes this cake pure sunshine!” They kept up a lively conversation over the whirring of the mixer. As the hours went by and the smell of cheesecake filled the house, Tyrone inhaled deeply and announced, “Umm, we’re in the home stretch now.”
- 8 Early the next day Tyrone and Dana carefully carried the precious cheesecakes to the county fair. They walked around for a couple of hours, waiting nervously for the judging to be over. Then they hurried back to the cake booth.
- 9 When Tyrone saw the results, he shouted, “I knew it! I can see tomorrow’s headlines now—‘Terrific Teen Tyrone Takes Top Two Prizes!’”
- 10 Dana laughed. “You need glasses, Tyrone. Those headlines say ‘Terrific Teen Team Takes Top Two Prizes!’ Now let’s go to claim *our* prizes!”

- 1 “Terrific Teen Team Takes Top Two Prizes” is an example of
- A a metaphor.
 - B onomatopoeia.
 - C alliteration.
 - D a simile.
- 2 In paragraph 2, what does the idiom lend a hand mean?
- A be present
 - B give assistance
 - C provide money
 - D take control
- 3 In paragraph 4, the phrase as easy as pie means
- A not hurried.
 - B comfortable.
 - C smooth.
 - D not difficult.
- 4 What does Tyrone mean in paragraph 7 when he says, “That’s what makes this cake pure sunshine”?
- A Adding orange rind turns the batter yellow like sunshine.
 - B Adding orange rind makes the cheesecake lighter.
 - C Adding orange rind gives the cheesecake extra vitamin C.
 - D Adding orange rind gives the cheesecake the flavor of warmth and happiness.
- 5 In paragraph 7, to what does home stretch refer?
- A the last stage of the cheesecake project
 - B the walk around the kitchen to relieve stiffness from working
 - C the place where the cheesecake is being made
 - D the length of time it takes to bake the cheesecake at home
- 6 Paragraphs 5 and 7 both contain
- A similes.
 - B metaphors.
 - C analogies.
 - D idioms.
- 7 In paragraph 2, what does the idiom have my hands full mean?
- A work without wasting anything
 - B hold as much as two hands can carry
 - C do as much as one person can manage
 - D try to carry too much
- 8 In paragraph 7, the word whirring is an example of
- A personification.
 - B a metaphor.
 - C alliteration.
 - D onomatopoeia.

Lesson
14

Comparison of Two Selections

We all judge—that’s how we make decisions. How do you judge a piece of reading? One way is to compare it to a poem, article, or story on the same topic but with a different perspective. How are the two alike? How are they different? **Comparing two selections** is a great way to learn more about *each* selection. Use these examples to answer questions about two selections.

Koko: Smart Signing Gorilla

by JEAN CRAIGHEAD GEORGE

“Fine animal gorilla,” said a young gorilla, Koko, in American Sign Language. A door to the silent world of the animals had been opened.

Using sign language and eventually a talking computer, Koko—under the devoted tutelage of her “mother,” Francine (Penny) Patterson—has told us what it is like to be a gorilla. It is just as frustrating and pleasant as being a human being.

Koko was born July 4, 1971, in the San Francisco Zoo. Penny saw the infant three months later and knew what she wanted to do for a graduate study: She would teach Koko to speak in sign language. After another month the zoo and Stanford University agreed to let her try, and a most remarkable experiment began. It demonstrated that gorillas, which have no vocal cords, can nevertheless use language. With sign language Koko expressed her inner emotions. “This gentle animal,” Penny wrote, “feels all the emotions you and I experience; grief, hope, greed, generosity, shame, love and hate.”

Koko’s first word was “drink,” the hand made into a fist with the thumb up, then put to the mouth. When that got her a bottle of milk, she quickly learned more signs. One lesson later, she signed “food” and Penny fed her. Koko was so pleased that she put a bucket over her head and ran around wildly. Two months later, when her vocabulary had expanded to eight words and combinations of those words, Penny wrote that Koko did “something simple but somehow very touching.” She took Penny gently by the hand and led her around her room, pausing frequently to adjust the position of their hands.

Gorillas have long been known to be moody and Koko was no exception. She was a very stubborn youngster. It took her two long months to learn the word for “egg,” which she disliked, and one minute to learn “berry.” She loved to eat berries.

A sense of humor often rose out of her stubbornness. When asked the color of her white towel for a boring umpteenth time, she signed “red.” When asked twice again, she replied “red,” then carefully picked a tiny speck of red lint off her towel. She chuckled, and again said “red.” . . .

As Koko learned more words, she was able to express not only her likes, but her dislikes. She hated the noisy blue jays at the zoo, so she called people who annoyed her “bird.” One day when Kate, an assistant, would not open the refrigerator, Koko signed, “Kate bird rotten.” When truly angry she had a humdinger of an insult, “rotten toilet,” which she invented herself. Mike, her young gorilla friend, was “Mike nut” when she felt jealous of him. Ron Cohn, Penny’s coworker and the person who disciplined Koko, came in for the worst abuses. “Stupid devil devilhead” was an expletive for him. One day when a teacher asked Koko to tell her something funny, she did. “Koko love Ron,” she signed, and kissed him on the cheek—then she chuckled. She liked the irony of her own jokes. . . .

Koko is one of an endangered species. The foundation she inspired, The Gorilla Foundation, is dedicated to breeding gorillas in captivity. If all goes as planned, Koko will teach her own baby to sign, use a computer, and tell the “beans” [that is, “human beings”] more about themselves and gorillas.

Gorilla Saves Tot in Brookfield Zoo Ape Pit

by JEFFREY BILS and STACEY SINGER
The Chicago Tribune, August 17, 1996

A crowd of visitors at Brookfield Zoo looked on in horror Friday afternoon as they watched a toddler tumble more than 15 feet into a pit, landing near seven gorillas.

But as zoo patrons cried out for help, expecting the worst for the 3-year-old boy lying battered on the concrete below, an unlikely hero emerged.

A female ape, with her own baby clinging to her back, lumbered over to the boy, cradled him in her arms, carried him to a doorway and laid him gingerly at the feet of waiting paramedics.

Zoo spokesperson Sondra Catzen said Binti Jua, a rare western lowland gorilla who has received training on how to be a good mother, appeared to act “out of purely maternalistic compassion for the human child.

“She picked up the boy, kind of cradling him, and walked him around,” said Catzen.

“Another gorilla walked toward the boy, and she kind of turned around and walked away from the other gorillas and tried to be protective,” said Carrie Stewart, a zoo visitor who witnessed the incident.

At first it appeared the boy had been knocked unconscious by the fall, witnesses told zoo officials. But “he was alert and crying when the paramedics came and got him,” Catzen said.

1▶ Which of the following is true of both Koko and Binti Jua?

- A** They have had babies.
- B** They have had training.
- C** They know sign language.
- D** They will be returned to the wild.

Step 1 Consider each answer choice.

- (A): Does each selection mention that the ape has had a baby? If not, eliminate **A**.
- (B): Does each selection mention that the ape has had training? If not, eliminate **B**.
- (C): Does each selection mention that the ape knows sign language?
If not, eliminate **C**.
- (D): Does each selection mention that the ape will be returned to the wild?
If not, eliminate **D**.

Step 2 Which answer choice is the best? Why?

2▶ These selections would be most useful to a reader who wants information about

- A** protective behavior in gorillas.
- B** communication between humans and gorillas.
- C** gorillas interacting with humans.
- D** methods used to train gorillas.

Step 1 Consider each answer choice carefully, as you did for the previous question.

Step 2 Which answer choice is the best? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selections. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

Once the gray wolf (Canis lupus) lived throughout the northern hemisphere. Today it has been almost wiped out in Europe and the United States. The following two letters (from a wolf to a human and from a concerned citizen to the editor of a newspaper) deal with this situation.

from **Brother Wolf**

by JIM BRANDENBURG

- 1 Since only the sun and moon made light, I have known you. I watched you from the once vast, impenetrable forest. I was witness as you discovered fire and strange tools. From ridges, I watched you hunt, and envied your kills. I have eaten your scraps. You have eaten mine.
- 2 I have heard your songs and watched your dancing shadows around bright fires. In a time so distant that I can barely remember, some of us joined you to sit near those fires. We became part of your packs, joined in your hunts, protected your pups, helped you, feared you, loved you.
- 3 We have existed together a long time. We were much alike. It is why the tame ones adopted you. Some of you, I know, respected me, the wild one. I am a good hunter. I respected you, too. You were a good hunter. I would see you hunt in a pack with the tame ones and catch meat.
- 4 Then there was always plenty. Then there were few of you. Then the woods was big. We howled to the tame ones in the night. Some came back to hunt with us. Some we ate, for they had become very strange. It was this way for a long long time. It was a good way. . . .
- 5 Like many of the tame ones, most of you have become very strange. Now I do not recognize some of the tame ones. Now I do not recognize some of you. We were once so much alike. You made the meat tame, too. When I began to hunt your tame meat (they are foolish creatures and do not honor death, but the wild meat was gone), you hunted me. I do not understand. When your packs grew larger and fought among themselves, I saw. I watched your great battles. I feasted on those you left behind. Then you hunted me more. I do not understand. They were meat. You killed them.
- 6 We wild ones are now very few. You made the woods small. You have killed many of us. But I still hunt, and I feed our hidden pups. I always will. I wonder if the tame ones who live with you made a good choice. They have lost the spirit to live in the wild. They are many, but they are strange. We are few. I still watch you, too, so I can avoid you.
- 7 I do not think I know you any longer.

