Grade 5 ELA Practice Passages

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Fiction Passages

Fiction Mentor Passage: “By Caldron Pool”*

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Poetry Passages

Poetry Mentor Passage: “Dog and Squirrel: Steps in a Flirtation”

Practice 1: “Ice Can Scream” and “Winter Songs”*
Practice 2: “First Men on the Moon”
In the imaginary land of Narnia, two animals—an ape named Shift and a donkey named Puzzle—are friends. Read the selection about one of their adventures and answer the questions that follow.

**BY CALDRON POOL** by C. S. Lewis

1. In the last days of Narnia, far up to the west beyond Lantern Waste and close beside the great waterfall, there lived an Ape. He was so old that no one could remember when he had first come to live in those parts, and he was the cleverest, ugliest, most wrinkled Ape you can imagine. He had a little house, built of wood and thatched with leaves, up in the fork of a great tree, and his name was Shift. There were very few Talking Beasts or Men or Dwarfs, or people of any sort, in that part of the wood, but Shift had one friend and neighbor who was a donkey called Puzzle. At least they both said they were friends, but from the way things went on you might have thought Puzzle was more like Shift’s servant than his friend. He did all the work. When they went together to the river, Shift filled the big skin bottles with water but it was Puzzle who carried them back. When they wanted anything from the towns further down the river it was Puzzle who went down with empty baskets on his back and came back with the panniers full and heavy. And all the nicest things that Puzzle brought back were eaten by Shift; for as Shift said, “You see, Puzzle, I can’t eat grass and thistles like you, so it’s only fair I should make it up in other ways.” And Puzzle always said, “Of course, Shift, of course. I see that.” Puzzle never complained, because he knew that Shift was far cleverer than himself and he thought it was very kind of Shift to be friends with him at all. And if ever Puzzle did try to argue about anything, Shift would always say, “Now, Puzzle, I understand what needs to be done better than you. You know you’re not clever, Puzzle.” And Puzzle always said, “No, Shift. It’s quite true. I’m not clever.” Then he would sigh and do whatever Shift had said.

2. One morning early in the year the pair of them were out walking along the shore of Caldron Pool. Caldron Pool is the big pool right under the cliffs at the western end of Narnia. The great waterfall pours down into it with a noise like everlasting thunder, and the River of Narnia flows out on the other side. The waterfall keeps the Pool always dancing and bubbling and churning round and round as if it were on the boil, and that of course is how it got its name of Caldron Pool. It is liveliest in the early spring when the waterfall is swollen with all the snow that has melted off the mountains from up beyond Narnia in the Western Wild from which the river comes. And as they looked at Caldron Pool Shift suddenly pointed with his dark, skinny finger and said,

3. “Look! What’s that?”

“That yellow thing that’s just come down the waterfall. Look! There it is again, it’s floating. We must find out what it is.”

“Must we?” said Puzzle.

“Of course we must,” said Shift. “It may be something useful. Just hop into the Pool like a good fellow and fish it out. Then we can have a proper look at it.”

“Hop into the Pool?” said Puzzle, twitching his long ears.

“Well how are we to get it if you don’t?” said the Ape.

“But—but,” said Puzzle, “wouldn’t it be better if you went in? Because, you see, it’s you who wants to know what it is, and I don’t much. And you’ve got hands, you see. You’re as good as a Man or a Dwarf when it comes to catching hold of things. I’ve only got hoofs.”

“Really, Puzzle,” said Shift, “I didn’t think you’d ever say a thing like that. I didn’t think it of you, really.”

“Why, what have I said wrong?” said the Donkey, speaking in rather a humble voice, for he saw that Shift was very deeply offended. “All I meant was—”

“Wanting me to go into the water,” said the Ape. “As if you didn’t know perfectly well what weak chests Apes always have and how easily they catch cold! Very well. I will go in. I’m feeling cold enough already in this cruel wind. But I’ll go in. I shall probably die. Then you’ll be sorry.” And Shift’s voice sounded as if he was just going to burst into tears.

“Please don’t, please don’t, please don’t,” said Puzzle, half braying, and half talking. “I never meant anything of the sort, Shift, really I didn’t. You know how stupid I am and how I can’t think of more than one thing at a time. I’d forgotten about your weak chest. Of course I’ll go in. You mustn’t think of doing it yourself. Promise me you won’t, Shift.”

So Shift promised, and Puzzle went cloppety-clop on his four hoofs round the rocky edge of the Pool to find a place where he could get in. Quite apart from the cold it was no joke getting into that quivering and foaming water, and Puzzle had to stand and shiver for a whole minute before he made up his mind to do it. But then Shift called out from behind him and said: “Perhaps I’d better do it after all, Puzzle.” And when Puzzle heard that he said, “No, no. You promised. I’m in now,” and in he went.

A great mass of foam got him in the face and filled his mouth with water and blinded him. Then he went under altogether for a few seconds, and when he came up again he was in quite another part of the Pool. Then the swirl caught him and carried him round and round and faster and faster till it took him right under the waterfall itself, and the force of the water plunged him down, deep down, so that he thought he would never able to hold his breath till he came up again. And when he had come up and when at last he got somewhere near the thing he was trying to catch, it sailed away from him till it too got under the fall and was forced down to the bottom. When it came up again it was further from him than ever. But at last, when he was almost tired to death, and bruised all over and numb with cold, he succeeded in gripping the thing with his teeth. And out he came carrying it in front of him and getting his front hoofs tangled up in it, for it was as big as a large hearthrug, and it was very heavy and cold and slimy.

He flung it down in front of Shift and stood dripping and shivering and trying to get his breath back. But the Ape never looked at him or asked him how he felt. The Ape was too
busy going round and round the Thing and spreading it out and patting it and smelling it. Then a wicked gleam came into his eye and he said:

"It is a lion’s skin."

"Ee—auh—auh—oh, is it?” gasped Puzzle.

“Now I wonder . . . I wonder . . . I wonder,” said Shift to himself, for he was thinking very hard.

“I wonder who killed the poor lion,” said Puzzle presently. “It ought to be buried. We must have a funeral.”

“Oh, it wasn’t a Talking Lion,” said Shift. “You needn’t bother about that. There are no Talking Beasts up beyond the Falls, up in the Western Wild. This skin must have belonged to a dumb, wild lion.”

This, by the way, was true. A Hunter, a Man, had killed and skinned this lion somewhere up in the Western Wild several months before. But that doesn’t come into this story.

QUESTIONS

1. In the selection, how does Shift mostly control Puzzle’s behavior?

A. by telling Puzzle that he will be rewarded for obeying
B. by reminding Puzzle that he is unintelligent
C. by urging Puzzle to be more daring
D. by warning Puzzle about danger

2. Based on paragraph 2, which of the following best explains how the Pool got its name?

A. It is filled with unknown objects.
B. It is deeper than other bodies of water.
C. It is black and dirty like a kettle used for cooking.
D. It is swirling and foaming like soup being stirred in a pot.
3. According to the selection, why does Puzzle think it would be best for Shift to go into the water?

   A. Shift loves to go swimming.
   B. Puzzle feels he is becoming ill.
   C. Shift grabs things more easily than Puzzle.
   D. Puzzle knows Shift enjoys finding treasure.

4. Which of the following best describes what happens in paragraph 14?

   A. Puzzle gives in to Shift’s demands.
   B. Shift expresses concern for Puzzle’s health.
   C. Shift offers to go into the Pool instead of Puzzle.
   D. Puzzle explains why Shift should go into the Pool.

5. Who is telling the story?

   A. Shift
   B. a lion
   C. Puzzle
   D. a narrator

6. In paragraph 12, what does the word **offended** mean?

   A. hurt
   B. modest
   C. pleased
   D. surprised
7. Based on the selection, describe the differences between Shift’s and Puzzle’s personalities. Support your answer with important details from the selection.
Fiction Practice Passage #1

Thomas and his grandfather are fishing off a pier for trout. They have been fishing for quite a while.

