

MSP

Measurements of Student Progress



Reading Grade 7

**Sample Reading Materials
Student Edition
2012**

Student's Name

Date

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“Where Tortoises Roam” by George W. Frame © 1989 Highlights for Children, Inc., Columbus, Ohio.

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Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions.

Where Tortoises Roam

by George W. Frame

- 1 One cool midmorning I watched a desert tortoise in southwestern Utah. The tortoise was eating some small, yellow flowers. It was a messy eater. As it slowly chomped a plant to pieces, green and yellow juices ran from its beaklike mouth.
- 2 I crouched behind a creosote bush, hoping that the tortoise would not see me. I was curious to see what else it might do.
- 3 After about ten minutes the tortoise finished eating the flowers. Then it walked along an animal path between the bushes and stopped at a small clump of grass. It nibbled a few blades of grass before moving along in search of other food.
- 4 I followed quietly for nearly an hour, stepping softly so the tortoise would not feel ground vibrations from my footsteps. When the air and soil became hot as the sun rose higher in the sky, the tortoise crawled under a shady bush. I expected that it would remain resting in the shade until evening. So I left and went walking to see what else I might find.
- 5 The desert tortoise is the largest of the plant-eating reptiles in the southwestern United States. The tortoise that I saw lives where there are Joshua trees, creosote bushes and cacti.
- 6 A desert tortoise can survive without drinking water for many months. It gets water from the food it eats. Green plants contain much water. Even dry foods form some water when they are digested in an animal's body.
- 7 But when rain falls, the tortoise drinks a huge amount. It can drink water equal to 40 percent of its body weight. If I drink just one percent of my body weight, I feel really full. I can hardly imagine what it is like to drink as much as a tortoise does.
- 8 The tortoise also conserves the water it has in its body. It loses just a little water by evaporation through the lungs while breathing. The shell, scales, and thick skin prevent most other evaporation. The tortoise, like other reptiles and birds, produces urine that is concentrated, so little water is lost. And by resting underground or in the shade in the hot weather, the tortoise keeps comfortable without using water for cooling its body.
- 9 In places where winters are cold, the desert tortoises gather together in dens. They dig holes sometimes as long as twenty feet underground, where they are safe from the cold. Inside the winter den they go into a sort of



hibernation. They fall into a deep sleep, and all their body systems slow down to nearly a stop. Cold-blooded animals like tortoises are not considered true hibernators. They can't lower their body temperature. What little energy and water they need during their sleep they get from stored body fat. They "hibernate" for six months, from October to April, without eating or drinking.

- 10 I enjoyed watching the tortoises when I hiked in the desert. They are especially interesting to me because they are so well adapted to living under the extremes of the desert. In cold or heat, wet conditions or dry, they can survive. These tortoises truly are at home in the desert.



- 1 According to the selection, which statement is true of the desert tortoise?
- A. It can drink almost half of its body weight in water.
 - B. It conserves the water in its body by eating green plants.
 - C. It maintains a constant body temperature by hibernating.
 - D. It rests in dens underground during the hot afternoons.
- 2 Which statement best explains why the author expected to see the tortoise in the evening?
- A. Because the tortoise wanted to stay cool in the shade
 - B. Because the tortoise spotted the author watching him
 - C. Because the tortoise requires a long nap in the afternoon
 - D. Because the tortoise hides from predators during the daytime
- 3 Which sentence from the selection is an opinion?
- A. These tortoises truly are at home in the desert.
 - B. The desert tortoise is the largest of the plant-eating reptiles.
 - C. It loses just a little water by evaporation through the lungs while breathing.
 - D. I crouched behind a creosote bush, hoping that the tortoise would not see me.



- 4 How is a hibernating tortoise different from a truly hibernating animal?
- A. The tortoise will hibernate for a longer period of time.
 - B. The tortoise will hibernate at different months of the year.
 - C. The tortoise's body temperature remains the same.
 - D. The tortoise's body systems remain at the same speed.



Directions: Read this poem, which goes with the selection you just read. Then answer the questions.

Desert Tortoise
by Byrd Baylor



I am the *old* one here.

Mice
and snakes
and deer
5 and butterflies
and badgers
come and go.
Centipedes
and eagles
10 come and go.

But tortoises
grow old
and *stay*.

Our lives stretch out.
15 I cross
the same arroyo
that I crossed
when I was young,



20 returning to
the same safe den
to sleep through
winter's cold.
Each spring,
I warm myself
25 in the same sun,
search for the same
long tender blades
of green,
and taste the same
30 ripe juicy cactus fruit.

I know
the slow
sure way
my world
35 repeats itself.
I know
how I fit in.

My shell still shows
the toothmarks
40 where a wildcat
thought he had me
long ago.
He didn't know
that I was safe
45 beneath
the hard brown rock
he tried to bite.

I trust that shell.
I move
50 at my own speed.

This
is a good place
for an old tortoise
to walk.



- 5 According to the poem, what will the tortoise most likely do next winter?
- A. Go back to the same den
 - B. Hibernate longer in its den
 - C. Dig another den in the same area
 - D. Relocate its den to a different area
- 6 How do the author’s feelings about tortoises in “Where Tortoises Roam” compare to the poet’s feelings about tortoises in “Desert Tortoise”? Include **one** detail from the selection and **one** detail from the poem in your answer.



Questions 7 and 8 are not connected to a passage.

7 Read the poster.

Cascade Day Parks

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Key

	Day only, 9 A.M.–4 P.M.
	Day & Night, 9 A.M.–9:30 P.M.
	Closed, 9 A.M.–11:00 P.M.

WASHINGTON

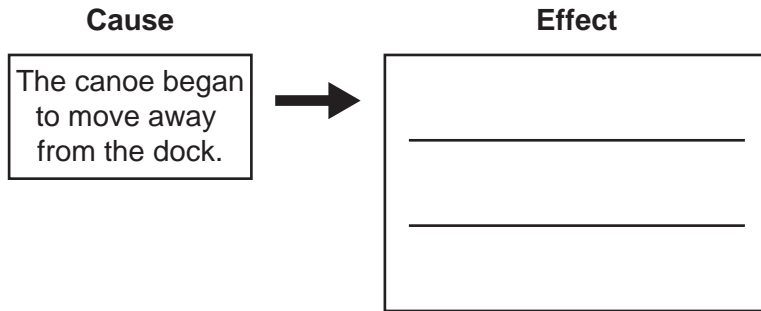
What is the main idea?



8 Read the passage below.

Omar paddled his canoe up alongside the dock. As he placed one foot on the dock, he became distracted. The canoe began to move away from the dock. While one foot was on the dock, the other foot was in the canoe. Omar realized what was happening, but it was too late to recover his balance.

Use information from the text to provide the effect for the given cause.