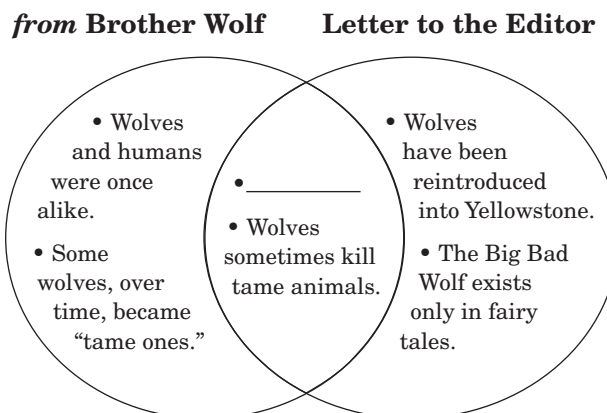
Canis Lupus

Dear Editor:

- 1 Wolves once lived in every part of the United States except the southern half of Florida. They hunted in the forests and on the prairies, raised their pups, and called to one another across the wilderness in beautiful haunting howls. Now they have almost disappeared. At present, wolves are an endangered species in every state except Alaska and Minnesota, and they are classified as a threatened species in Minnesota. This must be changed.
- 2 One reason the wolf is largely gone from U.S. soil is that its habitat, the place it lives, has been destroyed. As civilization advanced, wilderness areas were destroyed. Wolves disappeared because there was no room for them. And even where there was room for wolves, they were often deliberately destroyed. For example, during the 1930s, the federal government carried out a wolf-extermination plan in Yellowstone National Park. Despite the fact that the national parks were established to preserve the plants and animals that live in wilderness areas, every wolf in Yellowstone was hunted down and killed.
- 3 Today things are looking up. Thanks to the efforts of hardworking conservationists, wolves have been reintroduced into Yellowstone. In 1995 and 1996, thirty-one wolves brought from Canada were released in a variety of locations in the park. Close to three hundred wolves roam the park today. Many of them wear radio collars that allow biologists to keep track of them and study their behavior.
- 4 Will the presence of wolves create dangers for Yellowstone’s human visitors? Despite what fairy tales have taught us about the Big Bad Wolf, the answer is no. Unlike bears and cougars, wolves do not attack people except in rare circumstances. In the Superior National Forest of Minnesota, which has always been home to hundreds of wolves, not a single human visitor has ever been attacked by a wolf.
- 5 Reintroducing wolves into wilderness areas does involve some problems. Wolves—like most American humans—are meat-eaters, and livestock is meat. Wolves pay no attention to boundaries between public and private land. They do not read signs. If they are hungry (which they usually are) and some nice fat sheep are grazing nearby . . . well, dinner is served. Such problems, however, can be dealt with by compensating ranchers for their losses and even by allowing the limited hunting of wolves that become too fond of raiding domestic herds. It is worth paying the price, whatever it is, to keep these marvelous animals in our wilderness lands. The program in Yellowstone has been a successful one, but many more such programs are needed.

Hai Tran
Wolf Point, Montana

Look at the following diagram, which shows information from both selections.



- 1 Which one of these facts belongs in the blank?
 - A Wolves respect skillful human hunters.
 - B Radio collars allow wolves to be tracked.
 - C The land available for wolf habitat has shrunk.
 - D People have sometimes eaten prey that wolves have killed.

- 2 How are the two selections alike?
 - A Both deal with the disappearance of wolves.
 - B Both deal with conservation measures.
 - C Both mention wolf-reintroduction plans.
 - D Both are written from the same point of view.

- 3 Who are the writers of the two letters?
 - A One is the Big Bad Wolf, and the other is a park ranger.
 - B One is a hunter, and the other is a rancher.
 - C One is a hunter, and the other is a conservationist.
 - D One is a wolf, and the other is a human.

- 4 Which of the following ideas is found in the excerpt from *Brother Wolf* but not in the letter to the editor?
 - A a description of the problems that wolves face today
 - B a specific suggestion for what can be done to help wolves
 - C a reason for the problems that exist between wolves and humans
 - D a sense of the age-old relationship between humans and wolves

Lesson
15**Sources**

“What was unique about the Plains Indians?” How would you go about researching that question? To do research, you need good **sources**. Which sources have the most valid and up-to-date information on the topic? Use these examples to learn how to answer questions about sources.

A Living Machine

Your body is like a machine. And like a machine, it needs fuel. Many machines run on gasoline, but your body requires food. Your body has a power plant that takes food as its input and produces glucose as its output. The process of converting food into glucose is called digestion. Chewing the food begins the digestion process. Most of the process, however, takes place in the stomach and the small intestine. (The small intestine, coiled inside the body, is actually more than twenty feet long!) As food passes through the small intestine, the nutrients that are released pass into the bloodstream. Once in the bloodstream, the nutrients can enter the cells, where cellular respiration takes place. The main product of cellular respiration is the fuel glucose, which provides energy for the body.

1▶ You would most likely find this selection in

- A** an atlas.
- B** an article.
- C** a novel.
- D** a dictionary.

Step
1

Look at the answer choices. An atlas **(A)** is a book of maps. An article **(B)** provides information on a specific topic. A novel **(C)** is about imaginary people and events. A dictionary **(D)** contains word definitions.

Step
2

Based on Step 1, which answer choice is the best?

The Magnificent Seven

The movie *The Magnificent Seven* is one of the greatest westerns of all time. Filmed in 1960, it is based on famed Japanese director Akira Kurosawa's 1954 classic, *Seven Samurai*. With strong performances from actors such as Yul Brynner and Steve McQueen, *The Magnificent Seven* is filled with action, excitement, and romance.

The story revolves around the plight of a Mexican village. Most of the action in the film takes place in and around this village. A large band of desperadoes, or outlaws, has been routinely taking food from the village. The leader of the desperadoes, played superbly by Eli Wallach, is a ruthless killer. The villagers are terrified of what the bandits will do if they refuse to give away their food. However, determined to somehow stop the raids, they hire seven men to help them fight back. Tension builds as the seven men prepare to combat the desperadoes. Tension is also created by an intriguing romantic development.

2 ► Where would you look to find more information about *The Magnificent Seven*?

- A** in an encyclopedia
- B** in an almanac
- C** in a thesaurus
- D** in a dictionary

Step 1

Read the selection carefully. Label each paragraph with a note about its main idea.

Step 2

Look at the answer choices. What do you know? An *encyclopedia* (**A**) has entries or articles alphabetically arranged by subject. An *almanac* (**B**) is an annual publication that contains facts about countries and about notable people and events. You'd look in a *thesaurus* (**C**) for the synonyms (same meaning) and antonyms (opposite meaning) of a specific word. You'd consult a *dictionary* (**D**) for a word's definition and history.

Step 3

Which answer choice is the best? Why?

Now you try it.

Read the selection. Then use the steps you learned to find the answers.

