

Reading Comprehension

Lesson 3b Comprehension Skills

Directions: Read each selection and the questions that follow it. Choose the best answer to each question. Mark the space for your answer.

sample During the winter, ranchers must be sure that the water for their horses and cows does not freeze. They often use something called a deicer. It is a small heater that runs on electricity. The rancher puts the deicer in a tank of water. It heats the water just enough to prevent it from freezing.

A deicer can be used only —

- A where there is a pond or lake
- B in warm weather
- C for horses and cows
- D where there is electricity



Skim the questions. Answer the easiest questions first.

Have Fun and Help Kids Learn

Have you ever wanted to be an astronaut? Blast off to see the stars? Come down to Peninsula Park on Saturday, May 12, and meet a real space traveler. Astronaut Samantha Carver will be at the park from 9 A.M. until 3 P.M. In the morning, she will answer questions and sign autographs. In the afternoon, Carver will be part of the Astronaut Challenge Bicycle Race.

Join the Astronaut Challenge!

Samantha Carver will ride in a bike race open to all children ages 8–13. Astronauts have to be athletes, so you might think you wouldn't stand a chance against Carver. Think again! Carver will have to race on a child-sized bicycle with almost no air in the tires. All children who finish ahead of Carver will receive a certificate—signed by both Carver and the mayor! The Astronaut Challenge will be fun for racers and spectators.

Sign up your friends and family for the Astronaut Challenge!

Entry forms for the Astronaut Challenge are available at all local public schools. The entry fee is \$6. Entries must be received by April 28. Separate races will be held for children ages 8–10 and 11–13. All racers must wear bike helmets and ride bicycles in good condition.

All funds raised by the Astronaut Challenge will go to Kids in Science. Kids in Science funds science education for rural schools. For more information about Kids in Science, call 555-4389 or visit the Peninsula Park office on the day of the race.

Samantha Carver has made two space shuttle flights. She will be working on the new *International Space Station*. When she's not up in space, Carver raises money to fund science education.

GO

1

Why are you instructed to sign up your friends and family for the race?

- A Because they will enjoy meeting Samantha Carver
- B So the Astronaut Challenge will raise more money
- C Because the race will be more fun with more people
- D So you will have someone to share a bicycle with

2

Which of these statements is an *opinion*?

- A Separate races will be held for children ages 8–10 and 11–13.
- B In the morning, she will answer questions and sign autographs.
- C Samantha Carver has made two space shuttle flights.
- D The Astronaut Challenge will be fun for racers and spectators.

3

How should someone sign up for the Astronaut Challenge?

- A Get an entry form at school.
- B Visit the Peninsula Park office.
- C Show up on the day of the race.
- D Write to Samantha Carver.

4

Why does the ad tell you to “Think again!”?

- A Carver will not have an easy time winning the race.
- B You might not enjoy racing against Carver.
- C All riders need to double-check their safety equipment.
- D There is no special award for winning the race.

5

The ad tells you about Carver’s career as an astronaut in order to —

- A encourage you to become an astronaut yourself
- B show how important success is to her
- C explain why she is willing to ride a small bike
- D make people excited about racing against her

6

What can you get by visiting the park office?

- A Samantha Carver’s autograph
- B Information about Kids in Science
- C A certificate for finishing the race
- D A description of the new space station

GO

How did Hare try to farm?

Hare lived a lazy life. He ate whatever he found as he wandered. One day Hare fell in love and got married. "We will soon have a family," said his wife. "You must plant crops to feed our children."

Hare watched Monkey, Goat, and Cow toiling in the sun to grow their food. "How weary they look!" Hare said to himself. "That is not the life for me."

Still, he needed to grow food. "Start tomorrow," said Hare's wife. "Clear the plot of land around Jungle Hill." All night Hare tossed and turned.

In the morning, Hare made a long, strong rope. Then he began to search. At once he came upon Guinea Fowl. "No, no, too small," he said. Next, he saw Lion. "No, no, too hungry," whispered Hare. Finally, he spied Hippopotamus sleeping on the bank of a stream. "Just right!" said Hare, jumping up and down with glee.

Walking up to Hippopotamus, he announced in a loud voice, "Look at you asleep there, Hippopotamus! How lazy you are. Why even I am stronger than you!"

Hippopotamus opened her eyes. Slowly she looked from Hare's puny form to her own mighty legs and barrel chest. "I think," she said mildly, "that you must be mistaken."

"Oh, no! I am stronger than you, and I will prove it. I will tie this rope around myself and go in those bushes. When you see the rope move, you must pull me out of the bushes."