Go Fish

by Mary Stolz

1 “How long do we have to be patient?” Thomas asked.
2 “As long as it takes,” said Grandfather.
3 This didn’t sound good. Thomas scowled, scratched his arm, his head, his ankle. He shifted from one leg to the other.
4 “Observe, Thomas, how quietly they wait—the pelicans and our friend the heron. They don’t wriggle and writhe, like some I could name.”
5 “They don’t have anything to do but wait.”
6 “Thomas, I’ve said it before and I say it again, you are a restless boy.”
7 “I know,” Thomas said. “Grandfather?”
8 “Yes, Thomas?”
9 “When you were a boy, were you restless?”
10 Grandfather tipped his head till his beard pointed at the sky. “I’ll cast my mind back.”
11 Thomas waited.
12 Grandfather lowered his chin, looked into Thomas’s eyes. “I was,” he said.
13 “Oh, good.”
14 Grandfather threw out their lines again, handed Thomas his pole. They went on being patient.
15 They’d had a few strikes, but each time the fish got the bait and Thomas and Grandfather got nothing.
16 “All part of the game,” Grandfather would say, calmly rebaiting.
Thomas landed a blowfish. It came out of the water already starting on its defense. Breathing deeply, it began to puff up, swelling until it looked like a bubblegum bubble with spines.

“Thinks he looks pretty fierce, doesn’t he, Grandfather?”

“He does look fierce, for a fellow his size.” Grandfather dropped the stiff little blown-up blowfish into the water, where it slimmed down and swam off as if nothing unusual had happened.

They caught a flounder.

Flounders are bottom fish, and mostly spend their lives buried in sand. Their eyes are on top of their heads, they are flat as plates, and the one they caught was too small to keep. Carefully, Grandfather slid it back into the water. Too bad. Flounder were good eating. Especially the way Grandfather prepared them.

Thinking about Grandfather’s cooking made Thomas’s mouth water.

“You’re a very good cook, Grandfather,” he said.

“True.”

“I’m getting kind of hungry.”

“So am I,” said Grandfather. He did not sound ready to quit.

Thomas sighed and moved his rod gently up and down.

They caught a ladyfish. These are not good eating.

Grandfather was about to toss it back when the heron darted forward and took it right from his hand, then tossed his head up and set about swallowing.

Thomas watched as the bony fish went down the bird’s long neck.

“I’m glad we don’t have to swallow whole fish that way,” he said.

“So am I,” said Grandfather.

Suddenly Thomas’s rod dipped. A fish flipped out of the water a long way off.

“Speckled trout,” said Grandfather. “A big one. Gently, now, Thomas. You don’t want him to throw the hook.”
"I'm trying," Thomas said, turning the reel as slowly as he could. He wished Grandfather would take over, but didn't ask.

Grandfather believed it was every man to his own fish.

Slowly, slowly, he reeled in his trout until it was close enough for Grandfather to scoop up with the net. He was willing to do that.

"By golly, Thomas!" he shouted. "Look at the size of him!"

Thomas, swelling like a blowfish, regarded his catch proudly. "He'll have to go in the book, won't he, Grandfather?"

"He certainly will. A page to himself, like the snook we caught."

"You caught."

"All right. I caught. But this is your fish, and you are the one to write him in the book."

"Oh, good," Thomas said happily.

"Now—let's go to it," said Grandfather. "This crowd of trout is here, and we have to strike before they take off...."

In the excitement, Thomas forgot to be tired.

Side by side, he and his grandfather caught fifteen trout and had to send only three of them back to sea—to grow bigger and maybe be caught another day.

Twelve good-sized fish. Grandfather would keep out enough for tonight and tomorrow's dinner, and freeze the rest for later eating.

Thomas swallowed hungrily, thinking about dinner.

"All right," Grandfather said at last. "Let's go home."

Collecting their gear, richer by twelve speckled trout, they clanked back up the beach.
1. Which line from the text best shows Grandfather’s patience?

   a. “Thomas, I’ve said it before and I say it again, you are a restless boy.”
   b. Grandfather tipped his head till his beard pointed at the sky.
   c. “All part of the game,” Grandfather would say, calmly rebaiting.
   d. Grandfather believed it was every man to his own fish.

2. Based on the selection, what is the most likely reason Grandfather doesn’t help Thomas reel in the fish?

   a. Grandfather doesn’t know how to reel in trout.
   b. Grandfather wants Thomas to experience the challenge of reeling in a fish all by himself.
   c. Grandfather is angry with Thomas for being impatient.
   d. Grandfather is busy catching his own fish.

3. Why is Thomas “swelling like a blowfish” in paragraph 39? Use two details from the story to support your response.

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4. Thomas's mood changes from the beginning of the story to the end. How does Thomas feel at the beginning of the story? How does he feel at the end? Why does his mood change? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how Thomas feels at the beginning of the story
- explain how Thomas feels at the end of the story
- explain why his mood changes
- use details from the story to support your response
Once I went to visit my grandmother. My grandmother and I do not speak the same language. We talked through my father, as if he were a telephone, because he spoke both our languages and could translate what we said.

I called her Sitti, which means Grandma in Arabic. She called me habibi which means darling. Her voice danced as high as the whistles of birds. Her voice giggled and whooshed like wind going around corners. She had a thousand rivers in her voice.

A few curls of dark hair peeked out of her scarf on one side, and a white curl peeked out on the other side. I wanted her to take off the scarf so I could see if her hair was striped.

Soon we had invented our own language together. Sitti pointed at my stomach to ask if I was hungry. I pointed to the door to ask if she wanted to go outside. We walked to the fields to watch men picking lentils. We admired the sky with hums and claps.

We crossed the road to buy milk from a family that kept one spotted cow. I called the cow habibi, and it winked at me. We thanked the cow, with whistles and clicks, for the fresh milk that we carried home in Sitti’s little teapot.

Every day I played with my cousins, Fowzi, Sami, Hani, and Hendia from next door. We played marbles together in their courtyard. Their marbles were blue and green and spun through the dust like planets. We didn’t need words to play marbles.

My grandmother lives on the other side of the earth. She eats cucumbers for breakfast, with yogurt and bread. She bakes the big, flat bread in a round, old oven next to her house. A fire burns in the middle.

She pats the dough between her hands and presses it out to bake on a flat black rock in the center of the oven. My father says she has been baking that bread for a hundred years.
My grandmother and I sat under her lemon tree in the afternoons, drinking lemonade with mint in it. She liked me to pick bunches of mint for her. She liked to press her nose into the mint and sniff.

Some days we stuffed little zucchini squash with rice for dinner. We sang *habibi, habibi* as we stacked them in a pan. We cracked almonds and ate apricots, called *mish-mish*, while we worked.

One day Sitti took off her scarf and shook out her hair. She washed her hair in a tub right there under the sun. Her hair surprised me by being very long. And it was striped! She said it got that way all by itself. I helped her brush it out while it dried. She braided it and pinned the braid up before putting on the scarf again.

I felt as if I knew a secret.

In the evenings we climbed the stairs to the roof of Sitti’s house to look at the sky, smell the air, and take down the laundry. My grandmother likes to unpin the laundry in the evening so she can watch the women of the village walking back from the spring with jugs of water on their heads. She used to do that, too. My father says the women don’t really need to get water from the spring anymore, but they like to. It is something from the old days they don’t want to forget.

On the day my father and I had to leave, everyone cried and cried. Even my father kept blowing his nose and walking outside. I cried hard when Sitti held my head against her shoulder. My cousins gave me a sack of almonds to eat on the plane. Sitti gave me a small purse she had made. She had stitched a picture of her lemon tree onto the purse with shiny thread. She popped the almonds into my purse and pulled the drawstrings tight.

1. In paragraph 6, it says: We didn’t need words to play marbles. What does this mean?

   A. You are not supposed to talk when you play marbles.

   B. Mona didn’t want to play with her cousins.

   C. The cousins were able to play a game they all knew, even though they didn’t speak the same language.

   D. Sitti told them to play quietly.
2. Read the following line from paragraph 1.

*We talked through my father, as if he were a telephone, because he spoke both our languages and could **translate** what we said.*

What is the meaning of the word **translate**?

A. repeat  
B. echo  
C. turn words into a different language  
D. speak English

3. Why is the setting important to this story? Use two details from the story to support your response.

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4. The narrator’s relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to
• explain how their relationship develops
• explain how they communicate
• use details from the story to support your response
Greeting the Sun, a Maushop Story
retold by Joseph Bruchac

Long ago, as the Sun traveled across the sky, one of the first places he came to each morning was the land of the Wampanoag people. He would shine down on them, giving them warmth and light. But instead of thanking him for what he gave them, the Wampanoag people would look up into the sky, squint their eyes, and cover their faces with their hands.