The Largest Structure Ever Built

- 1 The Great Barrier Reef—which consists of thousands of smaller reefs, shoals, and islets—is one of the wonders of the natural world. Located off the northeast coast of Australia, this limestone formation lies just above or below the surface of the crystal clear water. The Great Barrier Reef is famous for its stunning beauty, varied and exotic marine life, and brilliant underwater colors. About 1,250 miles long, it is not only the largest living coral reef in the world but also the largest structure ever formed by living creatures.
- 2 Over millions of years, the reef was built up by the skeletons of succeeding generations of sea animals known as coral polyps. The reef is still growing. Attached to the hard white coral are billions of living polyps in an array of colors—purple, blue, red, green, and yellow—that give the Great Barrier Reef its extraordinary appearance.
- 3 The diverse population of the Great Barrier Reef makes it one of the most interesting habitats in the world. In addition to various species of coral polyps, over two thousand species of tropical fish make the reef their home. Many species of birds live on the islets that make up the reef. The most notorious reef animal is the crown-of-thorns starfish, which has reduced the color and attraction of the central part of the reef by eating much of the living coral.
- 4 Today conservationists are struggling to protect the Great Barrier Reef from what may prove to be an even greater threat—human destruction. Thousands of tourists and the diving, fishing, and sightseeing boats that bring them to the reef each year threaten the fragile ecosystem. Fertilizers and pesticides that drain from nearby agricultural areas are contaminating the reef. And just one spill by petroleum companies that want to drill for oil there could ruin the entire reef. In an effort to protect the Great Barrier Reef, the Australian government has made most of it into a national park. Now the reef is protected by law, and it is maintained and guarded by the park management.
- 5 The Great Barrier Reef is one of the most breathtaking spots in the world. It is a paradise of diverse plant and animal life that make it a memorable place to visit. No wonder so many people are working to safeguard this natural wonder!

- 1 Which would be the best resource for finding the location of the Great Barrier Reef ?**
- A** a novel
 - B** a newspaper
 - C** an atlas
 - D** a telephone directory
- 2 Which of the following details would be least important to include in a summary of this selection?**
- A** The Great Barrier Reef is the largest living coral reef in the world.
 - B** The Great Barrier Reef began forming hundreds of years ago.
 - C** The Great Barrier Reef is a memorable place to visit.
 - D** Many species of birds live on islets in the Great Barrier reef.
- 3 Which source would be least helpful in obtaining information for a research paper about the Great Barrier Reef?**
- A** a newspaper article: “Starfish Destroys Barrier Reef’s Living Coral”
 - B** a novel: *Shipwrecks and Sharks Down Under*
 - C** an interview: “Cousteau on Preserving the Great Barrier Reef”
 - D** an encyclopedia entry: “Great Barrier Reef, (reef, Austr.)”

Lesson
16

The Writing Process: Prewriting

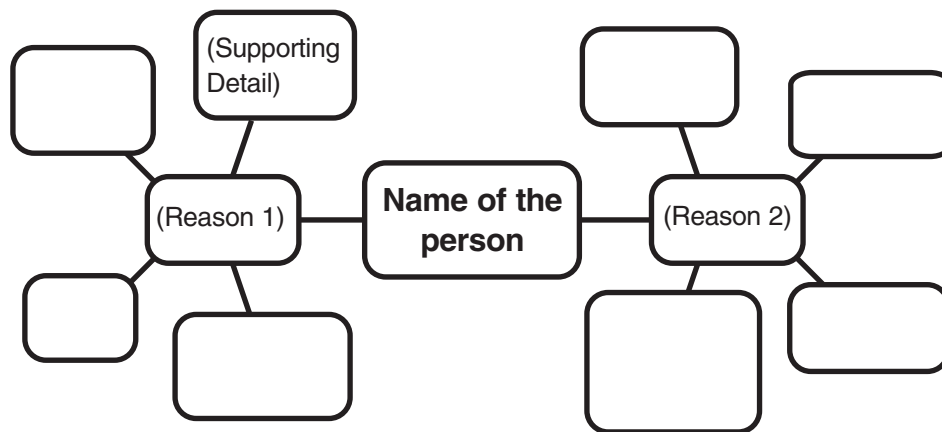
Good writing doesn't just happen. It takes hard work and a solid process. Before that piece you're reading got to the printed page, the author spent hours prewriting, drafting, and revising it. In the first step, **prewriting**, the author brainstorms ideas, examining different topics and techniques until he or she finds the main idea or theme, details to support it, and an ideal structure or shape. You can learn prewriting skills by completing the following examples.

1▶ Writing Prompt: If you could meet any person from history, whom would you choose and why?

Step 1 Read the prompt carefully. Make sure that you understand what the prompt is asking you to do.

Step 2 Write down the name of the person you would like to meet and your reasons for wanting to meet him or her.

Step 3 Now place the information that you gathered from brainstorming in a web, list, outline, or other organizational tool. Use a web like the one below. Add supporting details for your reasons in the outer boxes.



2 ▶ Writing Prompt: How was life in the United States a hundred years ago different from the way it is today?

Step 1

Read the prompt carefully. Make sure that you understand what the prompt is asking you to do.

Step 2

Write down the ways in which life in the United States a hundred years ago was different from life in the United States today.

Step 3

Decide which examples best illustrate the difference between life in the United States a hundred years ago and today. A good topic is one you can support well.

Step 4

Now place the information that you gathered from brainstorming in a web, list, outline, or other organizational tool. Try listing your main points below.

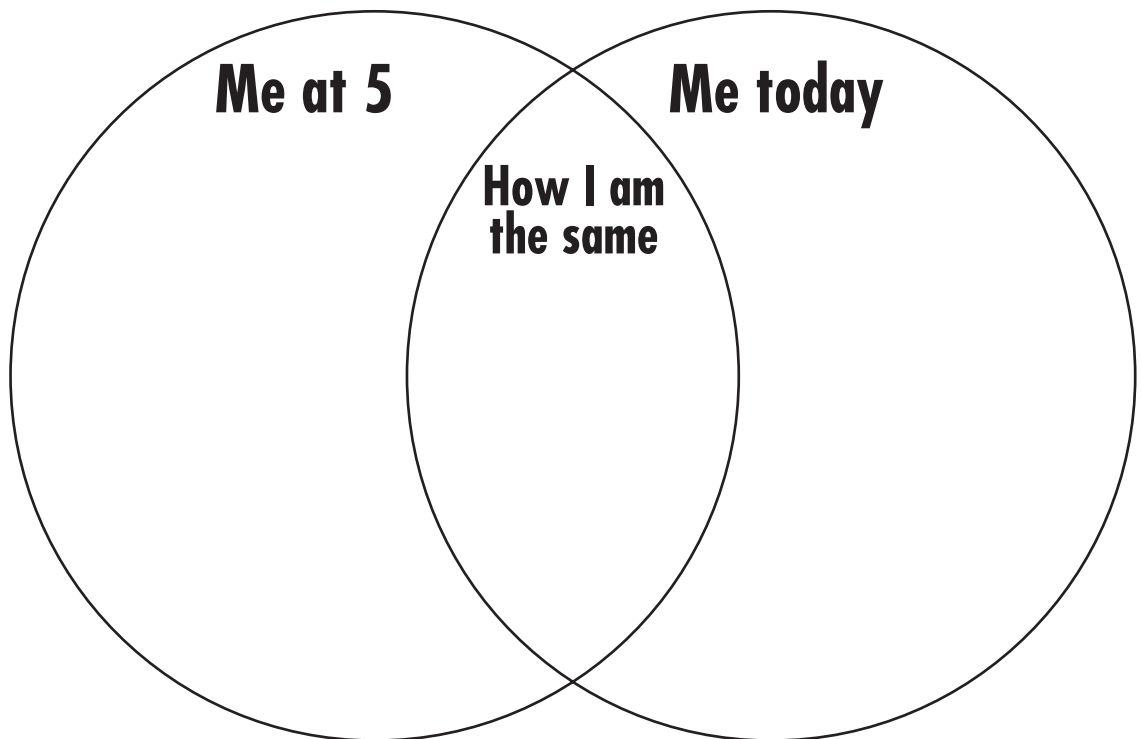
Life 100 Years Ago	Life Today

As your teacher reads aloud each of the following two writing prompts, read along silently. Then brainstorm for answers to the questions and write them on the sheets provided by your teacher. Finally, transfer the answers to a graphic organizer like the one printed at the bottom of this page.

- I Writing Topic: How do you think computers have changed your family's life? How do you think they will change your life in the future?

<p>I. Computers have changed my family's life.</p> <p>A. _____ _____ _____</p> <p>B. _____ _____ _____</p> <p>II. Computers will change my life in the future.</p> <p>A. _____ _____ _____</p> <p>B. _____ _____ _____</p>
--

2 Writing Prompt: Think about yourself when you were about five years old. How are you the same now? How are you different?



Lesson
17

The Writing Process: Drafting

Drafting is the second stage in the writing process. When you draft, you write the essay while using the graphic organizer that you created in the prewriting stage of the writing process. Learn drafting skills by studying the guidelines below and by doing the exercises that follow them.

Drafting Guidelines

- Respond fully to the prompt.
- Include an introductory and a concluding paragraph.
- Include your thesis, or main idea, in your introductory paragraph.
- Present your ideas in a logical and orderly manner.
- Support your ideas with details and examples.

