

Walk the Plank!

W.M. Akers

Walking the plank is not a fun thing to do. Here's how it works. A pirate sticks a long piece of wood off the side of his ship and makes you stand at one end. He puts his sword at your back and bellows, "Walllllk the plank!" You walk across the plank toward the water. When you run out of plank, you fall in the water. Probably there are sharks down there. The ship sails away, and that's the end of you.

The thing is, pirates never really made anyone walk the plank. This may surprise you, since it's in a lot of movies and TV shows. It's a nasty thing to do, and pirates were pretty nasty, so it *seems* like something they would do. But in fact walking the plank was imagined by Robert Louis Stevenson, a 19th century novelist, whose most famous book is *Treasure Island*. A fictional pirate like Long John Silver might make you walk the plank, but a real-life pirate never would.

That is what was going through Tommy's mind as he stood on the end of the plank staring out at his doom. His best friend Jack stood behind him. Tommy felt the point of Jack's wooden sword digging into his back.

"I said, walllllk the plank!" shouted Jack.

"The thing is," said Tommy, "pirates never really made people walk the plank. That was invented by Robert Louis Stevenson, who—"

"I'm a pirate! Do you think I care about books?"

They were standing on the edge of Jack's tree house, which had a lot of uses. Sometimes it was a submarine. Sometimes it was a spaceship. Sometimes it was just a tree house. That afternoon, it was serving as a pirate ship. They had been pirates all afternoon, and everything was going fine until Tommy made the mistake of criticizing his captain. Jack was always the captain, since this was his tree house. And Captain Jack's number one rule was that the crew must never question his orders.

So when the Captain ordered his first mate to hand over three chocolate chip cookies, Tommy was supposed to do so without complaint. But chocolate chip cookies were his favorite. He'd suffered through a whole boring bologna sandwich to get to them, and now that he was finished, Jack wanted to take them away. Tommy didn't care who was the captain. He stuffed all three cookies into his mouth and chewed as fast as he could. And so Captain Jack sentenced him to walk the plank.

"I'm getting tired of waiting, Mister Tommy. Walllllk the plank!"

Tommy looked at the ground. They had jumped out of the tree house tons of times, but it was easy when you had a running start. It would be harder to just walk into thin air. He could see why Robert Louis Stevenson thought this would be a scary thing. There was no way out. Unless...what would a pirate do?

Tommy didn't hesitate. He spun around as fast as he could and kicked his leg into the air. Jack's sword went flying, and before Jack knew what had happened, Tommy leapt onto the sword. He popped up and pointed it at Jack's back.

"Yaaargh!"

"What are you doing?" whined Jack.

"This is a mutiny! I'm the captain now. And I say that you have to walllllk the plank!"

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What were Jack and Tommy pretending the tree house was?

- A an island
- B a spaceship
- C a submarine
- D a pirate ship

2. What is the main conflict in this story?

- A Jack wants to eat all the cookies, but Tommy wants to share them.
- B Jack wants Tommy to walk the plank, but Tommy does not want to.
- C Tommy wants Jack to let him be Captain, but Jack does not want to.
- D Tommy wants to stop pretending to be pirates, but Jack does not want to.

3. Read these sentences from the text.

"So when the Captain ordered his first mate to hand over three chocolate chip cookies, Tommy was supposed to do so without complaint. But chocolate chip cookies were his favorite. He'd suffered through a whole boring bologna sandwich to get to them, and now that he was finished, Jack wanted to take them away. Tommy didn't care who was the captain. He stuffed all three cookies into his mouth and chewed as fast as he could."

Based on this evidence, what conclusion can you draw about how Tommy felt?

- A Tommy felt neutral and did not mind that Captain Jack wanted the cookies.
- B Tommy felt a little sad, but thought Captain Jack was being fair.
- C Tommy felt annoyed and thought Captain Jack's order was unfair.
- D Tommy felt calm, but thought Captain Jack's order was unfair.

4. Tommy is afraid to walk the plank. What evidence from the text best supports this conclusion?

- A "You walk across the plank toward the water. When you run out of plank, you fall in the water."
- B "A fictional pirate like Long John Silver might make you walk the plank, but a real-life pirate never would."
- C "[Tommy] could see why Robert Louis Stevenson thought [walking the plank] would be a scary thing."
- D "Tommy didn't hesitate. He spun around as fast as he could and kicked his leg into the air."

5. What is the main idea of this story?

- A While pretending they are pirates, Jack orders Tommy to walk the plank, but Tommy finds a way out.
- B While playing pirates, Jack orders Tommy to give him three chocolate chip cookies.
- C Although walking the plank is common in movies and TV shows, real pirates would not make someone walk the plank.
- D Jack and Tommy enjoy playing pretend in Jack's tree house.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

"So when the Captain ordered his first mate to hand over three chocolate chip cookies, Tommy was supposed to do so without complaint. But chocolate chip cookies were his favorite. He'd suffered through a whole boring bologna sandwich to get to them, and now that he was finished, Jack wanted to take them away. Tommy didn't care who was the captain. He stuffed all three cookies into his mouth and chewed as fast as he could. And so Captain Jack sentenced him to walk the plank.

"I'm getting tired of waiting, Mister Tommy. Walk the plank!"

As used in this context, what does the word "sentence" mean?

- A a kind suggestion
- B a complete unit in language
- C to order a punishment
- D to help or assist

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

Jack was always the captain _____ this was his tree house.

- A however
- B therefore
- C although
- D because

8. What did Tommy do that caused Captain Jack to sentence him to walk the plank?

9. How does Tommy avoid walking the plank?

10. Explain why Tommy decides to become the captain and order Jack to walk the plank. Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Sticky Fingers, Helping Hands

by ReadWorks



Who doesn't enjoy a chocolate bar?

Okay, maybe not everyone loves chocolate, but a lot of people do. No matter the vehicle-ice cream, cake, as a beverage, or simply in a candy bar-chocolate is enjoyed by millions of Americans. It's readily available, too; all you have to do for a taste is visit a corner market or a drug store, and you'll find a shelf of various chocolate bars waiting.

A lot goes into a chocolate bar, though, and ultimately, its origins trace back further than the grocery store checkout line. Your favorite Halloween candy has roots even deeper than the company that manufactured it. The next time you get to indulge, take a look at the candy wrapper. What's the most important ingredient in a chocolate bar, the one that makes chocolate...well, chocolaty? It's cocoa.

The origins of that corner-store chocolate bar start in fields along the Equator, in countries in South America, Africa, and South Asia. Cocoa comes from the seeds of cacao trees, which thrive in hot, humid climates. This is why most of the world's supply comes from places like Ghana or Nigeria in West Africa. Some cocoa is harvested in countries like Brazil, near the cacao tree's original habitat.

Chocolate farming may sound like a dream job, but unfortunately, the reality of life on a cocoa

farm is less than idyllic. Cocoa farms are usually located in small villages in remote areas of countries that are still developing a lot of the luxuries taken for granted by people who live in first world countries: running water, reliable electricity, accessible education, and so on.

The demand for chocolate throughout the world is high, so farmers work extremely hard to pick cocoa pods. The average workday hours an American may be used to do not apply on these farms-workers don't get scheduled breaks or eight-hour shifts. Laws restricting child labor don't apply here, either. Some cocoa farms use slave labor, buying and selling people as young as children to work long days in dangerous conditions.