“I do not like those little people making faces at me,” said the Sun one day. “I will no longer visit their land. I will stay on the other side of the sky, where the people appreciate me.”

So, when the next day came, the Sun did not rise up in the sky. Everything in the land of the Wampanoag people stayed dark and cold. The people became afraid and began to cry out.

“Someone help us,” they cried. “Everything is dark. The Sun is missing. The world is going to end.”

Maushop, the giant, had been sleeping, but the sound of many frightened voices woke him.

“Hunh,” Maushop said. “It is dark.”

Maushop stood up from the place where he had been sleeping on the beach, just below the great cliffs at Gay Head. He saw the little fires burning in the village of the Wampanoag people. Walking very carefully, so that he would not step on anyone in the darkness, Maushop went into the village.

“Maushop,” the people cried. “You must help us. The Sun did not rise today. How can we survive without the Sun?”

“I will go and find the Sun,” Maushop said.

Maushop turned and stepped into the ocean. He began to wade toward the east. His legs were so long that it took him only four steps to cross the ocean and four more steps to come to the other side of the world. There Maushop saw the Sun sitting in the middle of the sky and not moving.

“Older Brother,” Maushop called up to the Sun, “why are you here? It is long past the time for you to bring the new day to the other side of the
world. The people there are in darkness, and they are afraid.”

“I am glad to see you, Younger Brother,” said the Sun. “But as for those people on the other side of the world, I am not going there anymore. They never said thank you when I gave them light and warmth. All they did was squint their eyes and make ugly faces. I am going to stay here, where the people appreciate me.”

Maushop turned and walked back across the ocean to the land of the Wampanoag people. He told the people what the Sun had said.

“If the Sun returns,” the people promised, “we will greet him every morning. We will smile up at him and say thanks to him every day.”

Maushop turned and walked back to the other side of the world.

“Older Brother,” Maushop said to the Sun, “the people on my side of the world are sorry. They want you to return. They promise that they will greet you with smiles and words of thanks every morning.”

“No,” said the Sun. “I do not think they will remember what they promised. I will stay here. I will not move.”

Maushop decided that he would have to show the Sun that the people really meant what they said. Maushop went to the spiders.

“My friends,” said Maushop, “I need a big net. Will you weave it for me?”

“We will do as you ask,” the spiders answered. They wove a huge net that was very strong.

Maushop picked up the net and went back to the Sun.

“Older Brother,” Maushop said, “I want you to see that the people on the other side of the world meant what they said. You do not have to move. I will move you.”

Then Maushop threw that great net over the Sun. He grabbed the ends of the net in his hands, put it over his shoulder, and dragged the Sun back across the sky. Maushop was so strong that the Sun could not resist him.

As soon as they reached the land of the Wampanoags, the Sun heard voices calling up to him.
“Thank you,” the voices called. “Thank you for bringing us light and warmth. Thank you for the gift of another day.”

The Sun looked down at all of the people. They were not making ugly faces anymore. They were smiling up at him.

“Younger Brother,” said the Sun to Maushop, “you were right. The people on this side of the world are happy to see me. From now on, as long as they greet me this way, I will come to their land every day.”

Answer the following questions:

1. The Sun gets angry with the Wampanoag people because he thinks they are being

   A. ungrateful
   B. childish
   C. unfair
   D. cruel

2. Which is the best summary of this story?

   A. Maushop lives near the Wampanoag people. He goes to talk to the Sun on the other side of the world. The Sun calls Maushop his younger brother. Maushop is also friends with the spiders. The spiders weave a net for Maushop to use.

   B. The Sun leaves the land of the Wampanoag people because he is not happy with them. When the Sun does not come back, the people turn to Maushop for help. He finds the Sun on the other side of the world and finds out why the Sun will not come back. When the people say they will change their ways, Maushop finds a way to get the Sun to return.

   C. The Sun and Maushop are friends. When the Sun leaves the land of the Wampanoag people, they ask Maushop to help get the Sun to come back. Maushop makes two trips to the other side of the world.

   D. When the Sun leaves the land of the Wampanoag people, they want him to come back. They need help to find out where the Sun went. Maushop agrees to go look for the Sun and tell him that the people want him to come back. Maushop is able to do this because he is a giant and can travel around the world quickly.
3. Read these sentences from paragraph 23 of the story.

He grabbed the ends of the net in his hands, put it over his shoulder, and dragged the Sun back across the sky. Maushop was so strong that the Sun could not resist him.

What does the word “resist” mean in these lines?

A. offer to protect 
B. shine back at 
C. fight against 
D. care for 

4. Which sentence suggests that the Sun feels it is a bad idea to trust the Wampanoag people?

A. “I do not like those little people making faces at me,’ said the Sun one day.” (paragraph 2)

B. “So, when the next day came, the Sun did not rise up in the sky.” (paragraph 3)

C. “But as for those people on the other side of the world, I am not going there anymore.” (paragraph 12)

D. “I do not think they will remember what they promised.” (paragraph 17)

5. Maushop is a giant. How is this detail important to the story? How does it help solve the problem? Use details from the text to support your response.

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19
In this story, Naomi learns something new about her grandma.

**Grandma Ruth**

1. Last night I learned that my grandma was named after Babe Ruth, the greatest baseball player of all time. I learned this six hours too late.

2. Yesterday I wanted to work on throwing a baseball. I needed a baseball, since my brother wouldn’t let me borrow his. Unfortunately, I knew right where one was.

3. I tiptoed into my grandma’s bedroom. Sunlight from the late morning sun filtered in through the leaves of the dogwood tree outside the open window. I moved slowly through my favorite room in the house, which belonged to my favorite person in the world, my grandma.

4. I reached into the back of her closet and pulled out a shoebox full of old baseballs wrapped in tissue paper. I shoved my hand in and grabbed the first one I touched. I threw off the paper and ran out into the yard with our dog, Bowie, who would always play a game of catch with me.

5. We had a spectacular game of catch. By the end of our session I was throwing straight as an arrow and Bowie was bringing it back as fast as he could. It was perfect.

6. I went back into my grandma’s room and wrapped the ball back up in paper, just like I’d found it. Except now it looked dirty and used, like a good baseball should.

7. At dinner, though, I heard the story.

8. “Have I ever told you that I’m named after the greatest baseball player who ever lived?” Grandma asked suddenly.

9. James and I shook our heads. We leaned forward to listen. It isn’t often we hear new stories from her.

10. My grandmother stood up and walked into her bedroom. She came back with the shoebox in her hands. She sat down and started her story.

11. “So, your great-grandfather was the dentist for the Detroit Tigers back in the 1920s. His favorite player was Ty Cobb, the best player the Tigers have ever had. When Ty found
out that your great-grandparents were going to have a baby, he brought your great-grandfather a big package full of baseballs signed by the best-known players of the time. He said, 'Doc, you can have these under one condition: name your daughter Tyrina. After me.' And my father, too excited to say no, agreed.

12 "When my mother heard about this she told my father to go to Ty Cobb and give him back the baseballs, because she had her own ideas for names. Ty just laughed when he heard this. He said to my father, 'Doc, I'll tell you what: keep the baseballs but name her after my good friend Babe Ruth.'

13 "My father smiled and said, 'I'll see what I can do. Keep these for me until then.'

14 "It turned out my mother loved the name Ruth. That's how I got my name and how my father got these: he let Ty Cobb name me after Babe Ruth."

15 I tried to swallow but couldn't. I hoped that she wasn't going to say what I thought she was going to say.

16 Then she said it.

17 "In this shoebox are the ten baseballs Ty Cobb gave my father. They are signed by some of the most famous ballplayers in history, including one that has one single signature on it: Babe Ruth's."

18 My grandma pulled the ball out, unwrapped it, and held it out for us to see. The ball was scarred almost beyond recognition. It had dog bite marks, dirt scuffs, and fraying seams. Right in the middle was a big signature in black ink that I had somehow overlooked. It was smudged now and faded, but it still clearly said "Babe Ruth." I began to shake inside.

19 But my grandma just looked at the ball and smiled sweetly. She said softly, "Even though it doesn't look like much, this ball has brought our family a lot of joy in its time. I remember when I was your age, Naomi, I almost rubbed the signature right off from tossing it up and down all the time. You see, I've always felt that a baseball should be used for a lot more than looking. My dad, your great-grandfather, used to say the same thing."