1 ▶ Writing Prompt: If you could meet any person from history, whom would you choose and why?

Step 1

Look at your prewriting exercise on page 72. Have you written down enough ideas to fully respond to the prompt? If not, add more ideas so that you can develop your essay adequately.

Step 2

Reorganize the information in your prewriting exercise on page 72. Decide what information should be placed at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of your essay.

Organize your ideas in an outline or a graphic organizer.

Step
3

Using the ideas you developed in Step 3, write your thesis statement (your main purpose or idea) on the sheets provided by your teacher.

Now draft your essay on the answer sheets provided by your teacher. Make sure that you include your thesis statement in your introductory paragraph.

**Lesson
18**

The Writing Process: Revising and Editing

Revising and editing is the final stage of the writing process. Learn revising and editing skills by consulting the checklist below and then by doing the practice exercise that follows it.

Revising and Editing Checklist

- Did I write about the topic and address all parts of the prompt?
- Are my ideas expressed in complete sentences?
- Did I explain or support my ideas with enough details?
- Are the details that I included directly related to my topic?
- Have I arranged my writing so that the reader will clearly understand it?
- Do my paragraphs have topic sentences when appropriate?
- Did I start each sentence with a capital letter and capitalize other appropriate words?
- Have I used correct punctuation at the end of each sentence and within each sentence?
- Is my spelling correct throughout my writing?
- Will the reader be able to read my handwriting?

Using the checklist on page 78, revise and edit the draft you wrote beginning on page 77. You can make notes and corrections in the margins or between lines of text. Then write the final copy of your essay on the answer sheets provided by your teacher.



Reading Practice Test



Directions

After reading a selection, read each question, choose the best answer, and mark your answer on the Answer Sheet provided by your teacher. Make sure that you find the question number on the Answer Sheet that matches the question number in the Reading Practice Test. Use a pencil to fill in the bubbles for your answer choices.

from **“If I Forget Thee, Oh Earth . . .”**

by ARTHUR C. CLARKE

When Marvin was ten years old, his father took him through the long, echoing corridors that led up through Administration and Power, until at last they came to the uppermost levels of all and were among the swiftly growing vegetation of the Farmlands. Marvin liked it here: it was fun watching the great, slender plants creeping with almost visible eagerness toward the sunlight as it filtered down through the plastic domes to meet them. The smell of life was everywhere, awakening inexpressible longings in his heart: no longer was he breathing the dry, cool air of the residential levels, purged of all smells but the faint tang of ozone. He wished he could stay here for a little while, but Father would not let him. They went onward until they had reached the entrance to the Observatory, which he had never visited: but they did not stop, and Marvin knew with a sense of rising excitement that there could be only one goal left. For the first time in his life, he was going Outside.

1 The setting of this selection is

- A** a present-day farm with several outbuildings.
- B** an underground city of the future.
- C** an ancient city beneath the earth.
- D** a modern multiuse office building.

2 All of the following characteristics of science fiction are found in this passage except

- A** a futuristic setting.
- B** time travel.
- C** an alien civilization.
- D** imagined scientific advancements.

This selection was written by a doctor of veterinary medicine who lived and worked in the English countryside in the middle of the twentieth century.

from **All Things Bright and Beautiful**

by JAMES HERRIOT

- 1 “Move over, Bill!” Mr. Dacre cried some time later as he tweaked the big bull’s tail.
- 2 Nearly every farmer kept a bull in those days and they were all called Billy or Bill. I suppose it was because this was a very mature animal that he received the adult version. Being a docile beast he responded to the touch on his tail by shuffling his great bulk to one side, leaving me enough space to push in between him and the wooden partition against which he was tied by a chain.
- 3 I was reading a tuberculin test and all I wanted to do was to measure the intradermal reaction. I had to open my calipers very wide to take in the thickness of the skin on the enormous neck.
- 4 “Thirty,” I called out to the farmer.
- 5 He wrote the figure down on the testing book and laughed.
- 6 “By heck, he’s got some pelt on ’im.”
- 7 “Yes,” I said, beginning to squeeze my way out. “But he’s a big fellow, isn’t he?”
- 8 Just how big he was was brought home to me immediately because the bull suddenly swung round, pinning me against the partition. Cows did this regularly and I moved them by bracing my back against whatever was behind me and pushing them away. But it was different with Bill.
- 9 Gasping, I pushed with all my strength against the rolls of fat which covered the vast roan-colored flank, but I might as well have tried to shift a house.
- 10 The farmer dropped his book and seized the tail again but this time the bull showed no response. There was no malice in his behavior—he was simply having a comfortable lean against the boards and I don’t suppose he even noticed the morsel of puny humanity wriggling frantically against his rib cage.

- 11 Still, whether he meant it or not, the end result was the same; I was having the life crushed out of me. Pop-eyed, groaning, scarcely able to breathe, I struggled with everything I had, but I couldn't move an inch. And just when I thought things couldn't get any worse, Bill started to rub himself up and down against the partition. So that was what he had come round for; he had an itch and he just wanted to scratch it.
- 12 The effect on me was catastrophic. I was certain my internal organs were being steadily ground to pulp and as I thrashed about in complete panic the huge animal leaned even more heavily.
- 13 I don't like to think what would have happened if the wood behind me had not been old and rotten, but just as I felt my senses leaving me there was a cracking and splintering and I fell through into the next stall. Lying there like a stranded fish on a bed of shattered timbers I looked up at Mr. Dacre, waiting till my lungs started to work again.
- 14 The farmer, having got over his first alarm, was rubbing his upper lip vigorously in a polite attempt to stop himself laughing. His little girl who had watched the whole thing from her vantage point in one of the hay racks had no such inhibitions. Screaming with delight, she pointed at me.
- 15 "Ooo, Dad, Dad, look at that man! Did you see him, Dad, did you see him? Ooo what a funny man!" She went into helpless convulsions. She was only about five but I had a feeling she would remember my performance all her life.
- 16 At length I picked myself up and managed to brush the matter off lightly, but after I had driven a mile or so from the farm I stopped the car and looked myself over. My ribs ached pretty uniformly as though a light road roller had passed over them and there was a tender area on my left buttock where I had landed on my calipers but otherwise I seemed to have escaped damage. I removed a few spicules of wood from my trousers, got back into the car and consulted my list of visits.
- 17 And when I read my next call a gentle smile of relief spread over my face. "Mrs. Tompkin, 14, Jasmine Terrace. Clip budgie's beak."
- 18 Thank heaven for the infinite variety of veterinary practice. After that bull I needed something small and weak and harmless and really you can't ask for much better in that line than a budgie.

3 Dr. Herriot is visiting Bill, the bull, to

- A** get the results of a test.
- B** weigh him.
- C** treat a disease.
- D** perform an operation.

4 Which of the following sentences from the selection foreshadows Dr. Herriot's problem with the bull?

- A** *I was reading a tuberculin test and all I wanted to do was to measure the intradermal reaction.*
- B** *... the bull suddenly swung round, pinning me against the partition.*
- C** *Being a docile beast he responded to the touch on his tail by shuffling his great bulk to one side, leaving me enough space to push in between him and the wooden partition against which he was tied by a chain.*
- D** *Nearly every farmer kept a bull in those days and they were all called Billy or Bill.*

5 In paragraph 2, the adjective docile suggests that the bull is

- A** untamed.
- B** hard to ignore.
- C** smaller than average.
- D** gentle or easy to manage.

6 While Dr. Herriot is pinned, his situation becomes more dangerous because of

- A** Dr. Herriot's own struggles.
- B** the partition's collapse.
- C** the bull's movements.
- D** Mr. Dacre's efforts to help.

7 The author's word choice and writing style in this selection create a tone that is

- A** joyful.
- B** humorous.
- C** sorrowful.
- D** mysterious.

8 Why are only the narrator's thoughts, not Mr. Dacre's thoughts, revealed in this selection?

- A** The narrator is the main character; Mr. Dacre is not.
- B** The narrator is a man of thought; Mr. Dacre is a man of action.
- C** The selection is written from the first-person point of view.
- D** The author wants readers to reach their own conclusions about Mr. Dacre's thoughts.

9 Paragraphs 8 through 11 are mainly about

- A how Dr. Herriot manages a bull.
- B what happens when Dr. Herriot treats cows.
- C how difficult it is to be a veterinarian.
- D what happens when a bull tries to relieve an itch.

10 In paragraph 14, why does Mr. Dacre try to keep himself from laughing?

- A He is very frightened.
- B He needs to remain quiet to calm the bull.
- C He does not want to attract the bull's attention.
- D He does not want to hurt Dr. Herriot's feelings.