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Reading Grade 7

**Sample Reading Materials
Student Edition
2011**

Student's Name _____

Date _____

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“Manatee Ranger” by Susan Beckhorn, text © September 2000 Highlights for Children, Inc., Columbus, Ohio. Photo of Wayne Hartley as a boy, credit: Wayne Hartley. Photo of manatee and Wayne Hartley in boat, credit: Kim Stanberry.

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Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions.

Manatee Ranger

By Susan Beckhorn

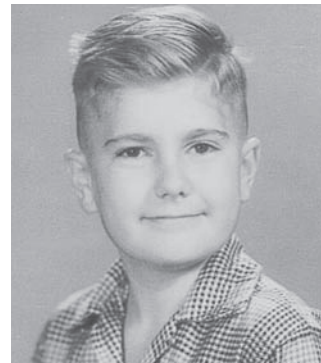
1 It was Christmas, 1953. The boy, Wayne Hartley, carefully turned the pages of his new book. Grandmother understood his love for forests, wetlands, and especially animals. It was a beautiful book, full of photographs of North American wildlife: grizzly bears, cougars, beavers, and many more.

2 He turned a page and stopped. What was this strange animal?

3 It looked like a cross between an elephant and a seal, floating in blue-green water. Its whiskered muzzle almost seemed to smile.

4 That was the moment when Wayne first came to love manatees. Now he is a park ranger at Blue Spring State Park, a wildlife refuge in northeastern Florida. He works with these amazing, peaceful creatures every day.

5 In fact, he has followed the population of manatees at Blue Spring for twenty years—longer than anyone else has studied a group of manatees. Wayne is a leading authority. Some people call him the Manatee Guru (teacher).



Wayne Hartley as a young boy.

Watchful Shepherd

6 Wayne is like a shepherd watching over his flock. He knows more than 130 manatees by sight.

7 Manatees like warm water. They spend the warm months along the coasts of the southeastern states and the Gulf of Mexico. Every November, when the water gets cold, the animals return to warm waters, such as Blue Spring.

8 That's when Wayne identifies and photographs them. He records new visitors, and he checks up on old friends.



Wayne Hartley is a shepherd of manatees.



- 9 Then, until they leave again sometime in March, he makes daily paddle patrols. First he canoes up to the “boil,” where Blue Spring bubbles out of a 120-foot-deep hole in the fossilized coral that forms Florida’s “backbone.” He searches the shallow bottom near the boil for flipper drag marks, nose prints, and drop-pings—signs that manatees have been there.
- 10 Then he drifts down the run to where it flows into the Saint Johns River, counting manatees, taking photos, and checking the water temperature. He names new babies. If he finds a sick or injured manatee, he arranges to have it sent to Florida’s Sea World for treatment.
- 11 Manatees need watching because they are endangered. They are dying from loss of habitat, pollution, accidents with boats, and natural causes. Because a female has a baby only every two to five years, every manatee is precious.
- 12 But to Wayne, they are precious also because they are individuals with personalities. There’s Howie, who’s been around at Blue Spring longer than Wayne. He likes to splash people and might mistake a canoe for a lovely lady manatee.
- 13 Georgia was raised at Sea World, and she birthed her calf, Peaches, in a canal nearby. She’s the first captive-raised manatee to reproduce in the wild.
- 14 And Lucille used to surface unexpectedly beside the canoe and breathe into Wayne’s face. Now she’s shy, after being captured to remove fishing line from her flipper. Does Wayne have a favorite? “I love ’em all,” he says with a chuckle.



Manatees tend to be loners until cold weather forces them to seek warm water.

“Get Wet!”

- 15 Part of the job description for a manatee ranger should be “Get wet!” Wayne gets wet a lot. When Lucille’s flipper was tangled up, Wayne played canoe cowboy. “It was just like cutting a steer out of a herd,” he says. “The others realized who I was looking for and lay back down on the bottom as if to say, ‘No problem, he’s not after us.’ Then I chased her down the run into a waiting net.” After Wayne snipped away the fishing line, Lucille gave a powerful smack with her tail that soaked everyone.



16 One morning, Wayne discovered Destiny tangled in old rope caught on a piling near the mouth of the run. She was belly up, struggling. Her calf, Paddy Doyle, was swimming nearby.

17 As Wayne came toward Destiny to cut her loose with his pocket-knife, she panicked. When the foam and spray settled, Mama was free and Wayne was drenched. After making sure that she wasn't injured, Wayne called a local scuba club to clear the rope from all the pilings.

18 But the wettest was the day Wayne took a federal researcher with no fewer than three cameras out to see manatees close-up. It was a Sunday, and the walkway beside the run was packed with visitors.

19 Up swam Howie. He nuzzled the canoe.

20 Apparently, in his enthusiasm, Howie bumped into the canoe and scared himself. There was a splash and a *wump* as Howie's tail slammed the side of the canoe.

21 The two men found themselves bobbing beside their overturned boat. Their cameras were soaked, but dozens on shore clicked merrily away.

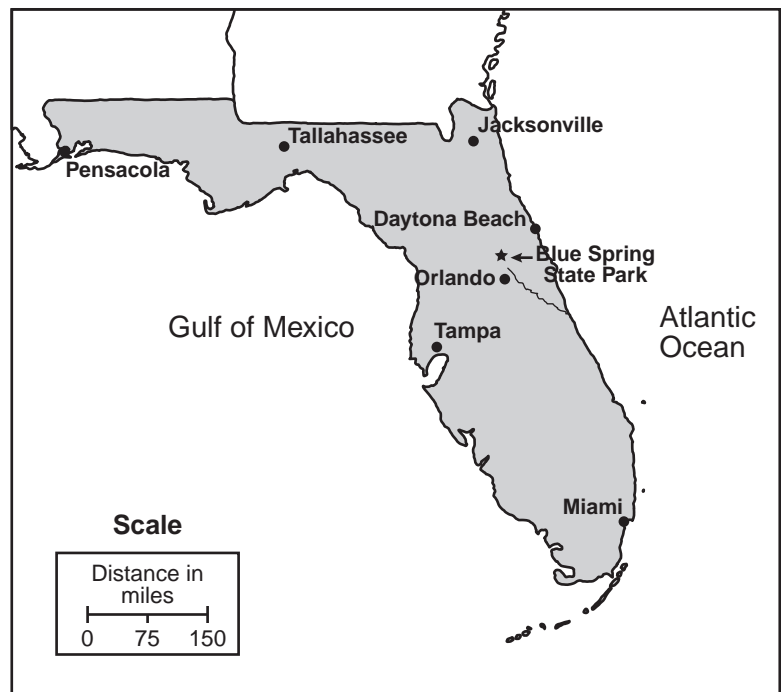
The Park's Beginning

22 In 1970, the famous explorer Jacques Cousteau visited Blue Spring and found eleven manatees. After his visit, the state purchased nearly four thousand acres around the spring and created a park.

23 Today, three of those manatees, including Howie, still visit Blue Spring. Now they bring along more than a hundred friends.