Additionally, many of these cocoa farmers aren't making much money, even though the world population loves its chocolate! Sometimes, greedy middlemen-a term for the marketers and salespeople who buy cocoa pods from farmers and sell them to chocolate makers around the world-buy for very little and sell for a much higher price. This means the traders are the ones making money, instead of the farmers.

As people involved in the global trade of cocoa began to find out about the slavery, child exploitation, and unsafe conditions on cocoa farms, they started to demand change. National and international regulations emerged to help regulate the labor and trade of other crops, such as coffee and tea. Cocoa joined the list of commodities that could be "fair trade."

Fair trade is a term that applies to anything farmed or made and traded, usually from small communities in developing countries to bigger communities with first world economies. The fair trade movement aims to fix the ugly scenarios on places like cocoa farms: lots of hard work, no access to medicine, not enough food, and definitely no fair pay.

To be certified as a fair trade product, a farm must adhere to some important rules. First of all, farming practices must be earth-friendly. Sustainability is a big issue for farmers worldwide, and fair trade organizations take it seriously. If a farm can't treat the land well, will it also treat its workers poorly?

Then, the concept of fair trade requires living and work conditions for laborers that are safe and clean. Fair trade certified operations promise better lives for the people doing the work. Fair trade organizations also prohibit the use of child labor and fight back against slave trafficking.

Finally (and this is where the "fair" part of fair trade really comes in), fairly traded products typically sell at higher prices to consumers so that the producers-the cocoa farmers-are getting paid a fair amount, often designated by the country's minimum wage.

Becoming fair trade certified is a process, and certification is sometimes expensive. However,

once an operation is fair trade certified, the farmers start to earn more money, as their products sell at a higher price. With increased profits, working conditions will also improve.

How can you tell the difference between fair trade chocolate and something that isn't? Look at the label on the candy you're about to enjoy. If there's a symbol on it that reads "Fair Trade Certified," you'll know that the cocoa in your chocolate bar didn't come from a farm that hurts its workers-and that's definitely something sweet.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Which ingredient makes a chocolate bar taste chocolaty?

- A. sugar
- B. butter
- C. cocoa
- D. milk

2. The problem explained in the passage is that cocoa farmers worked in poor conditions for very low pay. What was the solution?

- A. Cocoa became a fair trade product, which helped farmers to be paid more.
- B. Cocoa farmers formed a union to petition their governments for better pay.
- C. Cocoa farmers stopped harvesting cocoa until their wages were raised.
- D. Cocoa farmers got used to the poor working conditions and accepted them.

3. Some cocoa farms use unethical methods to harvest cocoa. What evidence from the passage best supports this conclusion?

- A. "Chocolate farming may sound like a dream job, but unfortunately, the reality of life on a cocoa farm is less than idyllic."
- B. "Cocoa farms are usually located in small villages in remote areas of countries that are still developing a lot of the luxuries taken for granted by people who live in first world countries."
- C. "Some cocoa farms use slave labor, buying and selling people as young as children to work long days in dangerous conditions."
- D. "The average workday hours an American may be used to do not apply on these farms-workers don't get scheduled breaks or eight-hour shifts."

4. Read the following sentences: "As people involved in the global trade of cocoa began to find out about the slavery, child exploitation, and unsafe conditions on cocoa farms, they started to demand change." Based on this information, what conclusion can you make?

- A. People in the cocoa trade already knew about the use of slavery on cocoa farms.
- B. People did not agree with the use of slavery or child labor on cocoa farms.
- C. People wanted to change the unsafe conditions on cocoa farms, but didn't care about slavery.
- D. People wanted to end child exploitation on cocoa farms, but not unsafe conditions.

5. What is this passage mostly about?

- A. the development of fair trade cocoa
- B. how chocolate is made from cocoa pods
- C. the process of becoming fair trade certified
- D. slavery and child labor on cocoa farms in Africa

6. Read the following sentences: "A lot goes into a chocolate bar, though, and ultimately, its **origins** trace back further than the grocery store checkout line. Your favorite Halloween candy has roots even deeper than the company that manufactured it."

As used in this sentence, what does the word "**origins**" mean?

- A. a company that makes chocolate
- B. the process of making something
- C. transporting goods between two places
- D. beginnings, the source of something

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

There is a high demand for chocolate worldwide, _____ many cocoa farmers do not make much money due to greedy middlemen.

- A. so
- B. yet
- C. after
- D. namely

8. What does the fair trade movement aim to fix?

9. Explain the rules a farm must adhere to in order to be certified as fair trade.

10. Explain how the fair trade movement helps improve the lives of cocoa farmers. Support your answer using information from the passage.

A New Letter for the Alphabet

by ReadWorks



In 2008, a man who lived in Detroit named Jerrold Foke, whom everyone called "Uncle Jerrold," came up with an unusual idea. Foke was an amateur linguist, a person who studies words and language. Foke had realized that for a long time, there had only been 26 letters in the English alphabet. He had consulted another alphabet, called the phonetic alphabet-which is like an alphabet for sounds-and came across a symbol that sparked his interest. It looks like an upside-down, lowercase "e" (""") and represents the sound, "uh," like the noise you make when you're confused. It is called the "schwa." Foke thought it might be time for a new letter to be added.

Jerrold had a good reason for wanting to add a new letter to the English alphabet. He thought that if English got a new letter, then people might be able to make new words. He reasoned that if people made new words, they might be able to communicate better. If they were able to communicate better, they might get along better. Plus, he thought, people might enjoy making new words. There are lots of things for which the English language has no word. Why not use the schwa to make words to describe these things?

Jerrold began telling everyone he knew about the schwa. He requested that friends help him make new words using the schwa. People would use the schwa to make an "uh" sound in the word. His friends thought this was a pretty good idea.

Jerrold lived in a hotel in downtown Detroit. Every day, when he went down to the lobby, someone he knew would tell him a new word he'd made. One person gave him the word "fundzlow" spelled with the schwa. The definition of "fundzlow" is to not have much money. If you were to use it in a sentence, you might say, "Hey, I'm sorry I can't pay you back-my fundzlow." Jerrold began working "fundzlow" into everyday conversations, hoping it would catch on.

In an effort to spread the schwa still farther, Jerrold began to spend some of his days standing in Campus Martius Plaza, in the center of town, with a sign that said "Have you heard about the schwa?" People would approach him and he would explain his quest. He liked to share some of the words he and his

friends had made, and then invite these people to make their own schwa-based words. Some people did so enthusiastically, while others were more skeptical about the schwa's potential. When people asked Jerrold where the schwa should go in the alphabet, he'd always say, "In the front." When people asked him why, he'd say, "Because that's where it belongs."

At the same time, Uncle Jerrold was writing short stories. Many of the short stories included words that were made from the schwa. Jerrold would self-publish these stories, printing them out, and binding them with string into a small book. At the same time, he was trying to convince publishing houses to publish a novel that he had written. He reasoned that if the novel, which included schwa words, was published by a major publisher, the schwa would then, by default, be added to the English language. Since there is no authoritative organization that decides which letters are part of English and which aren't, he figured that having a publisher publish a book with the new letter would be as close to an official acceptance as he was likely to get.