11 The author's main purpose in this selection is to

- A explain a problem and its solution.
- B influence young readers to become veterinarians.
- C describe a memorable experience.
- D warn readers about the dangers of veterinary work.

12 An example of a simile from the selection is

- A "my internal organs were being steadily ground to pulp."
- B "as I felt my senses leaving me there was a cracking and splintering."
- C "lying there like a stranded fish on a bed of shattered timbers."
- D "as I thrashed about in complete panic the huge animal leaned even more heavily."

13 The problem in the selection is resolved when

- A the partition gives way.
- B Mr. Dacre seizes the bull's tail.
- C Bill scratches himself against the partition.
- D Dr. Herriot pushes the bull away.

14 What information below best supports the fact that this selection is an example of nonfiction?

- A The story is about a person's life.
- B The story is based on fact.
- C The story has a plot.
- D The story is based on imagination.

GO ON ▶

- 1 A solar system is made up of a group of celestial bodies orbiting a star. The solar system that most people are familiar with is the one that includes Earth and the Sun. Today astronomers know of nine major planets that orbit the Sun. Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars are known as the inner planets, because they are closest to the Sun. The inner planets are made up mostly of iron and rock. They are also smaller than Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, which (along with Pluto) are known as the outer planets. These planets are farther from the Sun and are made up primarily of gases (such as hydrogen and helium) and ice.
- 2 The planets revolve about the Sun in a counterclockwise direction. The orbits of the planets appear circular but are, in fact, slightly elliptical. The orbit of Pluto differs from the orbits of the other planets in that it is highly elliptical. Sometimes Pluto is closer to the Sun than Neptune is. In addition to orbiting the Sun, the planets also rotate on their axes. Except for Venus and Uranus, the planets rotate on their axes in the same direction. Smaller bodies, known as satellites, orbit the individual planets. Except for a few of the satellites that orbit Jupiter, Saturn, and Neptune, the satellites also move in a counterclockwise direction.
- 3 There are other orbiting bodies within the solar system. Asteroids move in orbits principally between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter. These rocky bodies can be as large as 580 miles in diameter or as small as microscopic grains. When asteroids have been pulled out of their orbits by other forces, they have been known to cross Earth's orbit. When that occurs, they are called meteors. Comets, which are made up of dust and frozen gases, can also become meteors if they venture into Earth's orbit. Halley's Comet, one of the best-known comets, visits the inner solar system every seventy-five years.
- 4 Although each star and planet seems notably different, scientists believe that all of the bodies of the solar system were formed at the same time. An early theory on the origin of the solar system was that a gas cloud broke into rings that condensed and formed planets. Another theory postulates that a collision between the Sun and another star created the planets and other celestial bodies. A current theory states that the Sun was formed about 4.7 billion years ago when a cloud of gas and dust collapsed. Scientists believe that such a collapse could have been triggered by the explosion of a supernova—a massive star that in the last stages of its life contracts and explodes. Such explosions can cause huge amounts of energy and heavy elements to be distributed in space. These elements may condense into solids and become celestial bodies, such as planets.

- 5 Until 1995 astronomers had no proof that there were other solar systems in existence. Then a planet somewhat smaller in mass than Jupiter was discovered orbiting a star named 51 Pegasi. Shortly thereafter a planet about 8.1 times the size of Jupiter was found orbiting a star named 70 Virginis; and a smaller planet, only 3.5 times the mass of Jupiter, was discovered orbiting the star 47 Ursa Majoris. In 1999 multiple planets were revealed orbiting Upsilon Andromedae, a Sun-like star.
- 6 With today's technology, more and more is being discovered about celestial bodies. Nonetheless, mysteries still exist in the vast skies. Scientists are hopeful that new technological advances and space exploration will provide more information and increase our understanding of the vast realms of space.

15 If you were to outline this selection, what would one of the subtopics probably be?

- A** Planets with moons
- B** Halley's Comet
- C** How the planets formed
- D** How our Sun compares to others

16 Which of these strategies would be most useful if you wanted to remember the order of the planets from the Sun?

- A** List the planets in the proper order and make a sentence out of words that start with the first letter of their names.
- B** Remember that Mercury is first and Pluto is last.
- C** Remember that Mars is closest to Earth.
- D** Remember that the asteroids are found between Mars and Jupiter.

17 The study of supernovas would be useful in determining which of the following?

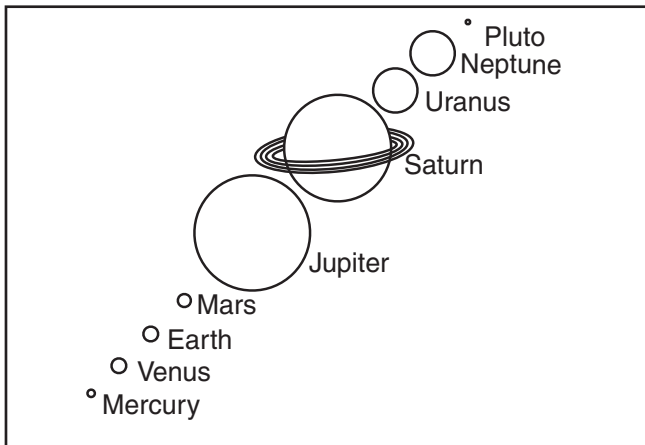
- A** the orbits of asteroids
- B** the evolution of meteorites and comets
- C** the evolution of other planetary systems
- D** the rotational direction of planets

18 Which of the following is an opinion in the selection?

- A** Halley's Comet has a beautiful, luminous tail.
- B** Satellites orbit the individual planets in our solar system.
- C** Today astronomers know of nine planets that orbit the Sun.
- D** There are asteroids moving in orbits principally between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter.

GO ON ▶

Look at the illustration below.
Then answer the question.



19 The illustration shows

- A the size of the planets in relation to the Sun.
- B the position of the planets in relation to one another.
- C the distance of the planets from one another.
- D the planets and their satellites.

20 The details in paragraph 5 support which of these ideas?

- A Astronomers are able to prove that our solar system is the only one that exists.
- B New solar systems are being formed all the time.
- C Extrasolar planets are written about only in science fiction.
- D Planetary systems similar to our own exist.

21 How do the outer planets compare with the inner planets in terms of their composition?

- A The outer planets are denser than the inner planets.
- B The inner planets are larger than the outer planets.
- C The inner planets are composed of gases and ice; the outer planets are composed of rock and iron.
- D The inner planets are composed of iron and rock; the outer planets are composed of gases and ice.

22 What question was answered only recently by discoveries in astronomy?

- A Are there other solar systems besides ours?
- B Were all of the bodies in the solar system formed at once?
- C Are there bodies other than the planets that orbit the Sun?
- D What is the composition of the planets?

23 Which title would be the best summary of this selection?

- A Celestial Bodies
- B Our Solar System and Beyond
- C Other Solar Systems
- D The Universe

from **Rain Music**

by JOSEPH SEAMON COTTER JR.

On the dusty earth-drum
 Beats the falling rain;
 Now a whispered murmur,
 Now a louder strain.
 Slender, silvery drumsticks,
 On an ancient drum,
 Beat the mellow music
 Bidding life to come.

- 24 **In this poem, what metaphor represents the earth and the rain?**
- A dust and silver
 - B a drum and music
 - C loud noises and soft music
 - D a drum and drumsticks
- 25 **An example of alliteration is best seen in**
- A line 1.
 - B line 3.
 - C line 5.
 - D line 8.
- 26 **The words whispered murmur are an example of**
- A alliteration.
 - B personification.
 - C hyperbole.
 - D parallelism.
- 27 **In line 7, to what does the metaphor mellow music refer?**
- A the sound of rain falling on the earth
 - B the sound of drumsticks beating on a drum
 - C the sound of an ancient instrument
 - D the sound of a whispered murmur
- 28 **Complete the analogy.**
drum : music :: rain : ____
- A life
 - B drum
 - C beat
 - D murmur

GO ON ▶

The next two selections are American folktales of mischief that come from the recent past. The first folktale involves the Hispanic residents of neighboring states in the southwestern United States. The second involves a famous trickster in Native American literature—the wily Coyote.

Chicoria

Adapted in Spanish by JOSÉ GRIEGO Y MAESTAS
Retold in English by RUDOLFO A. ANAYA

1 There were once many big ranches in California, and many New Mexicans went to work there. One day one of the big ranch owners asked his workers if there were any poets in New Mexico.

2 “Of course, we have many fine poets,” they replied. “We have old Vilmas, Chicoria, Cinfuegos, to say nothing of the poets of Cebolleta and the Black Poet.”