24 Every year, more manatees learn to use refuges like the one at Blue Spring State Park. It takes people like Wayne Hartley to make sure the animals are understood and protected. He is working to help this exotic American animal find a secure future.

Winter Habitat of Florida's Manatees



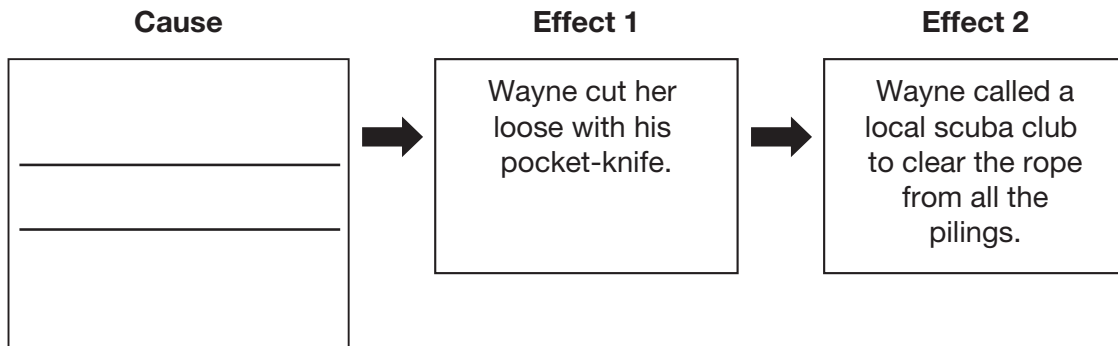
Blue Spring plays an important role in the survival of the manatees. From November through March, the manatees find comfort and safety in the 72-degree spring.



- 1 What is the meaning of the word *refuge* as it is used in paragraph 4 of the selection?
- A. Shelter
 - B. Animal clinic
 - C. Campground
 - D. Research center
- 2 Which idea from the selection **Watchful Shepherd** supports the summary statement?
- Wayne cares about the manatees he supervises at Blue Spring State Park in Florida.**
- A. Wayne purchased nearly four thousand acres to create a park for manatees in Florida.
 - B. Wayne and a federal researcher were soaked when a manatee named Howie overturned their canoe.
 - C. Wayne became interested in manatees after reading a book about North American wildlife.
 - D. Wayne arranges to have sick or injured manatees transported to Sea World for treatment.
- 3 Based on information in the selection, what would most likely happen if Blue Spring State Park closed down?
- A. Manatee population would double.
 - B. Wayne would create a creek for manatees.
 - C. Manatees would find another water reserve.
 - D. Wayne would take a job treating injured manatees.



- 4 Read the chart. Use information from the selection to complete the cause for the given effects.



- 5 How did Wayne most likely feel when Howie overturned the canoe?
- A. Relieved because the expensive research equipment was not damaged.
- B. Upset because Howie purposely slammed into the side of the canoe.
- C. Embarrassed because people on the shore were watching.
- D. Excited because Howie was usually shy around people.
- 6 According to the map and caption, which statement is true?
- A. Manatees migrate to Miami in the winter.
- B. Blue Spring State Park is closest to Tampa.
- C. Manatees thrive in water that is 72 degrees.
- D. Blue Spring State Park is closed down yearly in March.



- 7 How are Wayne Hartley and Jacques Cousteau similar?
- A. Both men worked with sick and injured manatees at the park.
 - B. Both men are considered leading authorities on manatees.
 - C. Both men photograph manatees as part of their research.
 - D. Both men worked to develop a manatee park.
- 8 Based on the information in the selection, what inference can the reader make about manatees?
- A. Manatees are playful
 - B. Manatees are intelligent
 - C. Manatees are afraid of humans
 - D. Manatees are difficult to photograph



- 9 Which chapter in a book about manatees might include the selection “Manatee Ranger”?
- A. Manatees in Captivity
 - B. Protecting Manatees in the Wild
 - C. Understanding Manatee Diseases
 - D. Skeletal Structure of the Manatee

- 10 One conclusion that a reader may draw from this selection is that Wayne Hartley’s job is important. Provide **two** details from the selection to support this conclusion.



Questions 11 and 12 are not connected to a passage.

11 Read the paragraph.

Carla showed up for the basketball tryouts at her school. She was surprised to see 30 students in the gym because she knew only 20 players would be selected for the team. While they were doing warm-ups, she was nervous because she knew the coaches were watching; she desperately wanted to make the team. As she became more confident during practice, she worked even harder. Carla was thrilled when tryout results were posted the next day, not only had she made the team but she was chosen as captain.

What inference can you make about why Carla became captain of the team?



12 Read the advertisement.



What is being presented in the advertisement?

- A. Fact
- B. Opinion
- C. Metaphor
- D. Point of view



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Measurements of Student Progress



Reading Grade 7

**Sample Reading Materials
Student Edition**

Student's Name _____

Date _____ 23

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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“Glowing Talk” by Susan J. Tweit, copyright © by Susan J. Tweit. Used by permission of the author.

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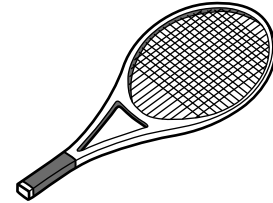
Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions.

Mountainside Sports & Recreation Center



2501 East Ridge Drive
Open Daily—9 A.M. to 9 P.M.

GRAND OPENING
SATURDAY, MAY 14



Mayor Roberta Diaz and the Mountainside City Parks and Recreation Department are pleased to announce the Grand Opening of Mountainside Sports & Recreation Center. All activities and facilities are free to the public.* Come out and enjoy:

- 2 Racquetball Courts
- 8 Softball Fields
- 8 Soccer Fields
- 10 Tennis Courts
- 10 Basketball Courts
- Skateboard Park
- Walking/Jogging Track
- Weightlifting Area
- Gymnasium



Grand Opening Activities

Healthy fun for the whole family!

- Free live music and healthful snacks and drinks!
- Door prizes: Grand Prize: A mountain bike and safety equipment; Second prize: A professional-quality skateboard.
- Free soccer clinic for players ages 5 to 15! Hosted by Thunder coach Todd Barnett. Participants will receive a free Thunder T-shirt.
- Sign up for free CPR and first-aid classes taught by the Mountainside Fire Department.
- Register for the Mountainside Summer Sports Leagues. Teams are forming for beginners (ages 8–10); minors (ages 11–13); majors (ages 14–15); and adults (16 and up).
- Make this your healthiest summer ever! Enroll in our exercise and fitness classes. All classes are taught by certified fitness instructors. See Mr. Weathers in the gymnasium for complete details.

**Scheduled league events may periodically limit public availability.*



1 What does the author mean by “Scheduled league events may periodically limit public availability”?

- A. Softball leagues take priority over other league events.
- B. Teams may be using facilities at scheduled times.
- C. A time must be scheduled to use the facilities.
- D. Fields are unavailable after 9:00 P.M.