20 She lowered her hand and gently tossed the ball toward Bowie, sleeping by the door. It rolled in a perfectly straight line and came to rest softly between the dog’s paws. A perfect throw.
Questions:

1. What does Naomi learn about Grandma Ruth?

   A. Grandma Ruth hates baseball.
   B. Grandma Ruth likes to hide things from the past.
   C. Grandma Ruth was named for Babe Ruth.
   D. Grandma Ruth was married to a baseball player.

2. Reread paragraph 18. Which set of words or phrases best help you understand the meaning of the word “scarred?”

   A. “held it out for us to see”
   B. “a big signature in black ink”
   C. “it had dog bite marks, dirt scuffs”
   D. “clearly said, 'Babe Ruth'”

3. Which of the following sentences suggests that Naomi is worried she’s done something wrong?

   A. “I tried to swallow but I couldn’t.”
   B. “But my grandma just looked at the ball and smiled sweetly.”
   C. “Then she said it.”
   D. “I've always felt that a baseball should be used for a lot more than looking.”
4. Explain what Grandma’s reaction to finding the baseball shows about her relationship with Naomi. Use specific details from the text to support your answer.
The Unfortunate Fireflies
by Clara Dillingham Pierson

Several very large families of Fireflies lived in the marsh and were much admired by their friends who were awake at night. The older Fireflies told the younger ones that they should get all the sleep they could during the daytime if they were to flutter and frisk all night. Most of them did this, but two young Fireflies, who cared more about seeing the world than they did about minding their elders, used to run away while the rest were dreaming. Each thought herself very important, and was sure that if the others missed her they wouldn’t sleep a wink all day.

One night they planned to go by daylight to the farthest corner of the marsh. They went to bed when the rest did and pretended to fall asleep. When she was sure that the older Fireflies were dreaming, one of them reached over with her right hind leg and touched the other just below the edge of her left wing-cover. “Are you ready?” she whispered.

“Yes,” answered the friend, who happened to be the smaller of the two.

When well away from their sleeping relatives, they lifted their wing-covers, spread their wings, and flew.

“Oh, wouldn’t they make a fuss if they knew!” exclaimed the Larger Firefly.

“They think we need to be told every single thing,” said the Smaller Firefly.

Just then a Flycatcher darted toward them and they had to hide. He had come so near that they could look down his throat as he flew along with his beak open. The Fireflies were so scared that their feelers shook.

“I wish that bird would mind his own business,” grumbled the Larger Firefly.

“That’s just what he was doing,” said a voice beside them, as a Garter Snake drew himself through the grass. Then their feelers shook again, for they knew that snakes do not breakfast on grass and berries.

“Did you ever see such luck?” said the Smaller Firefly. “If it isn’t birds it is snakes.”

“Perfectly dreadful!” answered the other. “I never knew the marsh to be so full of horrid people.”
Then they reached the farther corner of the marsh and crawled around to see what they could find. Their eyes bothered them so that they could not see unless they were close to things, so it was useless to fly. They peeped into the cool dark corners under the skunk cabbage leaves, and lay down to rest on a bed of soft moss.

While they were resting, they noticed a plant growing near. It had a flower of green and dark red which was unlike any other blossom they had ever seen. Each leaf was stiff and hollow and grew right out of the ground instead of coming from a stalk.

“I’m going to crawl into one of them,” said the Larger Firefly. She balanced herself on the top of a fresh green leaf.

“I’m going into this one,” said the other Firefly, as she alighted on the edge of a brown-tipped leaf. “It looks nice and dark inside.” Each dropped quickly into her own leaf.

Then there was a queer sputtering, choking voice in the fresh green leaf and exactly the same in the brown-tipped one. After that a weak little voice in the green leaf said, “I fell into water.”

Another weak voice from the brown-tipped one replied, “So did I.”

On the inside of each leaf were many stiff hairs, all pointing downward. Now that they wanted to get out, these same hairs stuck into their eyes and pushed against their legs and made them exceedingly uncomfortable.

After a while they gave up trying to get out until they should be rested. It was after sunset when they tried the last time, and the light that shone from their bellies brightened the little green rooms where they were. They went at it carefully. Slowly, one foot at a time, they managed to climb out of the doorway at the top. As they came out, they heard the squeaky voice of a young Mouse say, “Oh, where did those bright things come from?”

They also heard his mother answer, “Those are only a couple of foolish Fireflies who have been in the leaves of the pitcher-plant all day.”

They flew toward home. “I’m dreadfully tired,” said one, “but I suppose we shall have to dance in the air with the rest or they will make a fuss.”

“Yes,” said the other. “It spoils everything if we are not there.”
As they came near the middle of the marsh they were surprised to see the mild summer air twinkling with hundreds of tiny lights as their friends and relatives flew to and fro in the dusk. “Well,” said the Larger Firefly, “I think they might have waited for us!”

“Humph!” said the Smaller Firefly. “If they can’t be more polite than that, I won’t play.”

So two very tired and cross young Fireflies sat on a last year’s cat-tail and sulked. “We were not even missed!” they cried.

They were much wiser after that, for they had learned that two young Fireflies were not so wonderfully important after all. And that if they chose to do things which it was never meant young Fireflies should do, they would be likely to have a very disagreeable time, but that other Fireflies would go on eating and dancing and living their own lives. To be happy, they must keep the Firefly laws.

Questions

1. Explain why the young fireflies complain about the old fireflies. Use two details from the passage to support your answer.

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26
2. Read the following line:

*So two very tired and cross young Fireflies sat on a last year’s cat-tail and sulked.* “We were not even missed!” they cried.

Which of the following means the same thing as *sulked*?
- A. cried
- B. pouted
- C. felt left out
- D. said

3. The Fireflies run into all of the following dangers EXCEPT:
- A. a snake
- B. a bird
- C. water
- D. a mouse

4. Explain what lesson the Fireflies learn and how they change from the beginning to the end of the story. Use details from the passage to support your answer.

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Fiction Practice Passage #6: PAIRED PASSAGES

Read excerpts from Black Beauty and The Secret Garden. Then answer the questions that follow.

Black Beauty by Anna Sewell

This passage is narrated by a horse named Black Beauty.

When I was four years old Squire Gordon came to look at me. He examined my eyes, my mouth, and my legs; he felt them all down; and then I had to walk and trot and gallop before him. He seemed to like me, and said, “When he has been well broken in he will do very well.” My master said he would break me in himself, as he should not like me to be frightened or hurt, and he lost no time about it, for the next day he began.

Every one may not know what breaking in is, therefore I will describe it. It means to teach a horse to wear a saddle and bridle, and to carry on his back a man, woman or child; to go just the way they wish, and to go quietly. Besides this he has to learn to wear a collar, a crupper, and a breeching, and to stand still while they are put on; then to have a cart or a chaise fixed behind, so that he cannot walk or trot without dragging it after him; and he must go fast or slow, just as his driver wishes. He must never start at what he sees, nor speak to other horses, nor bite, nor kick, nor have any will of his own; but always do his master’s will, even though he may be very tired or hungry; but the worst of all is, when his harness is once on, he may neither jump for joy nor lie down for weariness. So you see this breaking in is a great thing.

I had of course long been used to a halter and a headstall, and to be led about in the fields and lanes quietly, but now I was to have a bit and bridle; my master gave me some oats as usual, and after a good deal of coaxing he got the bit into my mouth, and the bridle fixed, but it was a nasty thing! Those who have never had a bit in their mouths cannot think how bad it feels; a great piece of cold hard steel as thick as a man’s finger to be pushed into one’s mouth, between one’s teeth, and over one’s tongue, with the ends coming out at the corner of your mouth, and held fast there by straps over your head, under your throat, round your nose, and under your chin; so that no way in the world can you get rid of the nasty hard thing; it is very bad! yes, very bad! at least I thought so; but I knew my mother always wore one when she went out, and all horses did when they were grown up; and so, what with the nice oats, and what with my master’s pats, kind words, and gentle ways, I got to wear my bit and bridle.