3 “Well, when you return next season, why don’t you bring one of your poets to compete with Gracia—here none can compare with him!”

4 When the harvest was done the New Mexicans returned home. The following season when they returned to California they took with them the poet Chicoria, knowing well that in spinning a rhyme or in weaving wit there was no *Californio* who could beat him. As soon as the rancher found out that the workers had brought Chicoria with them, he sent his servant to invite his good neighbor and friend to come and hear the new poet. Meanwhile, the cooks set about preparing a big meal. When the maids began to dish up the plates of food, Chicoria turned to one of the servers and said, “Ah, my friends, it looks

like they are going to feed us well tonight!”

5 The servant was surprised. “No, my friend,” he explained, “the food is for *them*. We don’t eat at the master’s table. It is not permitted. We eat in the kitchen.”

6 “Well, I’ll bet I can sit down and eat with them,” Chicoria boasted.

7 “If you beg or if you ask, perhaps, but if you don’t ask they won’t invite you,” replied the servant.

8 “I never beg,” the New Mexican answered. “The master will invite me of his own accord, and I’ll bet you twenty dollars he will!”

9 So they made a twenty dollar bet and they instructed the serving maid to watch if this self-confident New Mexican had to ask the master for a place at the table. Then the maid took Chicoria into the dining room. Chicoria greeted the rancher cordially, but the rancher appeared haughty and did not invite Chicoria to sit with him and his guest at the table. Instead, he asked that a chair be brought and placed by the wall where Chicoria was to sit. The rich ranchers began to eat without inviting Chicoria.

10 So it is just as the servant predicted, Chicoria thought. The poor are not invited to share the rich man's food!

11 Then the master spoke: "Tell us about the country where you live. What are some of the customs of New Mexico?"

12 "Well, in New Mexico when a family sits down to eat each member uses one spoon for each biteful of food," Chicoria said with a twinkle in his eyes.

13 The ranchers were amazed that the New Mexicans ate in that manner, but what Chicoria hadn't told them was that each spoon was a piece of tortilla: one fold and it became a spoon with which to scoop up the meal.

14 "Furthermore," he continued, "our goats are not like yours."

15 "How are they different?" the rancher asked.

16 "Here your nannies give birth to two kids, in New Mexico they give birth to three!"

17 "What a strange thing!" the master said. "But tell us, how can the female nurse three kids?"

18 "Well, they do it exactly as you're doing it now: While two of them are eating the third one looks on."

19 The rancher then realized his lack of manners and took Chicoria's hint. He apologized and invited his New Mexican guest to dine at the table. After dinner, Chicoria sang and recited his poetry, putting Gracia to shame. And he won his bet as well.

- 29** In paragraph 4, the word *Californio* refers to
- A** a worker from New Mexico.
 - B** a rich rancher.
 - C** a person who lives in California.
 - D** a person who is a poet and storyteller.
- 30** At first the reason for Chicoria's visit is to participate in the poetry contest. At the end of the tale, it is
- A** to learn some California customs.
 - B** to sing and recite poetry better than Gracia does.
 - C** to make the master aware of his unkind manners.
 - D** to tell stories about the customs of New Mexico.

- 31** Why does the master suggest having a poetry competition?
- A** He thinks that the New Mexicans won't have any chance of winning.
 - B** He wants the poets to work on his ranch in California.
 - C** He wants to learn more about goats.
 - D** He wants to learn about New Mexican customs.

Coyote and Wasichu

Sioux Legend

1 There was a white man who was such a sharp trader that nobody ever got the better of him. Or so people said, until one day a man told this *wasichu*: “There’s somebody who can outcheat you anytime, anywhere.”

2 “That’s not possible,” said the *wasichu*. “I’ve had a trading post for many years, and I’ve cheated all the Indians around here.”

3 “Even so, Coyote can beat you in any deal.”

4 “Let’s see whether he can. Where is Coyote?”

5 “Over there, that tricky-looking guy.”

6 “Okay, all right, I’ll try him.”

7 The *wasichu* trader went over to Coyote. “Hey, let’s see you outsmart me.”

8 “I’m sorry,” said Coyote, “I’d like to help you out, but I can’t do it without my cheating medicine.”

9 “Cheating medicine, hah! Go get it.”

10 “I live miles from here and I’m on foot. But if you’d lend me your fast horse?”

11 “Well, all right, you can borrow it. Go on home and get your cheating medicine!”

12 “Well, friend, I’m a poor rider. Your horse is afraid of me, and I’m afraid of him. Lend me your clothes; then your horse will think that I am you.”

13 “Well, all right. Here are my clothes; now you can ride him. Go get that medicine. I’m sure I can beat it!”

14 So Coyote rode off with the *wasichu*’s fast horse and his fine clothes, while the *wasichu* stood there bare.

Sioux legend told at Grass Mountain, Rosebud Indian Reservation, South Dakota, 1974.

32 In paragraph 1, the word *wasichu* refers to

- A a Native American.
- B a greedy man.
- C a coyote.
- D a trading post.

33 Coyote’s original refusal to cheat is important to the story because it gives Coyote

- A time to think of a way to outsmart the *wasichu*.
- B time to ride home.
- C a way to avoid cheating the *wasichu*.
- D a reason to borrow the horse and the clothes.

34 It can be inferred that

- A** Coyote won't be returning.
- B** Coyote will be back with the cheating medicine.
- C** Coyote will trade the horse.
- D** the *wasichu* will give up trading.

35 This selection is an example of

- A** informational text.
- B** drama.
- C** nonfiction.
- D** fiction.

Use both selections, "Chicoria" and "Coyote and Wasichu," to answer questions 36 through 38.

36 What is a common theme of the two selections?

- A** accepting a social challenge
- B** using one's wits to right a wrong
- C** winning a twenty-dollar bet
- D** thinking quickly in a dangerous situation

37 Which of the following is not a characteristic of these two folktales?

- A** a present-day setting
- B** a clever hero
- C** a lesson about human nature
- D** a simple conflict

38 The main characters in the two selections are alike in that both are

- A** poets.
- B** traders.
- C** *Californios*.
- D** tricksters.

A Fearsome Fish

- 1 Swimming through the seas of the world, the shark moves smoothly, swiftly, and efficiently to kill its prey. Humans often fear this fish, even though it normally does not feed on people. The International Shark Attack File has data showing that attacks on humans around the world average fewer than one hundred per year. Of these attacks, an extremely small percentage are fatal. Biologists contend that without shark activities other animal populations might increase, creating an imbalance within the ecosystem.
- 2 Although the shark is a fish, it is not bony like most other fish. Its flexible skeleton is made of cartilage, a strong elastic tissue. The shark is well known for its sharp teeth and for the sharp fin, the dorsal fin, that points up from its back. Because its razor-sharp teeth are entrenched in its gums rather than in its jaws, a shark can lose numerous teeth while catching and eating live prey. Replacement teeth from the multiple rows growing behind the originals just move forward to replace the ones that are lost. During its lifetime a shark can lose and replace nearly thirty thousand teeth!
- 3 Scientists have identified nearly 375 varieties of sharks, ranging in length from eight inches to more than fifty feet. The shark's body is covered with hard scales that are light in color on the bottom and dark on the top. This coloring enables it to surprise its prey. Because an animal looking up toward the surface of the water sees sunlight entering the water, the animal might not recognize the light-colored stomach of a shark swimming above it. Similarly, because an animal looking down into deep water would see darkness, the animal might not recognize the dark-colored back of a shark swimming below it.
- 4 Biologists have learned that nearly one-third of a shark's brain is devoted to the sense of smell. A shark can detect the scent of even small amounts of blood or other substances in the water from far away. When a large amount of blood is in the water, a shark's sensory system can become overwhelmed. The confused shark begins snapping at anything that moves. Other sharks, attracted by the blood and the movement, form a large frenzied group that may include a variety of species of sharks. This violent behavior contributes to the shark's reputation as a deadly hunter.
- 5 Other components of the shark's highly efficient sensory system are its eyes, its lateral line, and its electrosensors. The shark's eyes can function at low levels of light, enabling it to see prey deep in the ocean. Its lateral line—sensory cells that lie in a line along the sides of its body—allows the shark to sense small vibrations caused by underwater movement. The shark's electrosensors, clustered in its head, enable it to sense weak electrical currents produced by nerves and muscles of other animals.