One day, a reporter wrote a story about Jerrold and the schwa for a local newspaper. Shortly after, several colleges in the area called Jerrold and asked him to come and talk about the schwa to some of their linguistics students. Jerrold was very pleased. While not all of the professors agreed the schwa should be part of the English alphabet-some thought there were quite enough letters already, thank you-the idea of someone adding a word intrigued them and they happily listened to Jerrold's ideas. Jerrold was happy because the lectures gave him a wider audience to spread the schwa to. To his delight, some of these students have shared new schwa-based words with him.

Even five years after he had his idea, Jerrold was continuing to push for the schwa's inclusion. While a publisher had not published his novel, the schwa had been getting wider usage throughout the Detroit area, and Jerrold came to be considered the leading regional authority on the schwa and its uses. While he continued to work at his day job-as a sailor-he often thought of pursuing writing full-time.

Because of Jerrold's work, people were encouraged to make their own words, whether using the schwa or not. His goal of increasing communication between different people remained one that was greatly valued.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is the schwa?

- A. a symbol that Jerrold Foke wants to add to the English alphabet
- B. a book that Jerrold Foke is trying to get published
- C. a debate between two groups about language and the alphabet
- D. a new word that someone introduces to a language and tries to spread

2. What does the passage describe?

- A. The passage describes a lecture that Jerrold gave to a college linguistics class.
- B. The passage describes all the letters in the phonetic alphabet and what their sounds are.
- C. The passage describes many different hotels and plazas found in the city of Detroit.
- D. The passage describes the schwa and what someone has done to increase its use.

3. Jerrold has written and self-published stories using words with the schwa. He has spoken about the schwa in college classes. He has spent days standing in Campus Martius Plaza with a sign reading, "Have you heard about the schwa?"

What can be concluded from this information?

- A. Jerrold is more interested in being a sailor than in being a full-time writer.
- B. Jerrold has done a lot to increase the use of the schwa.
- C. Jerrold does not care about whether the schwa becomes widely used.
- D. Some people do not think that the schwa should be added to the English alphabet.

4. How can people's attitudes toward making the schwa part of the English alphabet be described?

- A. completely supportive
- B. completely negative
- C. completely excited
- D. mixed

5. What is this passage mostly about?

- A. how Jerrold Foke got the nickname "Uncle Jerrold"
- B. the short stories written by Jerrold Foke and the novel he is trying to get published
- C. what a man in Detroit has done to spread the use of the schwa
- D. the importance of improving communication between people

6. Read the following sentences: "He reasoned that if people made new words, they might be able to **communicate** better. If they were able to **communicate** better, they might get along better."

What does the word **communicate** mean above?

- A. give and receive information
- B. watch over and defend from danger
- C. provide money to someone
- D. lead a healthy life

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Jerrold wants to add a new letter to the English alphabet, _____ not everyone thinks a new letter is necessary.

- A. therefore
- B. but
- C. so
- D. soon

8. What sound does the schwa represent?

9. What is the "good reason" Jerrold had for wanting to add a new letter to the English alphabet?

10. Should the schwa become part of the English alphabet? Explain why or why not, using evidence from the passage.

Honey to the Bee

by ReadWorks



Bees are flying insects that feed on nectar and pollen. They are usually yellow and black and covered in fuzzy hair that makes collecting pollen easier. A bee's body is similar to that of other insects—for instance, an ant—with three major sections: the head, the middle section called the thorax, and the last section called the abdomen. The head of a bee has five eyes for seeing and two antennae for touching and smelling. Two sets of wings and three sets of legs can be found on a bee's thorax. Depending on the type of bee, the last set of legs might have little sacs that store the pollen that the bee has collected from flowers. Many types of bees have stingers. The bee stinger is the most feared part of a bee, and for good reason. Filled with poison, the stinger is a bee's protection from danger. The stingers are around 12 millimeters long. There are over 20,000 known bee species in the world. The best known is probably the honeybee.

Honeybees live in beehives, which have a distinct order that helps things run smoothly. At the bottom of the totem pole are the workers. Workers are young female bees. Some of their main duties include going out to find food (nectar and pollen), building the hive, and keeping it clean. Honeybees will travel up to eight miles if necessary to find nectar and pollen to bring

back to the hive. Worker bees are actually the only bees that ever do any stinging. When this does happen, it is usually because they are trying to protect their hive from harm. A bee rarely stings when it is away from the hive, but it might sting if it senses danger. The lifespan of a worker bee is anywhere from 4 to 9 months.

The queen honeybee is the biggest bee in the hive. There is usually only one per hive, and her job is to grow the family by laying eggs that will become the next generation of honeybees. She lays over a thousand eggs per day and can live anywhere from 3 to 5 years. When the time comes for a new queen to take over, some larvae are placed in special chambers to grow queen bees. These larvae are fattened up with royal jelly, a nutritious substance that worker bees secrete. It usually takes about two weeks for a female larva to grow into a queen bee. The first female bee to become a queen bee kills the other potential queen bees.

Male honeybees are called drones. They don't have stingers, and they don't collect nectar or pollen. Their only purpose is to mate with the queen. Several hundred drones can live in a hive at one time. As the winter months approach, the males are kicked out of the hive in order to make it easier for the queen and her workers to survive. Food needs to be saved as there are fewer flowers to collect pollen and nectar from. Less food means the drones are the first ones to go!

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is a bee?

- A. an insect that lives near water and eats fish
- B. a red-and-black insect that lives under the ground
- C. a flying insect that collects nectar and pollen
- D. a crawling insect with two sets of legs and no wings

2. What does this passage describe?

- A. wings, legs, mouths, and trees
- B. totem poles and winter weather
- C. different honeybees in a beehive
- D. poison and measurement

3. Different bees in a hive have different duties.

What evidence from the passage supports this statement?

- A. Worker bees gather food; the queen bee lays eggs.
- B. Bee stingers are about 12 millimeters long.
- C. Bees have two sets of wings and three sets of legs.
- D. The honeybee is probably the best known bee species.

4. Which bees are probably the least important bees in a beehive?

- A. worker bees
- B. the queen bee
- C. female bees
- D. drones

5. What is this passage mainly about?

- A. honeybees
- B. the bodies of bees
- C. different types of insects
- D. antennae and wings

6. Read the following sentences: "There are over 20,000 known bee **species** in the world. The best known is probably the honeybee."

What does the word "**species**" mean in the sentences above?

- A. colors or shades
- B. orders or levels
- C. kinds or types
- D. duties or jobs

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

There is less food available for the honeybees in the hive during the winter; _____, the drones are kicked out.

- A. never
- B. even though
- C. including
- D. consequently

8. What does a bee look like, according to the passage?

9. What are the main duties of worker bees?

10. Drones are the first bees to be kicked out of a beehive as the winter months approach. Why might this be? Make sure to consider the role of the drone in the beehive. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

The Echoing Green

by William Blake

The sun does arise,
And make happy the skies;
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring;
The skylark and thrush, 5
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around
To the bells' cheerful sound;
While our sports shall be seen
On the echoing Green. 10

Old John, with white hair,
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk.
They laugh at our play, 15
And soon they all say,
"Such, such were the joys
When we all--girls and boys--
In our youth-time were seen
On the echoing Green." 20

Till the little ones, weary,
No more can be merry:
The sun does descend,
And our sports have an end.
Round the laps of their mothers 25
Many sisters and brothers,
Like birds in their nest,
Are ready for rest,
And sport no more seen
On the darkening green. 30

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What arises at the beginning of the poem and descends at the end?