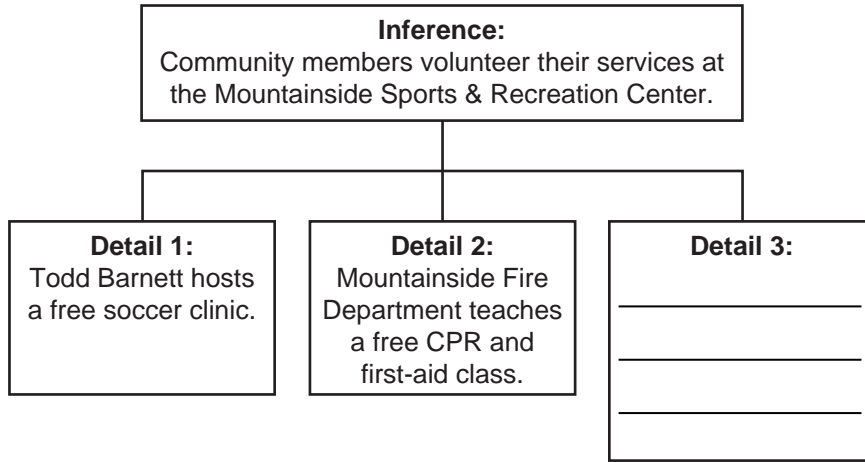
2 Is the Grand Opening ceremony of the Mountainside Sports & Recreation Center a good idea for the community? Provide **two** details from the selection to support your answer.



- 3** Based on the information in the selection, which inference can the reader make about the Mountainside Sports & Recreation Center?
- A. The center will offer free fire safety instruction.
 - B. The center will offer live music on the weekends.
 - C. The center will offer professional skateboarding classes.
 - D. The center will offer sporting activities throughout the year.
- 4** According to **Grand Opening Activities**, which statement is true?
- A. Mr. Weathers will teach exercise and fitness classes.
 - B. Winners of the door prize will receive a Thunder T-shirt.
 - C. Certified fitness instructors will provide CPR and first-aid training.
 - D. Twelve-year-olds interested in summer sports leagues should sign up for minors.



- 5 Read the chart below. Provide another detail from the selection that supports the inference.



- 6 According to the selection, what happens when community members attend the Grand Opening of the Mountainside Sports & Recreation Center?
- A. Community members will meet Mayor Roberta Diaz.
 - B. Community members will receive a Thunder T-shirt.
 - C. Community members will get healthful snacks and drinks.
 - D. Community members will take a free CPR and first-aid class.



Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions.

Glowing Talk

by Susan J. Tweit



A glowworm on tree bark

On warm summer nights, our backyard looks as though it's been invaded by creatures from outer space. Tiny, glowing lights appear at dusk, some blinking quickly as they drift through the air, others flicking on and off from the ground. These "aliens" are fireflies searching for mates. We watch, fascinated, as they talk in flashing code.

1

Fireflies are not flies, nor do they burn. They are beetles, and their light comes from special light-producing organs at the end of their bodies. Their family name, Lampyridae, means "shining tail" in Greek. If you live in the eastern or midwestern United States, you probably have fireflies, also called lightning bugs, in your neighborhood. They live on the edges of woods and in grassy places all the way from Florida to southern Canada, and west to the edge of the Great Plains. Only a few kinds of fireflies live in the dry, mountainous western states, and they're usually found in moist places—in woods along streams or lakes, or near marshes.

2

Four Stages

3 Fireflies, like butterflies, develop in four distinct stages: eggs, which can take about a month to hatch; larvae—pale, soft-bodied, wormlike creatures, which spend about two years eating and growing; pupae, a quiet stage where firefly bodies change from larvae to adults; and adults—dark, hard-shelled beetles, which live only to mate. Through all these stages, from egg to adult, fireflies "talk" with light. Other forms of life can glow, like some bacteria and certain kinds of mushrooms and molds. And some sponges, corals, clams, snails, squid, and fish may light up dark ocean depths. Other insects can shine or flash. But only fireflies have a whole light vocabulary.



Adult firefly on leaves

4 Firefly larvae are also called glowworms. Even before they hatch, they shine inside the eggs. This glow is a dual-purpose warning signal. It tells would-be predators that the larva tastes bad, and it warns other larvae that predators are nearby. The tiny larva (the size of a rice grain) is toothless and wingless, but not

GO ON 

helpless. It spends its nights hunting snails, slugs, cutworms, and other insect larvae. When it finds a potential meal, the larva injects it with a juice that paralyzes it. Then the larva sucks in its food through hollow, strawlike jaws.

- 5 Glowworms are easy to find. On a warm, damp spring or fall evening, look for tiny lights shining on lawns, at the edge of a woods, on a shady golf course, or any other moist place. If you shine a penlight toward the ground, the hunting larvae will light up in response.
- 6 During their second spring, glowworms pupate. They build an igloolike chamber on the ground and crawl inside it. Then they curl up and barely move for a couple of weeks while their bodies change. Once they grow a hard outer shell, wings, long legs, antennae, and larger light organs, they emerge as adults.

Finding a Mate

- 7 Now comes the real show. Early in the summer, male fireflies emerge from pupation and fly about, flashing, advertising for mates. Females stay near the ground and glow in response to a male of their own species. They can recognize each other only by light signals. Between signals, the flying males watch for answers. When a male sees a glowing response, it flies toward it, repeating its own flashing code. If the female continues to respond, a duet ensues: he flies closer, flashing his call phrase, and she responds. Finally the male lands and walks over to the female. If all goes well, they mate, and later the female lays clusters of eggs, beginning the new cycle again.



Firefly “talking” with light

- 8 The competition for mates is intense. Mating season is short, adults live only a few weeks, and there are fewer females than males. With so many lights blinking each evening, communication is difficult. In order to “hear” only its own kind, each species of firefly blinks its own signals. Each also flies only in its own air space—some near the ground, others five to six feet above the ground, others in the treetops. Each kind also flies during its own time period. Some begin just before sunset, others just after sunset, others long after dark.
- 9 Some kinds of female North American fireflies change from partner to hunter. After mating, they no longer answer their own mates’ signals. Instead, they begin to mimic the response signals of other kinds of females in order to lure eager males close and capture and eat them.



- 10 Elsewhere in the world, fireflies seek mates in other ways. In Southeast Asia, dense jungle vegetation makes visibility difficult, so thousands of male fireflies perch in one tree and all flash at once: on-off-on-off. Their bright beacon attracts females by the score. Since the fireflies use the same trees year after year, riverboat pilots can navigate by them at night. Britain's common glowworm locates its mate with even less fuss: only females signal. The flightless females glow steadily until a passing male finds them.