**GO ON ▶**

6 The very hunting and eating behaviors of the shark that are important in maintaining balance in the shark's ecosystem make sharks potentially dangerous to humans. Humans have hunted sharks for food and sport for centuries. Beach areas are protected by nets installed to keep the sharks out, but these nets also kill sharks by trapping them. Many shark species, including the great white shark and the sand tiger shark, are now in danger of becoming extinct. Surprisingly enough, humans may prove to be more dangerous than sharks.

39 This selection is **most likely** to be accurate if it was written by

- A a deep sea fisherman.
- B a veterinarian.
- C a scuba diver.
- D a marine biologist.

40 According to the author, the probable cause of feeding frenzies is the shark's

- A distinctive dorsal fin.
- B powerful sense of smell.
- C ability to see at low levels of light.
- D flexible skeleton of cartilage.

41 The author mentions the International Shark Attack File to assure readers that

- A sharks are serious threats to humans.
- B sharks can attack anywhere in the world.
- C fatalities from shark attacks are documented.
- D shark attacks on humans occur infrequently.

42 Which of the following details would be **most** important to include in a summary of this selection?

- A Sharks have multiple rows of teeth.
- B The sharp fin on a shark's back is the dorsal fin.
- C Sharks help to maintain balance in their ecosystems.
- D Sharks can sense underwater vibrations.

43 What evidence is there that sharks are **not** a major threat to humans?

- A Sharks lose numerous teeth while hunting their prey.
- B Statistics show that fewer than one hundred people are attacked by sharks each year.
- C Hunting and trapping activities have put many shark species in danger of becoming extinct.
- D A shark's sensors do not detect humans as keenly as they detect fish.

The following selection is set in the 1950s. The Indian narrator has just arrived in New York, where he will stay with an American couple for a few weeks. Both the narrator and his host, Mr. di Francesco, are blind.

from **Sound-Shadows of the New World**

by VED MEHTA

- 1 “Do you eat meat?” Mrs. di Francesco asked me from the kitchen. “Aunt Rita—Mrs. Chatterjee—didn’t know.”
- 2 “Yes, I do eat meat,” I called back to her. I started worrying about how I would cut it.
- 3 Mrs. di Francesco sighed with relief. “John and I hoped that you weren’t a vegetarian. We’re having spaghetti and meatballs, which are made of beef. Is that all right?”
- 4 I shuddered. As a Hindu, I had never eaten beef, and the mere thought of it was revolting. But I recalled another of Daddyji’s sayings, “When in Rome, do as the Romans do,” and said, “I promised my father that I would eat anything and everything in America and gain some weight.”
- 5 Mrs. di Francesco brought out the dinner and served it to us at a small table. “The peas are at twelve and the spaghetti and meatballs at six,” she said. I must have looked puzzled, because she added, “John locates his food on a plate by the clock dial. I thought all blind people knew—”
- 6 “You forget that India has many primitive conditions,” Mr. di Francesco interrupted. “Without a doubt, work for the blind there is very backward.”
- 7 I bridled. “There is nothing primitive or backward in India.”
- 8 There was a silence, in which I could hear Mr. di Francesco swallowing water. I felt very much alone. I wished I were back home.
- 9 “I didn’t mean it that way,” Mr. di Francesco said.
- 10 “I’m sorry,” I said, and then, rallying a little, confessed that Braille watches were unheard of in India—that I had first read about them a year or so earlier in a British Braille magazine, and then it had taken me several months to get the foreign exchange and get a Braille pocket watch from Switzerland.

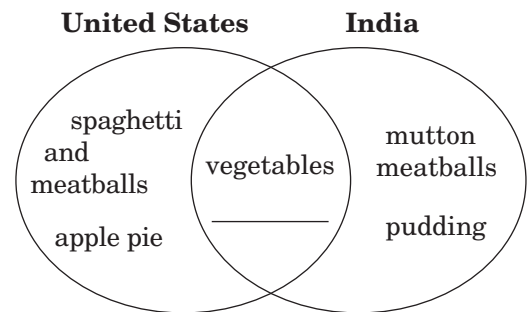
- 11 “Then how do blind people there know what time it is—whether it is day or night?” Mr. di Francesco asked.
- 12 “They have to ask someone, or learn to tell from the morning and night sounds. I suppose that things *are* a little backward there. That is why I had to leave my family and come here for education.”
- 13 “The food is getting cold,” Mrs. di Francesco said.
- 14 I picked up my fork and knife with trembling fingers and aimed for six. I suddenly wanted to cry.
- 15 “You look homesick,” Mrs. di Francesco said.
- 16 I nodded, and tried to eat. A sense of relief engulfed me: we had mutton meatballs at home all the time, and they didn’t require a knife. But the relief was short-lived: I had never had spaghetti, and the strands were long and tended to bunch together. They stretched from my mouth to my plate—a sign of my Indian backwardness, I thought. I longed for the kedgeree at home, easily managed with a spoon.
- 17 Mrs. di Francesco reached over and showed me how to wrap the spaghetti around my fork, shake it, and pick it up. Even so, I took big bites when I thought that Mrs. di Francesco was not looking—when she was talking to Mr. di Francesco. Later in the meal, it occurred to me that I was eating the food that Daddyji had eaten when he was a student abroad. I resolutely bent my face over the plate and started eating in earnest.
- 18 Mrs. di Francesco took away our plates and served us something else, and I reached for my spoon.
- 19 “That’s eaten with a fork,” she said.
- 20 I attacked it with a fork. “It is a pudding with a crust!” I cried. “I have never eaten anything like it.”
- 21 “It’s not a pudding—it’s apple pie,” Mrs. di Francesco said. “By the way, we’re having scrambled eggs for breakfast. Is that all right?”
- 22 I confessed that I didn’t know what they were, and she described them to me.
- 23 “Oh, I know—rumble-tumble eggs!” I exclaimed. “I like them very much.”
- 24 They both laughed. “British-Indian English is really much nicer than American English,” Mr. di Francesco said. “You should keep it. In fact, I’ll adopt ‘rumble-tumble.’”

- 25 I felt sad that I had come to America for my studies instead of going to England first, as Daddyji had done. But no school in England had accepted me.
- 26 “We’ve heard so much about India from Uncle Manmath,” Mrs. di Francesco said. “It must be a very exciting place.”
- 27 “Yes, tell us about India,” Mr. di Francesco said.
- 28 I felt confused. I couldn’t think of what to say or how to say it.
- 29 “You look tired,” Mrs. di Francesco said, patting me on the arm.
- 30 “I cannot think of the right English words sometimes,” I said.
- 31 Mrs. di Francesco cleared some things off the table and said, “Don’t worry. Now that you’re here, your English will improve quickly.”
- 32 She went to the kitchen and started washing the plates while Mr. di Francesco and I lingered at the table—much as we might at home.

44 Which sentence from the selection indicates when the narrator discovers a similarity between his life in India and life at the di Francesco’s?

- A** *Mrs. di Francesco reached over and showed me how to wrap the spaghetti around my fork, shake it, and pick it up.*
- B** *As a Hindu, I had never eaten beef, and the mere thought of it was revolting.*
- C** *She went to the kitchen and started washing the plates while Mr. di Francesco and I lingered at the table—much as we might at home.*
- D** *“British-Indian English is really much nicer than American English,” Mr. di Francesco said.*

Look at the following diagram that shows some foods mentioned in this selection.



- 45 Which of these foods belongs on the line?**
- A** fish flakes
- B** eggs
- C** beef
- D** mutton

46 Why does the narrator revise “There is nothing primitive or backward in India” to “I suppose that things *are* a little backward there”?

- A** He wants to explain why eating dinner is difficult.
- B** He knows that he exaggerated in making his first statement.
- C** He wants to please his host.
- D** He wants to explain why he wears a Swiss watch, not a watch made in India.

47 Which would be the best resource for finding more information about eating habits in India?

- A** a Web site for Indian tourism
- B** a book with the title *India: Country of Transition*
- C** an encyclopedia entry, “India: Regional Foods”
- D** a magazine article, “Of Indian Feasts and Carnivals”

48 How can readers tell that this is an autobiography and not a biography?

- A** It is an account based on facts about a person’s life.
- B** It includes characters, setting, and conflict.
- C** It contains descriptions that appeal to the five senses.
- D** It is written from the first-person point of view and uses the pronoun *I*.

49 What did the author intend the purpose to be for reading this selection?

- A** to understand the experiences and feelings of a blind newcomer to the United States
- B** to learn how difficult ordinary activities can be for blind people
- C** to discover why blind people deserve the same opportunities as others
- D** to compare daily life in India and in the United States

- 50** When summarizing this selection, which of these ideas would be least important to include?
- A** The narrator discovers that pie is eaten with a fork.
 - B** The narrator will stay with Mrs. di Francesco and her husband, John, who is blind.
 - C** The narrator, a young blind man, has come from India to attend a school for the blind in the United States.
 - D** The narrator encounters language, foods, and ways of doing things that are different from those in India.