- A. the sun
- B. a bell
- C. a bird
- D. an oak tree

2. What is the setting of this poem?

- A. the nest of a bird
- B. a bush where birds live
- C. the echoing Green
- D. the home of Old John

3. Reread the second stanza of the poem:

Old John, with white hair,

Does laugh away care,

Sitting under the oak,

Among the old folk.

They laugh at our play,

And soon they all say,

"Such, such were the joys

When we all--girls and boys--

In our youth-time were seen

On the echoing Green."

What can you infer from this stanza about Old John?

- A. Old John spends most of his time worrying.
- B. Old John used to play on the echoing Green.
- C. Old John likes being an old man more than he liked being a boy.
- D. Old John does not get along well with the other old folk.

4. Who or what are "the little ones" in line 21?

- A. young birds
- B. boys and girls
- C. mothers
- D. old folk

5. What is the theme of this poem?

- A. the disappointments of old age
- B. the importance of hard work
- C. the power of dreams
- D. the joy of playing outdoors

6. What is the effect of using personification in lines 2 and 4?

- A. Personification suggests that nature can be dangerous.
- B. Personification contrasts birds with human beings.
- C. Personification explains the difference between skylarks and thrushes.
- D. Personification creates a mood of happiness.

7. Whom does "our" refer to in line 15?

- A. the old folks sitting together under an oak tree
- B. the people who ring merry bells to welcome the spring
- C. the boys and girls playing on the echoing Green
- D. the mothers around whose laps many sisters and brothers gather

8. What "shall be seen" on the echoing Green?

9. Define the word "sports" as it is used in the poem. Support your definition with evidence from the text.

10. What is the echoing Green? Be sure to explain what the echoing Green actually is, not what takes place there. Support your answer with evidence from the poem.

Drip-Tips and other Adaptations in the Rainforest

by Mimi Jorling



Tropical rainforests have ideal climates for plant growth. Tropical rainforests are hot, humid, and wet. They have abundant rainfall and are warm year-round. Temperatures range from about 85 degrees Fahrenheit during the day to 70 at night. Tropical rainforests get at least 80 inches of rainfall each year. (Compare that to how much your town or city gets each year.) These two factors also create challenges for the plants that live there. As a result, plants in tropical rainforests have adapted to these conditions by making adjustments in how they grow.

The perfect conditions for plant life—warm temperatures and plenty of water—cause plants to grow quickly. One consequence of rapid plant growth is the depletion of nutrients in the soil. It also creates a thick layer of leaves in the upper part of the forest (the canopy) that blocks sunlight from reaching the forest floor.

Most plants get their nutrients, water, and oxygen from soil. However, in the rainforest, where soil is not nutrient-rich, many plants don't rely on it for their source of food. Some plants called epiphytes, or air plants, have learned to get water and nutrients from the air. Some examples of epiphytes in rainforests are mosses, lichens, and orchids. Although they often live on other plants, they don't take any nutrients from the other plant—they get what they need straight from the air with special root systems.

Other plants that grow on plants actually DO take nutrients from that plant. They are called parasitic plants, and the plant they grow on is called a host plant. Instead of getting food and water from the soil, parasitic plants have developed roots to cling to a host plant, pierce

through its leaves, stem, or trunk, and suck the nutrients out of the host. An example of a parasitic plant you might know is mistletoe. Parasitic plants can kill their host plant if they grow too rapidly. However, they tend to *not* kill their host plant because without a host, the parasitic plant will also die.

Another condition created by rapid plant growth is a lush canopy that shades out plants living below. Large trees grow quickly, reaching for sunlight. They create a dense shade that prevents sunlight from reaching the forest floor. In fact, only about 1 to 2% of sunlight reaches the ground in a tropical forest. Since plants depend on sunlight for growth, very few plants live on the ground. Instead, they find ways to live on other plants by climbing them, as vines do, or by growing very large, dark green leaves to absorb as much sunlight as possible.

Hot, humid, and wet conditions are also ideal for bacteria and fungi to grow. Water trapped in the crevices of a plant, in combination with warm temperatures, is a breeding ground for bacterial and fungal growth, which can harm plants. One adaptation many plants have made in the tropical forest is to develop smooth bark so that water runs off quickly. Another adjustment plants have made to shed water efficiently is to grow leaves with 'drip tips.' This shape prevents water from collecting on leaves. Look at the shape of leaves of plants around you. If possible, and after checking with an adult, gently pour water on the plant and watch where it goes. It may be channeled toward the stem of the plant or far away from it. These observations can give you clues to how a plant lives.

The environments plants and animals live in provide useful and harmful conditions for living. As a result, all living things must learn how to adapt to the challenges of where they live. These are some of the adaptations plants in a tropical rainforest have made to survive in their particular environment.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What are the climates of tropical rainforests ideal, or perfect, for?

- A. building roads
- B. raising cattle
- C. extreme sports
- D. plant growth

2. One effect of rapid plant growth is the depletion of nutrients in the soil. What is another effect of rapid plant growth?

- A. the depletion of animal life in the lower part of the rainforest
- B. the creation of a thick layer of leaves in the upper part of the rainforest
- C. an increase in temperature from 70 degrees Fahrenheit to 85 degrees Fahrenheit
- D. a decrease in rainfall from 80 inches each year to 65 inches each year

3. Read these sentences from the text:

"There are also some plants called parasitic plants. They grow on other plants, their host plants. Parasitic plants actually DO take nutrients from their host plants. Instead of getting food and water from the soil, parasitic plants have developed roots to cling to a host plant, pierce through its leaves, stem, or trunk, and suck the nutrients out of the host. An example of a parasitic plant you might know is mistletoe. Parasitic plants can kill their host plants if they grow too rapidly."

Based on this evidence, how might a rapidly growing parasitic plant kill its host plant?

- A. by sucking too many nutrients out of its host plant
- B. by sucking too few nutrients out of its host plant
- C. by preventing the host plant from taking in food and water from the soil
- D. by trying to help the host plant take in food and water from the soil

4. Read these sentences from the text:

"Another condition created by rapid plant growth is a lush canopy that shades out plants living below. Large trees grow quickly, reaching for sunlight. They create a dense shade that prevents sunlight from reaching the forest floor. In fact, only about 1% to 2% of sunlight reaches the ground in a tropical forest. Since plants depend on sunlight for growth, very few plants live on the ground. Instead, they find ways to live on other plants by climbing them, as vines do, or by growing very large, dark green leaves to absorb as much sunlight as possible."

Based on this information, what can you conclude about the connection between a leaf's size and the amount of sunlight it absorbs?

- A. The smaller a leaf is, the more sunlight it absorbs.
- B. The larger a leaf is, the more sunlight it absorbs.
- C. The connection between the size of a leaf and the amount of sunlight it absorbs cannot be predicted.
- D. Large leaves and small leaves absorb about the same amount of sunlight.