Next came the saddle, but that was not half so bad; my master put it on my back very gently, while old Daniel held my head; he then made the girths fast under my body, patting and talking to me all the time; then I had a few oats, then a little leading about; and this he did every day till I began to look for the oats and the saddle. At length, one morning, my master got on my back and rode me round the meadow on the soft grass. It certainly did feel queer; but I must say I felt rather proud to carry my master, and as he continued to ride me a little every day I soon became accustomed to it.
The Secret Garden  
by Frances Hodgson Burnett

This passage takes place in a garden. Colin is a young boy who was sickly and wheelchair bound, but is beginning to recover and be able to walk. Mary is his cousin, and Dickon is a friend to both of them.

At first the robin watched Mary and Colin with sharp anxiety. For some mysterious reason he knew he need not watch Dickon. The first moment he set his dew-bright black eye on Dickon he knew he was not a stranger but a sort of robin without beak or feathers. He could speak robin (which is a quite distinct language not to be mistaken for any other). To speak robin to a robin is like speaking French to a Frenchman. Dickon always spoke it to the robin himself, so the queer gibberish he used when he spoke to humans did not matter in the least. The robin thought he spoke this gibberish to them because they were not intelligent enough to understand feathered speech. His movements also were robin. They never startled one by being sudden enough to seem dangerous or threatening. Any robin could understand Dickon, so his presence was not even disturbing.

But at the outset it seemed necessary to be on guard against the other two. In the first place the boy creature did not come into the garden on his legs. He was pushed in on a thing with wheels and the skins of wild animals were thrown over him. That in itself was doubtful. Then when he began to stand up and move about he did it in a queer unaccustomed way and the others seemed to have to help him. The robin used to secrete himself in a bush and watch this anxiously, his head tilted first on one side and then on the other. He thought that the slow movements might mean that he was preparing to pounce, as cats do. When cats are preparing to pounce they creep over the ground very slowly. The robin talked this over with his mate a great deal for a few days but after that he decided not to speak of the subject because her terror was so great that he was afraid it might be injurious to the Eggs.

When the boy began to walk by himself and even to move more quickly it was an immense relief. But for a long time—or it seemed a long time to the robin—he was a source of some anxiety. He did not act as the other humans did. He seemed very fond of walking but he had a way of sitting or lying down for a while and then getting up in a disconcerting manner to begin again.

One day the robin remembered that when he himself had been made to learn to fly by his parents he had done much the same sort of thing. He had taken short flights of a few yards and then had been obliged to rest. So it occurred to him that this boy was learning to fly—or rather to walk. He mentioned this to his mate and when he told her that the Eggs would probably conduct themselves in the same way after they were fledged she was quite comforted and even became eagerly interested and derived great pleasure from watching the boy over the edge of her nest—though she always thought that the Eggs would be much cleverer and learn more quickly. But then
she said indulgently that humans were always more clumsy and slower than Eggs and most of them never seemed really to learn to fly at all. You never met them in the air or on tree-tops.

*Short Answer Constructed Response for “Black Beauty”*

1. In the passage, how does the master treat Black Beauty? Use two details from the text to support your answer.

   Write your answer in complete sentences.

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*Short Answer Constructed Response for “The Secret Garden”*

2. How do the robin’s feelings toward Colin change from the beginning of the story to the end? Use two details from the text to support your answer.

   Write your response in complete sentences.

   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
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3. Both stories are told from the perspective of an animal. How does this perspective affect how the stories are told? Compare and contrast how Black Beauty and the robin view their surroundings. Using details from both passages, describe how the animals’ perspectives influence how events are described. In your response, be sure to:

- describe the perspective of Black Beauty from "Black Beauty"
- describe the perspective of the robin from “The Secret Garden”
- explain how each author uses these perspectives to help the reader understand the events as they unfold
- use details from both stories
What Are Wind Tunnels?
by David Hitt

1 Wind tunnels are large tubes with air moving inside. The tunnels are used to copy the actions of an object in flight. Researchers use wind tunnels to learn more about how an aircraft will fly. NASA uses wind tunnels to test scale models of aircraft and spacecraft. Some wind tunnels are big enough to hold full-size versions of vehicles. The wind tunnel moves air around an object, making it seem like the object is really flying.

How do Wind Tunnels Work?

2 Most of the time, powerful fans move air through the tube. The object to be tested is fastened in the tunnel so that it will not move. The object can be a small model of a vehicle. It can be just a piece of a vehicle. It can be a full-size aircraft or spacecraft. It can even be a common object like a tennis ball. The air moving around the still object shows what would happen if the object were moving through the air. How the air moves can be studied in different ways. Smoke or dye can be placed in the air and can be seen as it moves. Threads can be attached to the object to show how the air is moving. Special instruments are often used to measure the force of the air on the object. How Does NASA Use Wind Tunnels for Aircraft?

3 NASA has more wind tunnels than any other group. The agency uses the wind tunnels in a lot of ways. One of the main ways NASA uses wind tunnels is to learn more about airplanes and how things move through the air. One of NASA’s jobs is to improve air transportation. Wind tunnels help NASA test ideas for ways to make aircraft better and safer. Engineers can test new materials or shapes for airplane parts. Then, before flying a new airplane, NASA will test it in a wind tunnel to make sure it will fly as it should.
4 NASA also works with others that need to use wind tunnels. That way, companies that are building new airplanes can test how the planes will fly. By letting these companies use the wind tunnels, NASA helps to make air travel safer.

**How Can Wind Tunnels Help Spacecraft?**

5 NASA also uses wind tunnels to test spacecraft and rockets. These vehicles are made to operate in space. Space has no atmosphere. Spacecraft and rockets have to travel through the atmosphere to get to space. Vehicles that take humans into space also must come back through the atmosphere to Earth.

6 Wind tunnels have been important in making the Ares rockets and Orion spacecraft. Ares and Orion are vehicles that will take astronauts into space. NASA engineers tested ideas for the design of Ares in wind tunnels. They needed to see how well Ares would fly. Engineers tested Orion models. They needed to know what would happen to different designs when the spacecraft came back through the atmosphere.

7 Long after the first design work is finished, NASA can still use wind tunnels. Wind tunnel tests have helped NASA change the space shuttle to make it safer. Wind tunnels will keep helping make all spacecraft and rockets better.

8 Wind tunnels can even help engineers design spacecraft to work on other worlds. Mars has a thin atmosphere. It is important to know what the Martian atmosphere will do to vehicles that are landing there. Spacecraft designs and parachutes are tested in wind tunnels set up to be like the Martian atmosphere.

9 NASA has many different types of wind tunnels. They are located at NASA centers all around the country. The wind tunnels come in a lot of sizes. Some are only a few inches square, and some are large enough to test a full-size airplane. Some wind tunnels test aircraft at very slow speeds. But some wind tunnels are made to test at hypersonic speeds. That is more than 4,000 miles per hour!
1. Which of the following best summarizes the main idea of the passage?
   A. “Researchers use wind tunnels to learn more about how an aircraft will fly.”
      (paragraph 1)
   B. “Special instruments are often used to measure the force of the air on the
      object.” (paragraph 2)
   C. “NASA engineers tested ideas for the design of Ares in wind tunnels.”
      (paragraph 6)
   D. “Long after the first design work is finished, NASA can still use wind
      tunnels.” (paragraph 7)

2. Which key detail helps the reader understand the importance of using wind
   tunnels?
   A. Wind tunnels can move air more than 4,000 miles per hour.
   B. Wind tunnels are design tools that help make safer aircraft vehicles.
   C. Wind tunnels can create different atmospheres.
   D. Wind tunnels are large tubes that show how air moves.

3. The statement that “NASA also works with others that need to use wind
   tunnels” most strongly suggests that
   A. Many different groups are developing space shuttles
   B. NASA hopes to buy vehicles made by other agencies
   C. NASA has the largest wind tunnels in existence
   D. Many companies do not have their own wind tunnels

4. The most important feature of a wind tunnel used to test vehicles that can land
   on Mars is the ability to test how
   A. Gravity affects vehicles
   B. A thin atmosphere affects vehicles
   C. High-speed winds affect vehicles
   D. Freezing temperatures affect vehicles
5. Which sentence from the passage best explains why NASA uses wind tunnels to test spacecraft models?
   A. “These vehicles are made to operate in space.” (paragraph 5)
   B. “Spacecraft and rockets have to travel through the atmosphere to get to space.” (paragraph 5)
   C. “They needed to know what would happen to different designs when the spacecraft came back through the atmosphere.” (paragraph 6)
   D. “Some are only a few inches square, and some are large enough to test a full-size airplane.” (paragraph 9)

Which sentence from the passage best explains how a wind tunnel works?
   A. “NASA uses wind tunnels to test scale models of aircraft and spacecraft.” (paragraph 1)
   B. “The object to be tested is fastened in the tunnel so that it will not move.” (paragraph 2)
   C. “Smoke or dye can be placed in the air and can be seen as it moves.” (paragraph 2)
   D. “The air moving around the still object shows what would happen if the object were moving through the air.” (paragraph 2)
Nonfiction Practice Passage #1

Read the two passages below and answer the questions.