Firefly Fascination

- 11 Fireflies have fascinated humans for centuries. Hindus in sixth-century India thought fireflies were signs of a holy presence. Healers in Europe during the Middle Ages used live fireflies to cure various ills. Modern scientists use fireflies' light in many ways: to make disposable flashlights shine, as a glowing marker to track how cells pass on inherited characteristics, and to light up drugs that fight cancer.
- 12 But as for me, I just enjoy watching fireflies. So if you want to find me on a warm June or July night, come outside. I'll be in the backyard, watching the glowing talk.



- 7** What is the main difference between the larvae stage and adult stage of fireflies?
- A. Only larvae emit light.
 - B. Only adults emit light.
 - C. Only adults lay eggs.
 - D. Only larvae lay eggs.
- 8** Which statement is the most important conclusion that may be drawn from the selection?
- A. Fireflies' communication skills are effective.
 - B. Fireflies' habits are similar to butterflies' habits.
 - C. Scientists study fireflies to learn more about cancer.
 - D. Scientists study fireflies because they are easy to find.



- 9 According to the section **Firefly Fascination**, what are **two** ways fireflies are useful to humans? Include information from the section in your answer.



- 10** Based on the information in the selection, predict what would most likely happen if scientists placed two species of fireflies together.
- A. The fireflies would mate.
 - B. The fireflies would be confused.
 - C. The fireflies would recognize each other.
 - D. The fireflies would blink the same signal.
-
- 11** Which sentence from the selection is an opinion?
- A. Modern scientists use fireflies' light in many ways.
 - B. Glowworms pupate during their second spring.
 - C. Fireflies have fascinated humans for centuries.
 - D. Fireflies develop in four distinct stages.



Questions 12 and 13 are not connected to a passage.

12 Read the thesaurus entries below.

poised adj. 1. Unprepared 2. Balanced 3. Confident 4. Motionless

The *poised* young girl a UfWYXhc h YghU YUbXgUb[Zcf h Y
Ybh i gUghWWck X

Which synonym could replace *poised* in the sentence above?

- A. Synonym 1
- B. Synonym 2
- C. Synonym 3
- D. Synonym 4

13 Which sentence contains an example of personification?

- A. The feather fluttered gently to the ground.
- B. The clock ticked as the seconds slowly went by.
- C. The apple plopped to the ground as the wind blew it off the tree.
- D. The motor hummed as the car drove smoothly down the highway.



WCAP

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ASSESSMENT PROGRAM



Reading Grade 7

**Sample Items
Student Materials**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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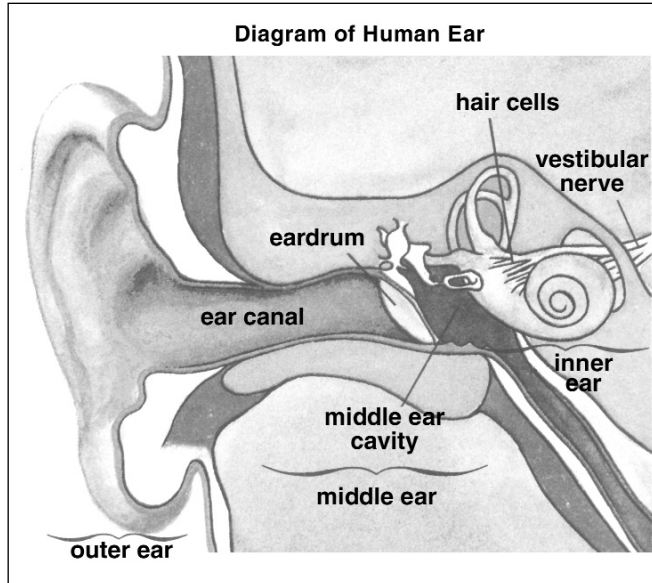
Noise and Old Ears

by Jack Myers

1 Although it is not exactly news, I want to report something I learned about ears.

2 I have old ears—they don't hear very well. That's no big surprise because I am an older person. The surprise is that young people can have old ears, too. The idea is that too much noise can give you ears that are older than your number of birthdays.

3 Your ear is a very sensitive gadget for hearing sounds. The outer ear is the only part you can see. It opens into a tube, the ear canal, which leads inside and ends in a thin membrane, the eardrum. On the other side of the eardrum is an air-filled space called the middle ear. Small bones of the middle ear carry vibrations of the eardrum across to another small membrane of the inner ear. That's a very sensitive place, a little cavity protected by a bony case.



4 Sound waves in the air cause vibrations of the eardrum. Then those vibrations pass through to the inner ear. That's where the action is. There is a lineup of some very special cells, called hair cells because each one has many tiny bristles that look like hairs even though they are much smaller. Connecting to them are the endings of nerve cells, which have nerve fibers leading to the brain. Even a little motion of "hair" sets off a hair cell so that it zaps its nearest nerve ending. That sets up a nerve message.

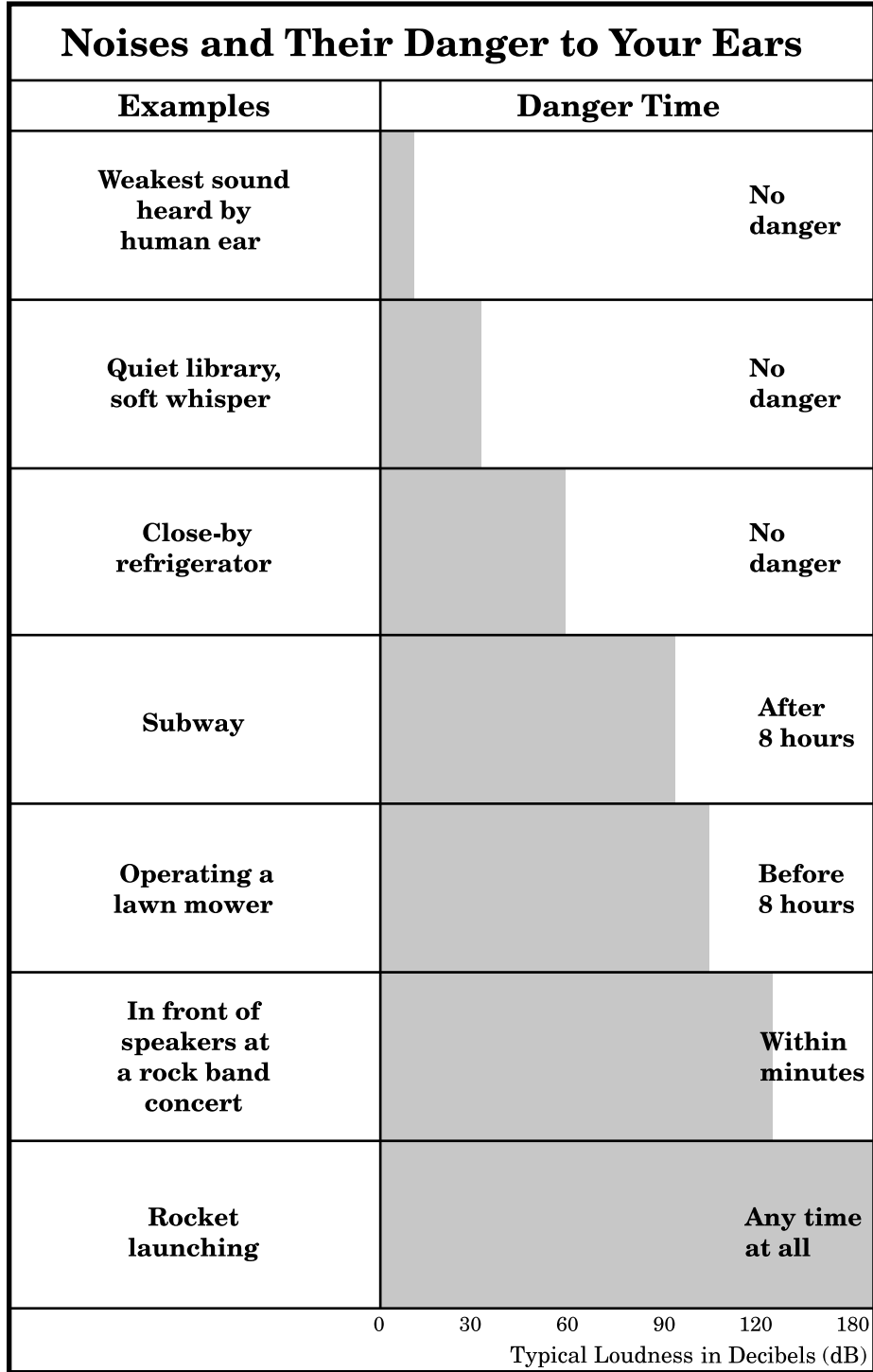
5 Of course, there will be nerve messages from many hair cells. When your brain puts together all the nerve messages, you hear the sound.