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. Some plants, such as mosses, lichens, and orchids, have learned to get water and nutrients from the air.
- B. Instead of getting food and water from the soil, parasitic plants have developed roots to cling to a host plant, pierce through its leaves, stem, or trunk, and suck out nutrients.
- C. Plants in tropical rainforests have adapted to their warm and wet conditions by making adjustments in how they grow.
- D. Water trapped in the crevices of a plant, in combination with warm temperatures, is a breeding ground for bacterial and fungal growth.

6. Read these sentences from the text:

"Some plants called epiphytes, or air plants, have adapted to get nutrients from the air. Some examples of epiphytes in rainforests are mosses, lichens, and orchids. Although they often live on other plants, they don't take any nutrients from the other plants—they get what they need straight from the air with special root systems.

There are also some plants called parasitic plants. They grow on other plants, their host plants. Parasitic plants actually DO take nutrients from their host plants."

Why might the author have capitalized the word "DO"?

- A. to point out a similarity
- B. to make a contrast
- C. to summarize a process
- D. to make an argument

7. Read these sentences from the text:

"Some plants called epiphytes, or air plants, have adapted to get nutrients from the air. Some examples of epiphytes in rainforests are mosses, lichens, and orchids. Although they often live on other plants, they don't take any nutrients from the other plants—they get what they need straight from the air with special root systems."

How could the last sentence best be broken in two?

- A. Although they often live on other plants, they don't take any nutrients from the other plant. As an illustration, they get what they need straight from the air with special root systems.
- B. Although they often live on other plants, they don't take any nutrients from the other plant. For example, they get what they need straight from the air with special root systems.
- C. Although they often live on other plants, they don't take any nutrients from the other plant. Third, they get what they need straight from the air with special root systems.
- D. Although they often live on other plants, they don't take any nutrients from the other plant. Instead, they get what they need straight from the air with special root systems.

8. Describe the climate conditions of a tropical rainforest.

Include at least three pieces of information from the text.

9. Read these sentences from the text:

"Hot, humid, and wet conditions are also ideal for bacteria and fungi to grow. Water trapped in the crevices of a plant, in combination with warm temperatures, is a breeding ground for bacterial and fungal growth, which can harm plants. One adaptation many plants have made in the tropical forest is to develop smooth bark so that water runs off quickly."

Explain how the adaptation these plants have made might help them.

Support your answer with evidence from the text.

10. Plants in tropical rainforests have adapted to their conditions by making adjustments in how they grow. Support this conclusion with evidence from the text.

Spinning Thunderstorms

This article is provided courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History.

On a spring night in 2007, disaster struck a small town in Kansas called Greensburg. Shortly before 10 p.m., a siren went off. A mile-wide tornado was approaching Greensburg. And it wasn't just any tornado. It was a category EF5, the most powerful kind there is.

Its winds were estimated to be more than 200 miles per hour. In less than ten minutes, the town was destroyed and ten people lost their lives.

When the fury had passed, people clambered through the rubble. Cars and trucks had been thrown about. Homes were crushed, or simply ripped from the ground. "I'm in downtown Greensburg. There's really nothing left," said one resident.



Credit: FEMA Photo by Michael Raphael

The tornado destroyed much of the town. Many residents needed temporary housing.

How do tornadoes form?

A tornado is a swirling, funnel-shaped column of wind that gets its start from a thunderstorm. Thunderclouds form when warm, wet air collides with cool, dry air. Then, strong winds form into a wide tube of spinning air. When the tube touches the ground, it becomes a tornado.



Credit: NOAA

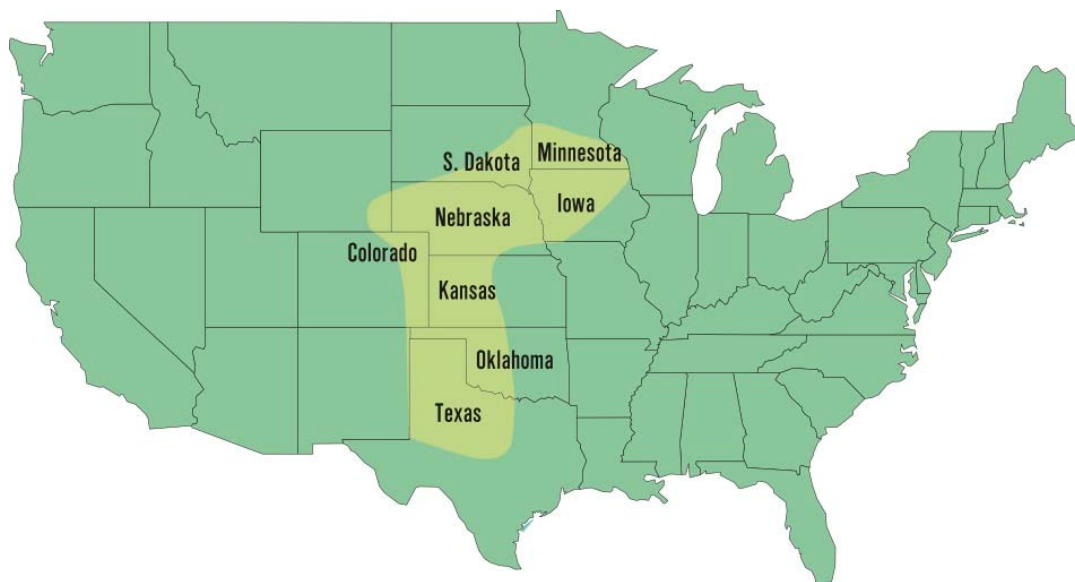
A tornado is a swirling, funnel-shaped column of wind. It stretches from a thunderstorm cloud down to the ground. A tornado gets its start when strong winds at high altitudes set a thunderstorm's winds rotating.



Credit: The Field Museum

The 200-plus-mph winds of a tornado can bend a stop sign.

Kansans are used to tornadoes. The people of Greensburg live smack in the middle of "Tornado Alley," an area that spans eight states in the Central United States. This region is a perfect thunderstorm factory. It has just what storms need to get started: cool, dry air from the Arctic mixing with warm, humid air from the Gulf of Mexico. Above the flat Great Plains, far from mountains and coastal weather, thunderstorms can form undisturbed. These conditions spawn more than 600 tornadoes, on average, in "Tornado Alley" every year.



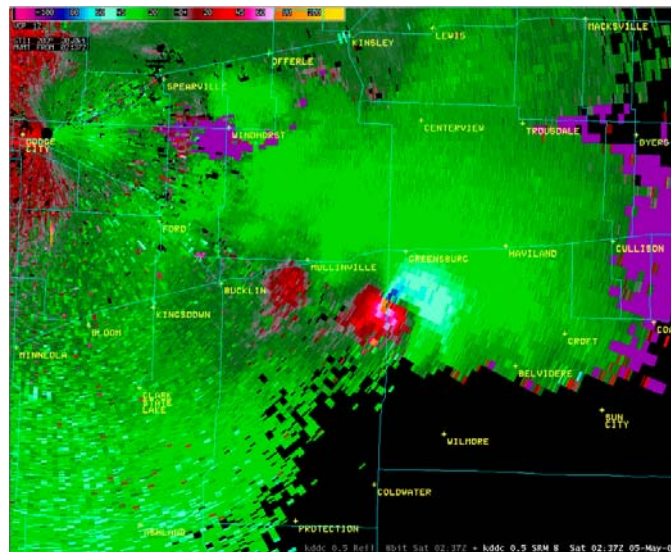
Credit: The Field Museum

More than 75% of all tornadoes in the world take place in "Tornado Alley."