Basic Archaeology: "What's a Dig?" and "What's a Midden?" from socialstudiesforkids.com
By David White, copyright 2002-2011.

Basic Archaeology: What's a Dig?

1 One of the main things archaeologists do in their line of work is the dig. This is a project designed to find out more about a specific area and what it was like many, many years ago. Archaeologists might be looking for animal skeletons or plant remains. They might be looking for weather patterns or fire damage.

2 Whatever they’re looking for, it usually involves digging. Why? Well, first of all, the wind is constantly blowing fresh dirt and trash all over the world. This airborne debris lands on the ground in tiny layers. After years of these tiny layers building up, what was once on the surface is buried underground. It’s not that the ground has really sunk; it’s more that more layers have been added on top.

3 So, archaeologists use their pickaxes and their drills and their brushes to find and piece together clues to what happened in an area’s past. And the more they find, the more they understand.

4 For instance, by discovering seeds, archaeologists can also discover what kinds of crops the people who lived there grew or, if people didn’t live there at all, what kind of wild plants or fruits or vegetables grew there.

5 Also, a dig might turn up fragments of clothing or shoes, giving archaeologists clues to what kind of clothing the people who lived there wore.

6 The basic idea behind the dig is to discover the past.
Basic Archaeology: What's a Midden?

1. It might sound a little silly, but archaeologists can find out a lot about people by looking through their trash.

2. People throw away things because those things aren't important or because the people have too much of those things already. By sifting through the garbage pile of a civilization, archaeologists can find out what was important to those people (or what they had too much of).

3. Why is this important? Sometimes, garbage is all that's left of a people. Especially if that people has been conquered by others, the buildings, tools, and food was probably consumed or destroyed long ago. A people's trash, especially if it was also trash to the invaders, might be left alone, enabling archaeologists to discover more about a people who left few clues to what they liked and didn't like.

4. Did they wear certain clothes? What kinds of food did they eat? What kind of tools did they use or throw away? Answers to all these questions can be found by sifting through a midden.

5. It could also be possible to find out more about a conquered people by searching the midden of their conquerers. Some invaders, not really knowing what's valuable to the people they're conquering, might very well throw away things that are extremely valuable. It is left to archaeologists to find these things and piece together the life stories of people long since conquered.

6. One person's trash could be another person's treasure.

QUESTIONS:
1. In paragraph 2 of Article 1, “What’s a Dig?” which two words help the reader understand what the word “debris” means?

   A. Wind
   B. Dirt
   C. Trash
   D. Ground
   E. Layers
   F. Surface
2. What does the information in paragraph 3 in Article 1 help the reader understand about archaeologists?

A. What types of tools they use
B. How long it takes to complete a dig
C. How many clues are found at each dig
D. What they learn about people from the past

3. The following question has two parts. Answer A and then answer part B.

PART A: According to Article 1, what do archaeologists study in addition to people who lived long ago?

A. The reasons an area became full of debris long ago
B. The general conditions in an area long ago
C. The governments of the people long ago
D. The ways people worked together long ago

PART B: Which details from Article 1 best supports the answer to Part A?

A. “It’s not that the ground has really sunk; it’s more that more layers have been added on top.”
B. “And the more they find, the more they understand.”
C. “For instance, by discovering seeds, archaeologists can also discover what kinds of crops the people who lived there grew or, if people didn’t live there at all, what kind of wild plants or fruits or vegetables grew there.”
D. “Also, a dig might turn up fragments of clothing or shoes, giving archaeologists clues to what kind of clothing the people who lived there wore.”
4. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: Which sentence best states the main idea of Article 2, “What’s a Midden?”
A. Conquering other people destroys details about the past.
B. Learning about the past is more important than ever.
C. Being an archaeologist is a very difficult job.
D. Looking at old trash gives archaeologists useful information.

Part B: Which detail from the article best support the answer to Part A?
A. “By sifting through the garbage pile of a civilization, archaeologists can find out what was important to those people (or what they had too much of).”
B. “Sometimes, garbage is all that’s left of a people.”
C. “Especially if that people has been conquered by others, the buildings, tools, and food were probably consumed or destroyed long ago.”
D. “Some invaders, not really knowing what’s valuable to the people they’re conquering, might very well throw away things that are extremely valuable.”

5. Read the following sentence from Article 2.

A people’s trash, especially if it was also trash to the invaders, might be left alone, enabling archaeologists to discover more about a people who left few clues to what they liked and didn’t like.

Which point is the author supporting by including this sentence in the article?
A. how difficult is it to learn about people based on the objects they have left behind
B. that objects that were considered worthless in the past are also worthless in the present
C. that throughout history people have fought over valuable objects
D. why some objects people used in the past may have survived to the present
6. Based on the information in both articles, what steps would you take to do an archaeology dig at a spot where people might have lived in the past? Write an essay describing the process you would follow to learn about these people, using only the information in the articles. Be sure to include details from both articles. Write your response in the space that has been provided below.
Nonfiction Practice Passage #2

Read the article about indoor rock climbing. Then answer the questions that follow.

You Rock!
By Elizabeth L. Ward

1 You’re high up in the air, facing a rock cliff. One chalky hand grips a piece of the cliff; the other slips into a crack. You wear climbing shoes and brace both feet against the surface.

2 Too busy to look down at the ground, you call, “Slack!”

3 Your partner feeds you more rope and calls back, “Climb!”

4 “Climbing!” you shout, and pull yourself up the final few inches to the top. Now it’s time to look down and enjoy the goose bumps. You’re a rock jock.

5 An indoor rock jock, that is. You’ve just climbed a wall of mock rocks at an indoor climbing gym. It’s one of many where kids like you hang on and hang out after school and on weekends. Brenna, 11 years old, first climbed at Prairie Walls Climbing Gym in Rochester, Minnesota, when she was 10. “I have gained lots of courage and self-confidence through this sport,” she says. Andrew, also 10, also climbs at Prairie Walls. He started climbing when he was 8, and he likes it because “I get to have some time with my dad and friends.”

6 The rock walls at a climbing gym are made of material that looks like real rock cliffs. They are usually from 30 to 50 feet high and peppered with large and small bumps and cracks where fingers and toes can grasp and fit. Colored tape and dots show various routes. Some are more difficult than others. Andrew says, “I like to do the different routes because some are challenging, and some have harder areas with not very big holds.”

7 At most climbing gyms, you can rent equipment. A safety harness, shoes, and chalk bag are standard. Show up in comfortable clothes that aren’t too baggy, and you’re set.

8 As for experience, don’t worry: none needed. Friendly, trained instructors are there to teach you the basics in safe surroundings. You’ll probably be surprised at how fast you learn the ropes. Andrew’s indoor rock climbing experience has helped him climb outdoors in the mountains, too. “It helps me with my finger muscles, balance, and tying knots,” he says.

9 What if you feel like you’re not that athletic? No worries there, either. Brenna remembers, “When I was first starting out, I would look at some of the advanced rock climbers and think, Wow, I’m never going to be able to do that. As I have matured in climbing, I have noticed that I can do a lot more than I think I can.”
Then there’s the height. Would you freak out? Maybe, but like any new thing you’ve tried before, it gets easier. Brenna thinks every new climber has to overcome the fear of falling. But she says, “You just need to trust your belayer, the person who holds the safety rope.”

So, consider morphing into a wall-rat. Get a grip, go vertical, and climb those rockin’ wall!

1. What does paragraph 4 mostly show about climbing?
   A. You need to practice before using the rock wall.
   B. You can be nervous and excited at the same time.
   C. You need to watch and listen for danger at all times.
   D. You should always have a partner when on the wall.