6 Even though lots of things can go wrong, our ears usually work right all our lives. However, our ears have their own way of growing old. We were born with about 15,000 of those special hair cells in each inner ear. As we go through life, there are many times when all of us are exposed to loud noises. A loud noise, particularly one that continues, may destroy some of those hair cells. And once destroyed, they can never work again. It's just that simple: the age of your ears is measured by how many hair cells you have lost. You can see that, with enough noise, your ears can grow old faster than you do.



- 7 The intensity of loudness of sound is measured on a scale of decibels (dB). The faintest sound heard by the human ear is put at zero (0 dB). The loudest sound a human is likely to hear is close to a rocket launching, about 180 dB. In the table “Noises and Their Danger to Your Ears,” you will see estimates for some different kinds of sounds or noise and how long it takes for them to be dangerous. You will see that until they get to be loud, noises never cause any ear damage. For louder noises, the longer you hear them the worse they are.
- 8 The table is only a rough guide, but it will give you an idea of noises loud enough to be dangerous. You will understand, of course, that any noise gets weaker the farther you get from its source. Even a thunderclap sounds weak if you are far enough away.
- 9 What should you do if you can’t get away from dangerous noise? Try earplugs made of rubber, foam, or plastic. Many sporting goods stores have them. (Plugs of cotton aren’t much help.)
- 10 How can you tell if a noise is loud enough to be dangerous? Because people differ, there is no very exact way to tell. But there is a rather simple rule: If someone has to shout to make you hear over a background noise, then that noise may be dangerous.
- 11 What about earphone radios? That’s what started me thinking about ears. I noticed that many people seem to like their music loud. I guess you can see that their ears may not be as happy with loudness as they are. Again there is that simple rule: If someone has to shout to get your attention, you have your music turned up too loud.
- 12 Now that you know about it, don’t let your ears get older than you are.





1 What is the meaning of the word *decibel* in paragraph 7 of the selection?

- A. The loudest sound heard by human ears
- B. An estimate of pitch on a scale
- C. A unit of sound measurement
- D. A hair follicle in the inner ear

2 What would be the best advice for someone who attends rock concerts?

- A. Wear earplugs made of cotton.
- B. Sit far away from the speakers.
- C. Try not to shout over the music.
- D. Stay no longer than an hour.

3 According to the selection, what is the most sensitive area of the ear?

- A. The eardrum
- B. The inner ear
- C. The middle ear
- D. The ear canal



- 4** What is suggested by the expression “old ears” in paragraph 2 of the selection?
- A.** Age has little to do with hearing ability.
 - B.** Ear disorders are quite common.
 - C.** The development of ears is being discussed.
 - D.** The story of deafness is an old one.
- 5** According to the selection, what causes nerve messages?
- A.** Vibrations of hair cells
 - B.** Disorders of the middle ear
 - C.** Air passing through the outer ear
 - D.** The brain’s interpretation of sound



- 6** What are **two** ways people could protect their hearing? Include information from the selection in your answer.



- 7** According to the selection, what might someone do to test if the noise level is dangerous?
- A. Notice if he or she has to shout
 - B. Use a decibel recorder
 - C. Ask other people if their ears hurt
 - D. Check for sound vibrations
- 8** Based on the information in the selection and the table, which of these is the most dangerous sound heard for one minute?
- A. A rock concert
 - B. A subway train
 - C. Shouting in someone's ear
 - D. A rocket launching
- 9** Which of these problems might be caused by earphone radios?
- A. An infection in the middle ear
 - B. Growth of hair cells in the inner ear
 - C. Hearing loss
 - D. A sore throat



Directions: Read the story and answer the questions.

The Clever Judge

retold by Babette Deutsch and Avrahm Yarmolinsky

Babette Deutsch, one of the authors of Tales of Faraway Folk, from which this story is taken, identifies "The Clever Judge" as a Kirghiz folk tale. In the introduction she says: "The people who tell this tale live on the vast steppes or prairies of southwestern Asia. They are herders of cattle, sheep, and goats. And they are clever fellows, too, as you shall see."

Glossary Box

Plaintiff = a person who brings a complaint to a judge

Defendant = a person who must defend himself to a judge

- 1 There lived a man in the steppes who was famous for his justice and wisdom. At that time if a man was known for his fairness, people came to him from far and wide to ask him to settle their disputes. And so it was that one day two villagers appeared before this wise man and asked him to settle their quarrel.
- 2 "Tell me your story," the judge said to Sergio, the plaintiff.
- 3 "I had to leave my village," said Sergio, "for I had business elsewhere. And all my wealth was a hundred gold coins. I did not come by them easily. I had to work hard for them, and I did not want them to be stolen while I was away. Nor did I care to carry so much money with me on my journey. So I entrusted these gold coins for safekeeping to this man here. When I got back from my journey, he denied that he had ever received the money from me."
- 4 "And who saw you give him these hundred gold coins?" asked the judge.
- 5 "No one saw it. We went together to the heart of the forest and there I handed him the coins."
- 6 "What have you to say to this?" the judge asked, turning to the defendant, Goran.
- 7 Goran shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know what he is talking about," said the man. "I never went to the forest with him. I never saw his gold coins."
- 8 "Do you remember the place where you handed over the money?" the judge asked Sergio.
- 9 "Of course I do. It was under a tall oak. I remember it very well. I can point it out with no trouble at all."
- 10 "So you do have a witness, after all," said the judge. "Here, take my signet ring, go to the tall tree under which you stood when you handed over the



money, set the seal of my signet ring against the trunk, and bid the tree appear before me to bear out the truth of your story.”