How do scientists predict dangerous storms?

Meteorologists are scientists who study and forecast weather. They use a technology called radar to track storms. Weather radar works by detecting the precipitation (rain, snow, or hail) in approaching storms. The radar unit sends out a radio wave towards the storm. The radio wave bounces off the raindrops, hail or snow that is in the storm, and then returns to the radar unit. The amount of time it takes for the wave to return tells meteorologists how far away the storm is. Most radar units send out about 1,000 radio waves per second. This gives them detailed, up-to-the-minute information about the storm.

Using radar, forecasters can track the formation and path of severe storms like tornadoes. When a tornado takes shape, its winds blow raindrops in a circular pattern. When scientists see that pattern on a radar screen, they know that a tornado is developing. Although tornadoes have fast swirling winds, tornadoes themselves move relatively slowly across the land (18-30 miles per hour). So scientists can make reasonable forecasts about where they are headed. A system of tornado watches and warnings are used to alert the public to danger. A tornado “watch” means thunderstorm conditions exist that could spawn tornadoes. A “warning” means a tornado has touched down and been spotted.



Credit: NOAA

Doppler radar map shows the tornado shortly before it leveled most of Greensburg, Kansas.

This system saved many lives in Greensburg. After the tornado sirens shrieked, people had 20 minutes to escape to their basements and storm shelters before the tornado destroyed their town.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What happened to the town of Greensburg in 2007?

- A It was destroyed by a fire.
- B It was destroyed by a tornado.
- C It was destroyed by a hurricane.
- D It was destroyed by an earthquake.

2. What does this article explain?

- A how scientists use radar to track storms
- B how the town of Greensburg was rebuilt
- C how the system of tornado watches and warnings developed
- D how cool, dry air moves from the Arctic to the middle of the United States

3. Read this sentence from the article: "Kansans are used to tornadoes."

What evidence in the article supports this statement?

- A The tornado that destroyed Greensburg was a mile wide and had winds that were moving faster than 200 miles an hour.
- B A tornado came through Greensburg and destroyed the town 20 minutes after tornado sirens went off.
- C Kansans live in an area of the United States where a lot of tornadoes happen.
- D "Tornado Alley" has cool, dry air from the Arctic that mixes with warm, wet air from the Gulf of Mexico.

4. What might be a reason why scientists track tornadoes?

- A to encourage more people to use radar technology
- B to warn people against living in "Tornado Alley"
- C to lower the number of tornadoes that happen every year
- D to gather information that is used to warn people that a tornado is approaching

5. What is the main idea of this article?

- A Tornadoes are dangerous spinning storms, but storm tracking and a system of watches and warnings can lessen their danger.
- B "Tornado Alley" is an area in the middle of the United States where cool, dry air mixes with warm, wet air.
- C The tornado that struck Greensburg threw cars and trucks through the air, pulled homes out of the ground, and killed 10 people.
- D Radio waves give scientists information about approaching storms by traveling from a radar unit toward a storm and then returning to the radar unit.

6. Why might the author use headings such as “How do tornadoes form?” and “How do scientists predict dangerous storms?”

- A to make readers think more deeply about the effects of tornadoes
- B to suggest that there is still a lot to be learned about tornadoes
- C to provide information about the pictures included with the article
- D to help organize the information in the article

7. Select the word that best completes the sentence.

A tornado warning saved many lives in Greensburg _____ the town itself was destroyed.

- A after
- B although
- C because
- D for example

8. What is a tornado?

9. Explain how radar could be used to track a tornado. Support your answer with evidence from the article.

10. Could using radar to track a tornado help save lives? Explain why or why not, using evidence from the article.

Houston Affects the Earth

by ReadWorks



When Houston's mayor Bill White went to work in 2008, he knew the city needed to make some changes. The city of Houston, Texas, is home to over two million people. It is the fourth most populous city in the United States and it takes up about six hundred square miles of land. The city is located in the southeastern part of Texas. It sits on the Gulf of Mexico.

Houston is sometimes called the "Energy Capital of the World." This is because a lot of oil refineries, natural gas production, and other energy companies are in Houston. Energy runs Houston. It creates jobs and powers local businesses and homes. But energy also makes an impact on the local environment. The ships that come to Houston to deliver petroleum disrupt local marine environments by producing waste emissions, noise and pollution. The processes that turn crude oil into gasoline and other petrochemicals release chemicals into the air. Too many chemicals in the air lead to air pollution. This affects people in Houston as well as the animals that live in or fly through the area.

In 2008 Mayor White started a campaign to reduce pollution in Houston. He made local factories and oil refineries reduce pollution. Mayor White worked to reduce the impact of energy consumption in Houston. In 2008, he increased the use of solar energy in the city. He put solar panels on several city buildings. The sun shines a lot in Houston, so capturing energy from the sun is easy. The energy it produces does not create the kind of pollution created by coal, gas and oil. It can be stored in batteries for use at night.

People in Houston were coming to understand their impact on the Earth's environment. People in Houston, like people all over the United States, need gasoline in order to drive their cars. They also need natural gas and electricity to run their homes and businesses. This energy consumption increases the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere and changes the air quality.

People also need water to drink, bathe, wash their clothes, and prepare their food. People in Houston were starting to see that the water and food they used were taken out of the Houston-area environment. It was therefore not available for non-human use. These people started to ask themselves if they could use less. Could Houston have less impact on the environment?

In 2010 the people of Houston elected Annise Parker to be mayor. Mayor Parker wanted to build on the work Mayor White had done. She wanted Houston to be called the "Energy Conservation Capital of the World." She started a "Bike to Work Day" to encourage people to drive less. Driving less means people use less gasoline. That means less carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere.

Businesses worked with Mayor Parker to start "Lights Out Houston," a program that gets office buildings downtown to turn off their lights at night. Turning off the lights helps conserve electricity. Turning off the lights is also good for wildlife. A city that is bright at night can affect the way birds migrate. At night a large, bright city like Houston is even visible from outer space!

The people of Houston have applied the ideas of energy conservation to other areas, including water use and farming. The water in Houston comes from Lake Houston. Lake Houston is a reservoir, a holding facility for water that was created by building a dam on the San Jacinto River. The reservoir was completed in 1953 when the city needed to guarantee more water for its growing population. (A dam stops the flow of water in a river and creates a lake or reservoir. The lake or reservoir must be managed to make sure it does not overflow, and to protect the wildlife that live in the river.)

As Houston grows in terms of population, so will its need for water. The city of Houston now

sells rain barrels for rainwater collection. Rain barrels can be used to collect rainwater. This water can be used for watering gardens and lawns. Doing so will reduce the amount of water the city takes from Lake Houston.

The city has started community gardens. These gardens allow Houston residents to grow their vegetables in containers in the city. This way they do not have to rely as much on farms. Land that was used for farms might someday be allowed to rest. The animals that lived on the land before it was a farm could return. The water that was used to grow the plants on the farm would not be used.