2. According to the article, why are colored tape and dots used on rock walls?
   A. to decorate the area
   B. to mark the distances
   C. to warn of loose holds
   D. to show different paths

3. Based on the article, what do kids gain by climbing?
   A. energy
   B. courage
   C. patience
   D. curiosity

4. What is the main purpose of paragraphs 1-4?
   A. to tell readers why they shouldn’t climb
   B. to show readers what climbing is like
   C. to describe why it is difficult to climb
   D. to explain how to stay safe while climbing

5. What is the purpose of the quotation marks used throughout the article?
   A. to highlight facts in the article
   B. to highlight main ideas in the article
   C. to show that the words are part of a title
   D. to show that the words are spoken by a person
6. Reread paragraphs 5 and 6. Based on the paragraphs, a mock rock is a rock that is

A. old  
B. fake  
C. dark  
D. smooth

7. Based on the article, explain what climbers can learn from practicing at indoor gyms. Support your answer with important information from the article.
Imagine stepping out your front door to find yourself 40 feet above the ground overlooking a dense forest and a winding stream. Instead of hopping on your bike, you grab the handles of your very own zipline and fly 1000 yards over a pond, landing safely on the far bank.

Sound crazy? Not to Jonathan Fairoaks, who lives in a four-story tree house that he designed and built! In fact, as a tree house architect, Jonathan has built more than 380 custom tree houses across the United States.

Jonathan’s love of tree-house living began when he was a kid. He started climbing trees when he was 10 years old, and he became an arborist (a person who cares for trees) in high school. He built his first tree house and lived in it while he was in college.

“It was delightful—like being on a ship because it moved with the wind,” Jonathan says. “It was the most fun I ever had.”

Designing unique tree houses may sound tough, but Jonathan says it’s no sweat. “I let the trees decide the designs,” he says. “Hardwoods such as oak, maple, or hickory make the best trees for houses—but I did once build a wonderful tree house in a crabapple tree.”

“If you want a bigger tree house than the tree can support,” he adds, “you can use braces. My tree house is in two trees—an oak and a fir—and has three posts to support the weight.”

As a certified arborist, Jonathan tries to never harm the trees.

“I build a tree house so it helps the tree,” he says. “The tree’s center of gravity is at the top and the ends of its branches, so I build a house down at the center of the tree, which shifts the center of gravity and makes the tree more balanced.”
9 Using a special drill bit, he attaches artificial limbs to the tree to support the tree house.

10 "The tree grows over the artificial limbs, and they become part of the tree," Jonathan says. "I suspend the house on the artificial limbs so it actually floats."

11 The tree house is not the only thing suspended in Jonathan's designs. His tree houses always have swings. "Swings are a great way to enjoy the tree," he explains. For live-in tree houses he installs porch swings, and for kids' tree houses he puts up monkey swings (a rope with a round seat).

12 Jonathan also likes tree houses that overlook streams or rivers and include stained-glass windows to catch the sun's rays. But the most fun tree house designs he ever constructed were inspired by a galaxy far, far away.

13 "I've done several Ewok Villages," he says, "with ziplines and bridges to other trees and rope swings. Those were fun to build!"

14 When designing a tree house, the sky's the limit according to Jonathan.

15 "Let your imagination run wild," he says. "Walk in the woods and learn the different trees. Spend time climbing and learn how to do it safely."

16 Jonathan also encourages his clients to give their tree houses names. One of his favorite names is "Ups and Downs."

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**Interview with Pete Nelson**

Here's some more about living in the limbs! Read this interview with tree house expert Pete Nelson.

**WELCOME TO TREE-HOUSE SCHOOL**

17 Hey, Kids! Jack here. Feeling inspired to design your own tree house? Here's some advice from Pete Nelson, who runs TreeHouse Workshop, a treehouse building school. He's built tree houses across the United States- and in far-away countries such as Japan and Morocco too!

18 Jack: What would you include in your dream tree house?

19 Pete: It would have windows everywhere but enough wall space for a favorite painting or two and a shelf for books. It would have a comfortable bed with lots of pillows, a writing desk, and a comfortable reading chair with a good light.

20 Jack: Do books or movies ever give your customers ideas?

21 Pete: We often get asked to recreate the tree house from *The Swiss Family Robinson*.

22 Jack: How do you determine the shape of a tree house?

23 Pete: The trees will dictate how a floor plan lays out. Often these are unusual shapes. My tree houses tend to be square because it is less expensive to build square. If someone has all the time in the world to design a tree house, then I would make it wacky and fun!

24 Jack: Any crazy extras to include?

25 Pete: I have added fun stuff like water balloon launchers!

26 Jack: Do you name your tree houses?

27 We name them all the time: “Babylon,” “The Temple of the Blue Moon,” “Trillium,” “Solace,” “Uppermost,” and many more.

28 Now get busy and draw up plans for your own tree house!
Life in the Limbs – Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word **dictate** as it is used in paragraph 23?
   a. hint
   b. fix
   c. understand
   d. decide

2. Which phrase helps the reader understand the meaning of **dictate**?
   a. “recreate the tree house”
   b. “determine the shape”
   c. “is less expensive to build”
   d. “has all the time in the world”

3. Which of the following lines supports this main idea: **Jonathon is an experienced tree house builder**?
   a. “It was the most fun I ever had.”
   b. “Walk in the woods and learn the different trees. Spend time climbing and learning how to do it safely.”
   c. “In fact, as a tree house architect, Jonathan has built more than 380 custom tree houses across the United States.”
   d. “Jonathan’s love of tree-house living began when he was a kid.”

4. What is the purpose of the braces described in paragraph 6 of the article?
   a. They fix broken tree limbs, so a tree house will not fall down.
   b. They lock several trees together, so almost any kind of tree can be used.
   c. They join two trees into one unit, so a tree house looks secure.
   d. They help trees hold up a tree house, so the trees will not break.

5. Which idea is found in both the article about Fairoaks and the sidebar about Nelson?
   a. Each tree house should be special for its owner.
   b. People should climb trees for practice before building a tree house.
   c. Having a tree house is good for people.
   d. Going to a tree house school can be helpful in getting started.
6. Based on what you just read, what are the different factors to consider when planning to build a treehouse? Use details from the text to support your response.
Nonfiction Practice Passage #4

Read the selection to find out why some plants smell bad.

FOUL FLORA

By Marilyn Singer

The Rancid Rafflesia

What weighs as much as a miniature poodle and smells as bad as rotten dog food? Would you believe it’s a flower? The rafflesia is the world’s largest flower. When it’s in full bloom, it can weigh up to fifteen pounds and be a yard wide. Found on rain forest floors in Indonesia, Borneo, and Sumatra, it is a parasite that lives off the roots of a vine related to the grapevine. Having no roots, stems, leaves, or chlorophyll, the rafflesia gets its food from that plant.

The rafflesia takes nine months to reach full size. Then it bursts out like a big, orange cabbage and expands into a blossom as much as three feet wide and up to fifteen pounds in weight. Flowering for just four to six days, it fills the air with a stench like carrion,* which has earned it the name “stinking corpse lily.”

Why would any flower smell like that? The answer has to do with pollination.

Two, Four, Six, Eight— Now’s the Time to Pollinate!

In order to reproduce, most flowers need to be pollinated. For flowers to make fruit and seeds, pollen from the male parts needs to reach the female parts. Some plants can pollinate themselves. Others must be pollinated by wind, water, or animals.

If a flower smells yummy during the day, chances are that it is pollinated by butterflies, bees, wasps, certain beetles, or other insects that are attracted to sweet odors. Pollen clings to them and is deposited on other blossoms. Pale or white flowers that are fragrant at night usually attract moths. Dull-colored, odorless plants are often wind-pollinated. Some bright, odorless blooms may be pollinated by birds, such as hummingbirds, which have a poor sense of smell. The birds go to drink nectar, and the pollen sticks to their feathers or beaks. Colorful but unscented flowers also appeal to bees, wasps, and butterflies, which look for blossoms of
particular colors and shapes and not just scent. And if a flower smells—and sometimes even looks—bad, it lures flies, carrion beetles, or other critters that love the putrid odor of rotten meat or fish.

Going Batty!

6 Flies and beetles aren’t the only creatures attracted to smelly flowers. Many plants are pollinated by bats. What odors do bats prefer? Some like the smell of rotting fruit. And some like the musty aroma of fellow bats.

7 In Africa, the baobab tree (Adansonia digitata) produces gorgeous blossoms that reek rather like these flying mammals. Because bats are nocturnal, the flowers open at night and are pale in color so the bats can see (and smell) them more easily. While they are eating the flowers’ nectar, the pollen sticks to the bats’ fur or mouths. As they fly from bloom to bloom, they transfer it.