Hippopotamus took one end of the rope. Then Hare walked into the bushes. Carefully, he crept away and ran around Jungle Hill until he came to where Elephant was grazing on fresh green grass.

"Elephant!" shouted Hare. "Is this all you can find to eat? Why even I am strong enough to pull down trees and eat their juicy fruit! I must be stronger than you!"

Elephant snorted. "I think that you must be mistaken."

"Oh, no!" said Hare. "I will prove it. I will tie this rope around myself and go in those bushes. When you see the rope move, you must pull me out of the bushes."

Elephant took the end of the rope, and Hare walked into the bushes. He held the rope in the middle and gave it a quick tug. Hippopotamus and Elephant each saw the rope move and began to pull.

All day Elephant and Hippopotamus pulled on that rope. Each imagined that Hare was on the other end. When the sun set, they had trampled flat all the land around Jungle Hill.

"I cleared the land around Jungle Hill today," Hare told his wife proudly. The next day Hare went out to plant his new farm. He found that Hippopotamus and Elephant had indeed cleared the land. But their huge feet had packed the ground so hard that Hare could not dig holes for his seeds. Hare was right back where he started, in spite of all his clever tricks.

7

You would most likely find this selection in a —

- A farming magazine
- B collection of children's plays
- C history textbook
- D book of myths and legends

8

Why did Hippopotamus and Elephant agree to pull on the rope?

- A Hare needed their help to start his new farm.
- B They were sure they were stronger than Hare.
- C Hare's wife asked them to go along with his plan.
- D They wanted to see which of them was stronger.

9

Which of these was responsible for Hare ruining his plot of land?

- A Laziness
- B Pride
- C Jealousy
- D Greed

10

Why does Hare's trick not really help him?

- A Hare does not know anything about farming.
- B Elephant and Hippopotamus stopped pulling too soon.
- C The trees and brush are still on the ground.
- D The land around Jungle Hill is still not ready to farm.

11

In this story, Hare acts like a —

- A thief
- B victim
- C hero
- D fool

12

Why does Hare pick Hippopotamus and Elephant for his challenge?

- A They are big and strong, but they are not hunters.
- B They are the only large animals he can find.
- C They are his enemies, and he wants to trick them.
- D They are lazy and weak, but they are very proud.

13

Why was Hare determined to farm differently from Monkey, Cow, and Goat?

- A He needed a lot of food to feed his family.
- B He saw how unhappy they were.
- C He thought they worked too hard.
- D He was too weak to toil in the hot sun.

GO

Can something that tastes so good be good for you?

America has given the world many foods, one of which is the pecan. This tasty nut is a wonderful snack, plain or roasted, and it adds flavor and crunch to all sorts of dishes. Moreover, pecans are healthful as well as delicious. They are a good source of protein and contain iron, calcium, potassium, phosphorous, magnesium, and B vitamins. They are also high in fiber and unsaturated fat. Unfortunately, pecans are also high in calories—190 calories per ounce—and that makes them fattening if eaten in great quantity.

People in the South have enjoyed finding and eating native pecans for centuries. The earliest French and Spanish explorers found that pecans were a staple part of the Native American diet. In fact, the name *pecan* comes from an Algonquin word that means “good to eat but with a hard shell.” The trees naturally grow along riverbanks in the South. The rushing water carries nuts and deposits them in other places where they can sprout and grow. The warm climate in the South is perfect for pecan trees.

Native pecans are tasty and abundant, but the shells are very hard. Horticulturists have developed more than a thousand different varieties of pecans with thinner shells, called paper shell pecans. All of these varieties are grafts, which means a branch from a paper shell tree is attached to a cut made in the trunk of a young native tree. If it grows (or grafts), the other limbs of the native tree are cut off and only the paper shell limb develops. The root system is native, but the limbs and fruit are paper shell. This grafting process is necessary

because only nuts from native trees, not paper shell pecan trees, can be planted to produce a new tree.

Most pecans are grown on farms today. The pecan tree farmer has to learn patience because a pecan tree must be six years old before it will bear fruit. A productive pecan farm can produce a thousand pounds of pecans per acre of trees. Georgia produces more of the country’s commercial pecan crop than any other state—46 percent. Texas is second with 26 percent.

14 Pecan trees seem to grow best —

- A where the weather is cold
- B where the weather is warm
- C in hot, dry ground
- D where the wind seems to blow often

15 In this passage, a “native tree” is one that —

- A was planted by Native Americans
- B was grafted
- C has thin-shelled nuts
- D grows naturally

16 In this passage, what tone does the author use?

- A Uncertain
- B Calming
- C Factual
- D Excited

STOP