Life in Houston has changed since 2008. The changes have been good for the environment.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What was the goal of the campaign Mayor White started in 2008?
 - A. to produce more coal, gas, and oil in Houston
 - B. to get people in Houston to drive less
 - C. to reduce pollution in Houston
 - D. to stop the ships from delivering petroleum to Houston

2. The city of Houston started more community gardens. What has been one effect of these gardens?
 - A. Vegetables are readily available to people that live in the city.
 - B. Animals are leaving the farms and going to the city gardens.
 - C. More farm land is being used to grow fruits and vegetables.
 - D. More water used on farms that grow fruits and vegetables is wasted.

3. Which of the following sentences provides evidence that the people of Houston took action to make their city a better place?
 - A. People in Houston were coming to understand their impact on the Earth's environment.
 - B. People in Houston, like people all over the United States, need gasoline in order to drive their cars.
 - C. People in Houston were starting to see that the water and food they used were taken out of the Houston-area environment.
 - D. The people of Houston have applied the ideas of energy conservation to other areas, including water use and farming.

4. What can be concluded about the way the recent mayors of Houston have viewed the issue of pollution?
 - A. Pollution is an issue that should be actively addressed.
 - B. Pollution is an issue which the people of Houston can do nothing about.
 - C. Pollution is an issue which politicians do not have the resources to address.
 - D. Pollution is an issue which can only be addressed at the state level.

5. What is the passage mostly about?

- A. how the people of Houston are conserving water
- B. how the people of Houston took steps to reduce their impact on the local environment
- C. how the people of Houston elected Mayors that were focused on reducing pollution
- D. how the people of Houston plan to deal with population growth

6. Read this sentence: "The ships that come to Houston to deliver petroleum **disrupt** local marine environments by producing waste emissions, noise, and pollution."

Which word could best replace the word **disrupt** as it is used in this sentence?

- A. assist
- B. upset
- C. interfere
- D. reduce

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Energy is good for Houston in that it creates jobs and powers homes and companies; _____, this same energy has a huge impact on the local environment.

- A. particularly
- B. thus
- C. second
- D. however

8. List at least two things Mayor White did to reduce pollution in Houston.

9. Houston is sometimes called the "Energy Capital of the World". Mayor Parker wanted Houston to be called the "Energy Conservation Capital of the World."

Explain the meaning of both titles and how they are connected.

10. Explain Mayor White's role in the efforts to reduce pollution in Houston that started in 2008. What might have happened had he not been elected? Use evidence from the passage to support your answer.

Adventure on a Hot Air Balloon

by ReadWorks



The wind is starting to blow stronger, and when you're riding in a basket under a hot air balloon, just 400 feet above ground, that's not necessarily a good thing. Keith Rodriguez looks to the horizon and squints. He had planned to take off from Scioto Downs, a horse racetrack south of Columbus, Ohio, fly a few miles north, and land his balloon in a barren cornfield next to his pickup truck.

Then the wind changed. Instead of a light breeze from the south, now Rodriguez's bright red balloon is getting hit by stronger, colder winds headed west. He has plenty of propane fuel in his tank—he probably could ride the wind halfway to Pennsylvania. But that would be dangerous. Rodriguez's choice of landing sites just became very limited. As the balloon switches direction and floats east, everything below becomes a wide carpet of suburban sprawl—big-box stores, major highways, and strip malls. Beyond the stores lie forests.

The only factor in Rodriguez's favor is that it's early, just after 7 a.m. The highways are filling up with people driving to work, but otherwise the morning is quiet and still.

"Oh boy," Rodriguez thinks. "If I don't land, like now, this could get bad."

The balloon has no propeller or engine, so Rodriguez can't change direction on his own—he's entirely dependent on the wind. The only thing he controls is altitude. He does this by changing the air temperature inside the balloon.

Sitting on the floor of the wicker gondola are three tanks of liquid propane. The tanks are connected via black rubber hoses to two burners overhead. Each burner is nearly as big as Rodriguez's head. Rodriguez turns a knob on one side of the burners. This releases propane from a tank into the heating coil, where the liquid propane is heated to a gas and mixed with the air. Then the mixture is ignited by a pilot light. The mixture catches fire, and flames leap two feet high into the balloon.

The balloon rises. Rodriguez has a plan in mind. The flame heats the air inside the nylon balloon. This works on a simple principle: hot air is lighter than cold air. One cubic foot of air weighs about an ounce. If you heat that air by 100 degrees Fahrenheit, its weight drops by about 7 grams. This means every cubic foot of heated air inside Rodriguez's balloon can lift about 7 grams. Just by himself, Rodriguez weighs 170 pounds, which equals about 77,110 grams. That means he needs about 11,016 cubic feet of hot air just to raise his own body off the ground. This is why hot air balloons are so big—they must trap tremendous amounts of heated air. Rodriguez's balloon is a common size, trapping about 100,000 cubic feet of air. The balloon is 80 feet tall and 60 feet wide. As Rodriguez gives his short burst of flame, the air inside swirls in complicated, invisible patterns.

To drop in altitude, Rodriguez can pull a cord attached to a parachute valve at the very top of the balloon. Since the hottest air sits at the top, this releases the balloon's most buoyant air, which makes the balloon descend.

Rodriguez gives the cord a short pull, and the gondola drops a little.

"I don't have an altimeter, and I can't really see anything happening inside the balloon," Rodriguez thinks. "I have to pilot by feel."

Pushed by the wind, the balloon is flying quickly now. It's floating over the back wall of a supermarket when Rodriguez grabs hold of the parachute valve cord and gives it a long, hard tug. The balloon drops. Quickly. The hot air balloon is sinking, but still flying forward.

It looks as though it's about to slam into the edge of the supermarket's roof, but it sails over it, with only about 15 feet to spare. Still, Rodriguez does not let go of the cord. He drops and drops, right between the light poles of the nearly empty parking lot. Just a few feet above the ground, Rodriguez releases the parachute cord, turns the knob above his head and fires both burners. The steep descent slows. The gondola touches lightly against the asphalt, and then drags to a stop. There are only two people in the parking lot, standing near the entrance to the store. They look toward the balloon, their eyes and mouths open wide in shock.

"That was a little closer than I expected," Rodriguez says to himself, laughing. "I really needed to land quick."

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What makes landing the hot air balloon a challenge for Keith Rodriguez?

- A. the gondola
- B. the wind
- C. the parking lot
- D. the time of day

2. What problem does Keith Rodriguez solve?

- A. how to fly from Ohio to Pennsylvania in his hot air balloon
- B. how to increase the altitude of his hot air balloon
- C. how to safely land his hot air balloon
- D. how to change direction on his own in his hot air balloon

3. A hot air balloon floats because the air inside the balloon is warmer than the air outside of it.

What information from the story supports this statement?

- A. Hot air is lighter than cold air.
- B. One cubic foot of air weighs about an ounce.
- C. The air inside the balloon swirls in complicated, invisible patterns.
- D. The hot air balloon is sinking, but still flying forward.