8 The baobab is a magnificent and important plant. Animals live in its branches. People use all of it—the bark for cloth and rope, the leaves for medicine, the fruit for food—and sometimes even take shelter inside its huge trunk.

9 Another important relative of the baobab is the silk cotton tree (Ceiba pentandra). This tree’s fruits produce kapok—a fluffy material once widely used in lifejackets, sleeping bags, quilts, mattresses, and pillows because it is buoyant and warm. In many places the wood is still used to make canoes. Like the baobab, the kapok has malodorous flowers that attract bats. In some places, bats appear to be the plant’s only pollinator and seed disperser. Eliminate the bats, and you eliminate the tree—one of many good reasons to protect these mammals.

10 Baobab and kapok blossoms, like carrion flowers, certainly smell great to their animal pollinators, but there’s a good chance Mom won’t like them. So when it comes to Mother’s Day, it’s best to stick with roses.
1. Based on the selection, where does the rafflesia get its food?
   A. from carrion beetles
   B. from another plant
   C. from bats
   D. from soil

2. Based on paragraph 5, how does a plant attract insects at night?
   A. by its appearance and odor
   B. by its appearance and size
   C. by its location and odor
   D. by its location and size

3. What is the best conclusion that can be drawn from the information in paragraph 5?
   A. Plants do not rely on pollination to reproduce.
   B. Plants have many ways to appeal to pollinators.
   C. Plants must be pollinated by more than one animal.
   D. Plants do not make pollen at certain times of the year.

4. According to the selection, what would most likely happen if bats were to disappear from Earth?
   A. Flowers would become more fragrant.
   B. Baobab trees would become more common.
   C. Silk cotton trees would no longer reproduce.
   D. Colorless flowers would no longer be necessary.
5. Explain how the author makes the selection both entertaining and informative. Support your answer with important details from the selection.
Mentor Poetry Passage

*This poem is a conversation between a dog and a squirrel.*

**Dog and Squirrel: Steps in a Flirtation**  
by Joyce Sidman

The bushy flick of your tail  
catches my attention.  
\[ I \text{ am aware of your presence,} \]
\[ \text{but I am ignoring you.} \]

5  
You are now my bull’s eye.  
This will be a fine game.  
\[ I \text{t may be a game,} \]
\[ \text{but I set the rules.} \]

Whenever you lower your guard,  
10  
I step forward.  
\[ I \text{ never lower my guard.} \]
\[ \text{All escape routes are intact.} \]

My body is an arrow  
pointing at your heart.  
15  
\[ O \text{ large clumsy one,} \]
\[ \text{have you any idea how fast I can run?} \]

I draw closer.  
The space between us is nothing.  
\[ \text{Odd how the sunlight} \]
\[ \text{kindles your dark fur.} \]

I can taste the silk of your tail.  
You can’t possibly get away now.  
\[ I \text{ know the precise point at which} \]
\[ \text{I must flee. Still, those eyes...} \]

20  
Gaze locked, I pounce!  
And you are...  
\[ \text{Gone, of course.} \]
\[ \text{My heart pounds! See you tomorrow?} \]
**Dog and Squirrel – Questions:**

1. In the poem, what do the indented and italicized sections represent?
   - A. the dog’s comments
   - B. the narrator’s comments
   - C. the squirrel’s comments
   - D. an observer’s comments

2. What do lines 5-8 suggest about both animals?
   - A. Each is worrying about the other.
   - B. Each is challenging the other.
   - C. Each hopes to escape.
   - D. Each can run fast.

3. Which line from the poem contains a metaphor?
   - A. “The bushy flick of your tail.”
   - B. “I am aware of your presence.”
   - C. “My body is an arrow.”
   - D. “Gone, of course.”

4. Based on the poem, what will the squirrel **most likely** do the next day?
   - A. find a safe hiding place
   - B. play with the dog again
   - C. try a new path to escape
   - D. chase the dog into the woods
Poetry Practice Passage #1

Read “Ice Can Scream” by Jane Yolen and “Winter Songs” by Douglas Florian. Ice Can Scream

Ice Can Scream
Ice can scream
Ice can shout:
Winter in
And autumn out

Ice can shout,
Ice can call,
Signaling
The end of fall.

Ice can call,
Ice can yell
Secrets no one
Else can tell.

Ice can yell,
Ice can howl,
Naming winter’s
Weather foul.

Ice can howl,
Ice can wail,
Counting up
Each storm and gale.

Ice can wail,
Ice can shriek
Till the land
Is winter-bleak.

Ice can shriek,
Ice can scream
Straight across
The autumn dream.

Ice can scream,
Ice can shout:
Winter in
And autumn out.
Winter Songs

The winter sings a windy song
That hustles rusty leaves along.

The winter sings a song of hail
That pings and pangs like falling nails.

The winter sings a song of sleet
As sloshing cars slip down the street.

The winter sings a song of snow,
A whispering as whiteness grows.

1. Based on “Ice Can Scream,” the speaker sees ice as a sign of the
   A. beauty of water
   B. change of the season
   C. speed of passing time
   D. dangers of the outdoors

2. Read lines 9-12 from “Ice Can Scream” below:
   Ice can call,
   Ice can yell
   Secrets no one
   Else can tell

   In these lines, what does the poet make ice seem like?
   A. an echo
   B. a person
   C. a picture
   D. an animal

3. In “Winter Songs,” the speaker compares hail to
   A. cars
   B. nails
   C. leaves
   D. streets
4. Which of the following best shows that both “Ice Can Scream” and “Winter Songs” are poems?
   A. They have rhythm and rhyme
   B. They describe wind and snow
   C. They teach an important lesson
   D. They teach facts about the climate

5. Read lines 1 and 2 from “Winter Songs” below:
   The winter sings a windy song
   That hustles rusty leaves along.

What does the word **hustles** mean as it is used in the lines?
   A. hides
   B. hangs
   C. harms
   D. hurries
Poetry Practice Passage #2

Read the following poem about the first humans to land on the moon.

First Men on the Moon

by J. Patrick Lewis

"The Eagle has landed!"
Apollo 11 Commander Neil A. Armstrong

"A magnificent desolation!"

July 20, 1969

That afternoon in mid-July,
Two pilgrims watched from distant space
The Moon ballooning in the sky,
They rose to meet it face-to-face.

Their spidery spaceship Eagle dropped
Down gently on the lunar sand.
And when the module’s engines stopped,
Cold silence fell across the land.

The first man down the ladder, Neil,
Spoke words that we remember now—
“Small step for man . . .” It made us feel
As if we too were there somehow.

Then Neil planted the flag and Buzz
Collected lunar rocks and dust.
They hopped like kangaroos because
Of gravity. Or wanderlust.

A quarter million miles away,
One small blue planet watched in awe.
And no one who was there that day
Will soon forget the Moon they saw.
QUESTIONS

1. Read the line from the poem.

“The Moon ballooning in the sky,”

What does the metaphor in the line suggest?

A. The Moon appears to grow in size.
B. The Moon appears to move swiftly.
C. The Moon is brightly colored.
D. The Moon has a perfect shape.

2. Read the line from the poem.

“They rose to meet it face-to-face.”

What is the meaning of the line?

A. They were able to climb up onto the surface of the Moon from the spaceship.
B. There were many people traveling together to the Moon.
C. They were close enough to see the surface of the Moon from the spaceship.
D. There were people waiting to meet them on the Moon.

3. Which line from the poem best supports the inference that the first humans on the Moon were explorers approaching a new frontier?

A. “That afternoon in mid-July,”
B. “Two pilgrims watched from distant space”
C. “The first man down the ladder, Neil,”
D. “Spoke words that we remember now—”
4. This question has **two** parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

**Part One**

Which theme is best supported by the speaker’s description of the first landing on the Moon?

A. Teamwork makes difficult tasks possible.
B. Travel can be dangerous but also rewarding.
C. Scientific discovery is not valued enough.
D. Adventure brings about excitement and wonder.

**Part Two**

Which line from the poem best supports the answer in Part One?

A. “A quarter million miles away,”
B. “They hopped like kangaroos . . .”
C. “Then Neil planted the flag . . .”
D. “One small blue planet watched in awe.”