11 Sergio took the signet ring and went off to carry out the demand of the judge. Goran remained behind and waited for his return.

12 After some time had passed, the judge turned to Goran and asked, “Do you think he has reached the oak by this time?”

13 “No, not yet,” was the answer.

14 After further time had passed, the judge again turned to Goran and asked, “Do you think he has reached the tree by this time?”

15 “Yes,” was the answer, “by now he must have reached it.” Not long after that Sergio returned.

16 “Well?” asked the judge.

17 “I did just as you said,” replied Sergio. “I walked as far as the forest and then I went on until I came to the tall oak under which we stood when I handed over my gold coins. I set the seal of your signet ring against the trunk of the tree and I bade it appear before you as a witness. But the tree refused to budge.”

18 “Never mind,” said the judge. “The oak has appeared before me and it has borne witness in your favor.”

19 At that Goran exclaimed, “How can you say such a thing! I have been here all this while and no tree has stalked into the place.”

20 “But,” replied the judge, “you said that you had not been in the forest at all. And yet when I asked you whether Sergio had reached the oak, first you answered that he could not have reached it, and the second time you said that he must surely have reached it. Therefore, you were in the forest and you remembered where the oak was under which you stood when Sergio handed his gold coins to you for safekeeping. Now you must not only return him his hundred gold pieces, but you must also pay a fine for having tried to cheat him.”

21 So the tree was a witness without budging, and justice was done.



- 10** What is the main problem in the story?
- A. Sergio accuses Goran of stealing his money.
 - B. Sergio cannot find the oak tree in the forest.
 - C. Goran brings the oak tree to the courtroom.
 - D. The judge punishes Goran for stealing the money.
- 11** Based on the information in the story, what does the judge most likely think of Sergio's story?
- A. He thinks it is vague.
 - B. He thinks it is boring.
 - C. He thinks it is believable.
 - D. He thinks it is exaggerated.
- 12** Which sentence best describes the punishment the judge gives Goran?
- A. Goran is told to apologize and leave the village.
 - B. Goran is told to return the money and pay a penalty.
 - C. Goran is told to pay off his debt by working for Sergio.
 - D. Goran is told to wait in the forest until the oak tree tells the truth.



13 Which event in the story best shows why the judge is famous for his justice and wisdom?

- A. The judge sends a signet ring into the forest.
- B. The judge demands to be paid for his decision.
- C. The judge releases Goran without punishment.
- D. The judge creates a plan to catch Goran in a lie.

14 The defendant in the story, Goran, could be described as dishonest. Provide **two** details from the story to support this idea.



15 What was the authors' purpose for writing the story?

- A. To describe to readers the life of Asian judges
- B. To entertain readers with a story that teaches a lesson
- C. To inform readers about village life in southwestern Asia
- D. To persuade readers to use a judge when handling disputes



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Reading Grade 7

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Dr. Terry Bergeson
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Directions: Read the selection and answer the questions.

The Returning Cats

by David C. Knight

- 1 In the autumn of 1968, a housewife in the suburbs of a large Midwestern city heard scratching sounds at her front door. Puzzled, she went to the door, opened it slowly, and after a few seconds exclaimed, “Jingles!”

Jingles’ Story

- 2 Jingles was the family’s black-and-white cat. The woman could scarcely believe her eyes because Jingles had been lost for over four weeks—ever since the family had missed the cat while on vacation at the lake resort nearly 300 miles away. When, at the end of the vacation, the cat had not shown up, they had had to leave without him.
- 3 At first the woman thought she must be mistaken. The cat *looked* like Jingles, but its fur was so matted and dirty that it was hard to tell. Also, one of its ears was torn and there were patches of dried blood on its back. But when the woman saw the grimy white star on the cat’s black chest, she knew it must be Jingles.
- 4 The woman took Jingles into the bathroom and cleaned him up as best she could. Then she fed him. Except for his torn ear and a slight limp from a cut on one of his legs, Jingles seemed to be in reasonably good shape after his ordeal.
- 5 Around the dinner table that night, the family talked about what poor Jingles must have gone through. How had the cat managed to stay alive for all those days and miles? How had it found food? How had the animal known in which direction the city lay and, once he had reached it, how had he made his way through the busy streets to the correct suburb and his home? The lake resort was so isolated, with twisting, confusing roads leading to it, that Jingles must have had to travel long miles through fields and woods on his way back. There were also several small rivers that the cat must have had to swim across.



Cats seem to know their way home.

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- 6 As the family shook their heads over these mysteries, Jingles purred happily on the sofa. Already he seemed to have forgotten his terrible experience and was content simply to be back with the people he loved.

Other Mystery Returns

- 7 This story is not an unusual one. Cat owners all over the world have reported similar cases of their pets traveling long distances, overcoming tremendous obstacles, to find their way back to their homes. One cat, returning from New Jersey to Brooklyn, must have had to cross the Hudson and East Rivers. Whether it used bridges or swam, no one will ever know. Yet it reached home safely. Another cat, lost in the Arizona desert, somehow made its way across the sandy wasteland to its home in Phoenix—over 100 miles away.



A cat crossed the Hudson and East Rivers to get from New Jersey to Brooklyn.

- 8 Some animal experts have compared this amazing ability of cats to that of homing pigeons. But there is one big difference. Pigeons must be trained by their owners to return. Each training period, they are taken farther and farther from their homes, until they have learned to fly back over great distances. But cats are given no such training. They just seem to *know* the way back.
- 9 Does this “homing instinct” have something to do with cats’ keen sense of smell? It doesn’t seem likely. Even for cats, the smells of home would be too far off for them to sniff their way back. One scientist has suggested that homing pigeons—and perhaps cats as well—somehow use the earth’s magnetic field to guide them. But the scientist does not explain how this actually happens. There is also a theory that the cats’ strong sense of belonging to certain people and to a certain place somehow furnishes them with a special gift for knowing just how to return to those people and that place. It is still a mystery.

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- 1 Based on the information in the selection, what is the most important idea the author presents?
- A. Animal experts believe cats have a strong sense of belonging.
 - B. Animal experts believe cats have a special ability to find their way home.
 - C. Animal experts believe cats may use a strong sense of smell to guide them.
 - D. Animal experts believe cats may use the earth's magnetic field to guide them.
- 2 Any of these words could be used to describe Jingles in the selection. Choose the word you think best describes Jingles.

Determined

Brave

Intelligent

Provide **two** details from the selection to support your choice.

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3 What is the meaning of the word *furnishes* in paragraph 9 of the selection?