4. Based on information in the text, what would make a good landing area for a hot air balloon?

- A. a large, open space with no buildings
- B. a large space with lots of tall buildings
- C. a small, narrow space near a highway
- D. a small space, such as the roof of a building

5. What is this story mainly about?

- A. a hot air balloon that scares lots of people when it lands in a parking lot
- B. a hot air balloon that does not work properly
- C. a person who gets stuck up in the air and does not know what to do
- D. a person trying to land a hot air balloon in difficult conditions

6. Read these sentences from the text.

To drop in **altitude**, Rodriguez can pull a cord attached to a parachute valve at the very top of the balloon. Since the hottest air sits at the top, this releases the balloon's most buoyant air, which makes the balloon descend.

What does the word "**altitude**" mean in the sentence above?

- A. length
- B. width
- C. height
- D. volume

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Keith Rodriguez was planning to land in a cornfield; _____, he changes his mind because of the wind.

- A. previously
- B. however
- C. as a result
- D. for example

8. What effect does pulling the cord attached to the parachute valve have on Rodriguez's balloon?

9. Based on what the story explains about air temperature, why does pulling the cord have this effect?

10. Keith Rodriguez makes a successful but dangerous landing in a parking lot. Based on information in the story about his location, the weather, and how hot air balloons work, explain whether his decision to land in the parking lot was or was not a good idea. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Trading for Clams in Narragansett

by Kyria Abrahams



Jennifer just moved to Narragansett, Rhode Island (United States), with her whole family. She grew up in Boston, but her father's company moved. The whole family transferred to this new, unfamiliar state. Now her father can keep his job, but everyone has to start over from scratch. New schools, new supermarkets, new friends.

Jennifer's father works as an engine repairman for boats. He said there were more boats in Narragansett because there was more coastline. Her mother sells beauty products from home.

"I can sell from anywhere," her mother said. She seemed sad about leaving her home but excited for a new adventure.

Jennifer's whole family was born and raised in Boston, which is a medium-sized city in the United States, although the residents there would probably say it's pretty big.

"We're every bit as cosmopolitan as *New York*!" Jennifer's father always used to say. He'd sneer when he said the words *New York* and add: "What does that city have that we don't have, anyway?"

"The Empire State Building, the Chrysler Building..." Jennifer started to list them all.

"That's a rhetorical question!" Dad said, laughing.

Jennifer knew that meant there wasn't supposed to be an answer; you were just supposed to agree with him.

Their new home in Narragansett is right on the water. The front porch is built on stilts, in case the ocean waves get big during a storm. Most of the homes in Narragansett are weatherproof, with shutters on the windows that can close during a hurricane.

This was strange and a little frightening for Jennifer, who was used to living in a three-story brick building near Boston Common. She used to have lots of little shops and restaurants within walking distance. Now, all she sees for miles and miles is sand and water.

Jennifer walks the beach every day, picking up seashells and pretty rocks. She walks along the shore every day for two weeks and only sees grumpy fishermen. They never talk to her or even smile.

One day, she sees a small shadow coming toward her from the other side. It's another girl her age. They get closer and closer and finally stop right in front of each other.

"Hello, are you new here?" the girl asks. "My name is Susan." Susan has a bucket filled with clams, and her jeans are rolled up around her ankles.

"We just moved in. I thought I was all alone here!" Jennifer stops for a moment and notices the bucket. "Why do you have clams?"

"My dad's a fisherman," she says. "We went clam digging this morning."

Jennifer has eaten clams before, but only at a fancy restaurant in Boston called Legal Seafood. The chef boiled them and brought them out with a bowl of butter for dipping. She thinks they cost about \$12.00.

"I love clams!" Jennifer says. She thinks of the food she has at home. Her mom usually cooks red meat. She'd love some seafood instead.

"Can I get some clams, too?"

Susan says yes, because her father is a fisherman and she has clams all the time. "I'll trade with you!" she tells her. "What do you have to trade with me?"

Jennifer thinks about what she has to trade. It isn't much. She has her clothes and her dolls, but those are hers.

"My mom has lots of beauty products!" she says. "Do you like makeup?"

"I sure do!" Susan says.

So Jennifer runs home and grabs a bag full of beauty products. There are perfume and lipstick. She's not sure how much the products are all worth. She knows that the clams she had at the restaurant were expensive, so she figures this is a good trade.

She hands Susan the bag of cosmetics, and Susan hands over the clams. They shake on the deal.

"It was great to meet you," says Jennifer. "I think this is the start of a great friendship!"

When Jennifer gets home, her mother is looking very distressed.

"Where is my bag of makeup?" she asks, angrily. "I was just about to bring that bag to the neighbor's house. They bought it yesterday."

Jennifer realizes her mistake and starts to hold up the clams. She suspects her mother is going to be angry at the trade, and she's not wrong.

"I'm going to take \$2.00 a week out of your allowance until you have paid me back in full," Mom tells her. She is not happy.

"But Mom, that's not fair!"

"It is more than fair," Mom says "These were my things, not yours to give away! However, I will take these clams and make them for dinner."

Jennifer accepts her punishment, but she knows she's going to keep trading with Susan to get fresh clams. She'll just have to find something else that Susan wants next time, something that doesn't belong to her mother.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Where does Jennifer's family move?

- A. to Boston, Massachusetts
- B. to Narragansett, Rhode Island
- C. to New York, New York
- D. to Newport, Rhode Island

2. What are important features of the setting in Narragansett?

- A. the sand and water
- B. the schools and supermarkets
- C. the sunny weather and heat
- D. the shops and restaurants

3. Jennifer feels lonely in her new town and new house.

What information from the story best supports this conclusion?

- A. Her whole family was born and raised in Boston.
- B. She walks the beach every day, picking up shells.
- C. She says to Susan, "I thought I was all alone here!"
- D. She trades her mother's beauty products for clams.

4. Why doesn't Jennifer give Susan her clothes or dolls for the clams?

- A. because she doesn't think Susan will like her clothes or dolls
- B. because she thinks her mother would get mad at her for giving them away
- C. because they belong to Jennifer, and she doesn't want to give them away
- D. because she doesn't trust Susan to take good care of her clothes or dolls

5. What is a theme of this story?

- A. It is impossible to make friends without trading gifts.
- B. It is not fair to give away something that is not yours to give.
- C. Moving to a new place is always an exciting adventure.
- D. Makeup products are more valuable than clams.

6. Read these sentences from the passage.

"She walks along the shore every day for two weeks and only sees grumpy fishermen. They never talk to her or even smile.

One day, she sees a small shadow coming toward her from the other side. It's another girl her age."

Why does the author put the descriptions of these two events next to each other in the passage?

- A. to show that Jennifer was very happy to live in a house along the shore, unlike the grumpy fishermen
- B. to suggest that Jennifer feels lonely and that the girl she sees could end her loneliness
- C. to reveal that one of the grumpy fishermen whom Jennifer sees is actually another girl Jennifer's age
- D. to show that Jennifer really wants to have a conversation with the grumpy fishermen, instead of with the other girl

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Jennifer did not want to give away her own belongings. _____, she gave away her mother's beauty products.

- A. Previously
- B. Instead
- C. Currently
- D. Similarly

8. Why does Jennifer want to get some clams from Susan?

9. Why does Jennifer's mother punish her for trading away her beauty products?

10. Has Jennifer learned anything about fairness by the end of the story? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