The Art and Science of Babysitting

1 They weren't bad kids, not really. Rita knew they were just cranky from being overly tired and not the least bit interested in washing their hands and faces or brushing their teeth or going to bed at eight o'clock, all of which their mother insisted they do. Rita was tired from an afternoon of basketball practice and not in the mood to deal with them. Besides, she had to study for a test the next day—one that would determine her science grade. But she'd agreed a week ago to babysit, and here she was—babysitting.

2 After several failed attempts to sweet-talk the boys into doing what needed to be done, Rita had an idea and went into the kitchen to get what she needed. Then she chased down Charlie and Seth and carried them, kicking and yelling, into the bathroom. Both were curious as monkeys and stubborn as mules. They looked scornfully at the sink she'd filled with water and left no room for doubt about their intentions, which involved not having anything to do with it.

3 “Have you ever washed your face and hands with purple water?” Rita asked.

4 They stopped trying to escape and looked at her. “No,” said Charlie. “No,” said Seth.

5 “Water isn't purple,” said Seth. Charlie, who tended to disagree with his younger brother, had to agree with this statement. He nodded. “It's not,” he said.

6 “Oh, it can be,” she replied. She reached over the sink and squirted blue and red food coloring into the water. “If you dip your hands into the water, the water will turn purple,” she said.

7 The boys, already fascinated by the swirls of color, immediately complied and, as Rita had predicted, their movements turned the water purple. They were disappointed that their hands did not take on the same shade, but Rita had not been foolish enough to add the large amount of coloring needed to cause such a result. She refilled the sink to wash their faces, but this time she made the water green. The children were in such a good mood at this point that getting their teeth brushed, even with clear water, was a snap.

8 One more challenge remained. Rita had no doubt that she could get the two exhausted children to sleep with a story; the problem was getting them into bed and keeping them there long enough.

- 9 “There’s a game I know,” she said, “that I think you’ll like. But we’ll play it only if you get into your beds.”
- 10 “Do the sheets turn purple?” asked Charlie. “Or green?”
- 11 “Well, no,” she replied. “I’ll tell you about it when your pajamas are on and you’re each in your own bed.”
- 12 The boys weren’t sure about this plan, so they stalled awhile, fiddling with the remote control and their beloved video games, but curiosity got the best of them. Ten minutes later they were in their pajamas and their beds.
- 13 “Now,” said Rita, “time for the game. It’s a test. If you each get five right answers, you get a story. If you don’t . . . no story. Ready?”
- 14 The boys nodded solemnly. Rita began. “OK, Charlie, you go first. Here’s your question. If a lot of rain started coming in that open window there by your bed, and you and your teddy bear began to get wet, what would be the best thing to do? Would it be best to lie there and yell for help, to shut the window yourself, or to go crawl in with your brother and sleep in his bed?”
- 15 Rita was making up the answer key for the test as she went along, of course, and was willing to be flexible in her grading, but she didn’t need to be. “Shut the window!” said Charlie triumphantly. Seth correctly answered his question too—one about sports played with a racket—and then another about the biggest animal being a whale.
- 16 “What fruit must be peeled before eating: watermelon, apple, or banana?” asked Rita.
- 17 “Banana!” Charles answered gleefully, showing off for his brother about his cleverness.
- 18 Then they each got three more questions right. And then they got a story.
- 19 Just as Rita had thought, they were sound asleep before the bunny rabbit finished tricking the fox and made his way safely home. Rita sighed contentedly, glad that she would have time to study for her own test, which she was pretty sure would not be quite as easy as the one the boys had taken.

- 51 **How does Rita get the boys to wash their hands and faces?**
- A by calmly insisting
 - B by threatening them
 - C by promising a game
 - D by making the event seem special
- 52 **The quality that Rita has that is most helpful to her is**
- A humor.
 - B patience.
 - C creativity.
 - D strictness.
- 53 **Why is Rita tired at the beginning of the passage?**
- A She has been studying.
 - B She has been at basketball practice.
 - C She has been babysitting since early in the morning.
 - D She stayed up too late the previous night.

- 54 **Which word is a synonym for complied in paragraph 7?**

- A argued
- B ignored
- C confused
- D obeyed

- 55 **Read the following sentences from the passage.**

“The boys weren’t sure about this plan, so they stalled awhile, fiddling with the remote control and their beloved video games, but curiosity got the best of them. Ten minutes later they were in their pajamas and their beds.”

As used in the passage, what does the phrase curiosity got the best of them mean?

- A The boys finally could not resist Rita’s offer to play a game.
- B The boys finally got tired and fell asleep.
- C The boys became distracted by television and video games.
- D The boys became worried that Rita would report their behavior to their mother.

56 Which **best** describes how Rita most likely feels at the end of the passage?

- A relieved and looking forward to enjoying the rest of the evening
- B satisfied with herself but still concerned about her science test
- C exhausted from the day but relaxed and free of worry
- D annoyed and determined never to babysit again in her life

57 The strategies Rita uses while babysitting are **best** described as

- A enjoyable but unsuccessful.
- B dishonest and unfair.
- C tricky but effective and fun.
- D successful but overly strict.

58 Which sentence contains a simile?

- A “Both were curious as monkeys.”
- B “She refilled the sink to wash their faces, but this time she made the water green.”
- C “Rita had no doubt that she could get the two exhausted children to sleep with a story; the problem was getting them into bed and keeping them there long enough.”
- D “She reached over the sink and squirted blue and red food coloring into the water.”

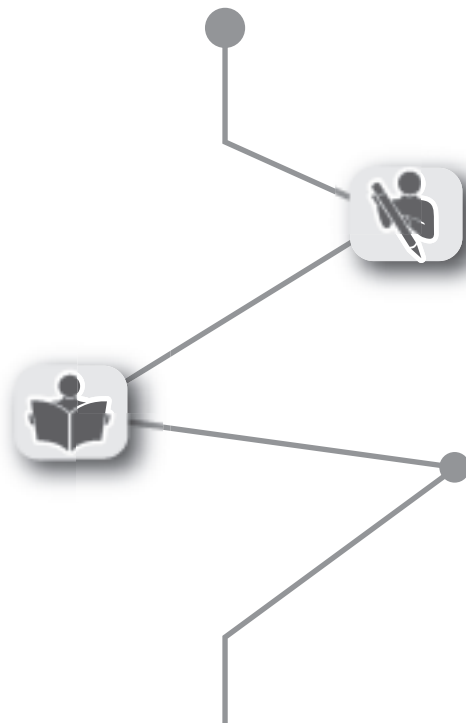
59 Which sentence **best** represents the resolution of the story?

- A “Then she chased down Charlie and Seth and carried them, kicking and yelling, into the bathroom.”
- B “They weren’t bad kids, not really.”
- C “Seth correctly answered his question too—one about sports played with a racket—and then another about the biggest animal being a whale.”
- D “Just as Rita had thought, they were sound asleep before the bunny rabbit finished tricking the fox and made his way safely home.”

60 What is **most likely** the author’s primary purpose for this passage?

- A to teach readers how to babysit
- B to entertain readers
- C to persuade readers to be responsible
- D to inform readers about games to play while babysitting

STOP



Writing Practice Test



Directions

While your teacher reads the following writing prompt aloud, read along silently.

Planning Page

Writing Prompt:

Your life has been affected by many different people, some of whom you know and some of whom you have only heard about. Think about a person who has had a positive effect on your life.

Explain who this person is and how and why they have had a positive effect on your life.



Plan your composition on the sheets provided by your teacher. You might consider using a web, cluster, list, story map, or any other way to organize your writing.

Revising and Editing Checklist

- Did I write about the topic and address all parts of the prompt?
- Are my ideas expressed in complete sentences?
- Did I explain or support my ideas with enough details?
- Are the details that I included directly related to my topic?
- Have I arranged my writing so that the reader will clearly understand it?
- Do my paragraphs have topic sentences when appropriate?
- Did I start each sentence with a capital letter and capitalize other appropriate words?
- Have I used correct punctuation at the end of each sentence and within each sentence?
- Is my spelling correct throughout my writing?
- Will the reader be able to read my handwriting?

Writing Prompt:

Your life has been affected by many different people, some of whom you know and some of whom you have only heard about. Think about a person who has had a positive effect on your life.

Explain who this person is and how and why they have had a positive effect on your life.



Write your composition on the sheets provided by your teacher.

STOP