- A. Eliminates
- B. Distracts
- C. Replaces
- D. Provides

4 According to the section **Other Mystery Returns**, which statement is true?

- A. Cats rarely have a strong sense of belonging to their owners.
- B. A cat in Arizona traveled over 100 miles to get home.
- C. Jingles the cat had a grimy, white star on his chest.
- D. Cats are trained to return home.

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- 5 In paragraphs 8 and 9 of the selection, why does the author include information about homing pigeons? Include **two** details from the selection in your answer.

- 6 Which sentence best summarizes the section **Other Mystery Returns**?
- A. Cats are trained by their owners to return home.
 - B. Cats can cross deserts, bridges, and rivers to return home.
 - C. Cats, like homing pigeons, have an amazing ability to return home.
 - D. Cats, like homing pigeons, use the earth's magnetic field to return home.

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7 Which sentence best explains why homing pigeons return home?

- A. Pigeons have a sense of belonging to their owners.
- B. Pigeons are trained by their owners to return.
- C. Pigeons instinctively know their way back.
- D. Pigeons use their sense of smell to return.

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Directions: Read the story and answer the questions.

The Friendship Orchard a tale from Central Asia

by Pleasant DeSpain

- 1 Two elderly friends tilled a small patch of earth on the barren steppe, a large, flat, treeless piece of land. They raised vegetables and a few sheep, but life was hard and they earned little. Winter was especially difficult because of the dreaded snowstorms known as *dzhut*, in which previously thawed snow froze over. Sheep couldn't dig through the ice for food and often perished.
- 2 Because they were old and poor, they took care to watch out for one another. One of the men was named Kurai. He owned the land on which they lived and worked. The other was called Dau, and he was in charge of the sheep.
- 3 One winter, a severe *dzhut* struck their farm. Soon after, all their sheep starved to death.
- 4 Dau took Kurai aside and said, "I must move away and start again. You've been a fine friend, Kurai. I will miss you."
- 5 "No, no, Dau," replied Kurai. "You can't go off and leave me. Who will help with the garden, come spring? Who will tell me stories around the night fire? I want you here, on the land with me. I'm giving you half ownership of the field. You take the lower half, and I'll keep the upper part. The deed is already in your name."
- 6 A rare and wonderful thing happened the following spring. Dau was digging in his half of the field and struck something made of metal with his hoe. He dug deeper into the black earth and uncovered a small, iron chest. It was filled with gold coins.
- 7 He ran to Kurai, shouting, "You are rich! You can live like a tribal ruler. And you deserve it, Kurai, for you are a good man."
- 8 Kurai said, "You found the gold in your half of the field, Dau. The treasure is yours, and yours alone. I'm truly happy for you."
- 9 "No, my generous friend," explained Dau. "The gold is yours. You have already helped me enough. How can I take anything more?"
- 10 "You have found the gold," said Kurai. "How can I take from you that which has been found by you?"
- 11 "Enough of your stubbornness!" cried Dau. "Take the gold."
- 12 "Enough of your nonsense!" replied Kurai. "The gold is yours."

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- 13 The two friends argued long into the night. Neither gave in to the other. They were exhausted by morning and decided to talk with a teacher who lived in the middle of the steppes. He was known as the wisest man in the region.
- 14 It took five days to find the wise man's hut. The two friends showed him the gold and told him of their argument. The teacher looked at the coins and then at the men. He looked again at the coins and again at the men. Then he closed his eyes and thought and thought.
- 15 After a long while, he opened his eyes and said, "Take the gold to the city and buy the highest quality seeds in the land. Return to your fields and plant the finest orchard in the steppes. Make it an orchard of friendship. Allow the poor to rest in its shade, eat of its fruit, and enjoy its beauty. Rather than divide two friends, let the gold serve many."
- 16 Kurai and Dau agreed, and left for the city. They arrived several days later and headed for the marketplace. They searched and searched for a seller of fruit seeds, but had no luck. No one had seeds to sell. The old men were tired and decided to rest for the night and try again the following day.
- 17 On the way to an inn, they heard a terrible screeching coming from a thousand caged birds, carried by a caravan of camels. The colorful birds had been captured in the thick forests and high mountains, and were being taken to market. They would be sold as food for wealthy tables.
- 18 Kurai looked at Dau and said, "It isn't good to be put in a cage."
- 19 Dau looked at Kurai and said, "It isn't right that beautiful birds should be eaten by the rich."
- 20 They approached the leader of the caravan and asked the price of the birds.
- 21 He looked at their poor clothes and said, "More than you have."
- 22 Kurai opened the iron chest. "Release them and the gold is yours," he said.
- 23 Dau nodded his head in agreement.
- 24 The leader ordered his helpers to set the birds free.
- 25 Up into the sky they flew, singing songs of joy!
- 26 Kurai and Dau began their long walk home, feeling happy for the birds, but sad for the orchard that would never be. They talked about their long friendship and decided that it was foolish to argue.
- 27 Arriving home a few days later, they witnessed a strange sight. A thousand beautiful birds sat in their field and scratched in the dirt. Each held a seed in its beak and dropped it into the loose soil. The dirt was smoothed over the seeds with the beating of strong wings. Then, creating a multicolored cloud of

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feather and song, the birds rose into the sky and flew away.

28 Rain fell and the seeds sprouted, climbing slowly from earth toward sky. The orchard took root. Apple trees and pear trees and apricot, too.

29 Trees take time to grow, and the two old men passed on before they could taste the first of the fruit. Kurai and Dau were not saddened, however, as they had eaten from the fruit of friendship for so many years.



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- 8 What is the meaning of the word *deed* in paragraph 5 of the story?
- A. A garden that is bare
 - B. A document giving ownership
 - C. A few acres of land
 - D. A letter to a landowner
- 9 What is most likely the author's purpose for writing this story?
- A. To persuade the reader to donate
 - B. To explain how orchards came to be
 - C. To demonstrate the power of friendship
 - D. To show how friends can get advice
- 10 According to the story, which of these is true of a *dzhut*?
- A. A *dzhut* lasts for most of the season.
 - B. A *dzhut* immediately kills livestock.
 - C. A *dzhut* can happen at almost any time of the year.
 - D. A *dzhut* makes it hard for animals to find food.

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- 11** Does spending all the gold on the release of the birds seem to be a reasonable thing to do? Explain your response by providing **two** details from the story.

- 12** How are Dau and Kurai alike?

- A.** They are both ambitious.
- B.** They are both stubborn.
- C.** They are both dishonest.
- D.** They are both greedy.

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13 Which sentence explains why Kurai gives Dau half ownership of his land?

- A.** Dau raises sheep on Kurai's land and becomes part owner of the land.
- B.** Kurai and Dau are brothers and should share their possessions with each other.
- C.** Kurai enjoys and appreciates Dau and wants to keep a good friend in his life.
- D.** Dau's sheep die and he needs to plant a crop in order to have some food.