Directions
Read this passage. Then answer questions 1 through 6.

Alex, the Talking Parrot
by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent

1 Parrots that are trained to talk often say silly things like “Polly want a cracker.” Although these birds have learned to imitate the sounds that make up the words, they don’t really know what they’re saying. But there is one parrot who speaks more than a hundred words and actually understands their meanings. He is an African gray parrot named Alex.

2 Dr. Irene Pepperberg, a research scientist, has worked with Alex for many years. Teaching Alex to speak and understand wasn’t easy at first. He had to learn one word at a time. Irene and an assistant would teach Alex by showing him what a word meant. Irene would hold up an object, saying, “What’s this?” Her human partner would give the word—“pasta,” for example—while Alex watched. Irene would praise her partner, then ask Alex the name of the object. When he got it right, Irene would praise him and give him the object to play with as a reward. It took Alex many weeks to learn his first word. After that, each new word became easier and easier for him.

3 Why did Irene spend so much time getting a parrot to talk? Scientists like Irene are interested in discovering how intelligent animals are and how their brains work. But studying animal intelligence has always been difficult, partly because animals haven’t been able to communicate clearly with humans. Teaching Alex to speak words that he understands has let Irene talk to him directly. She can ask him questions, and he can answer them in English. In this way, Irene is finding out what sorts of things Alex’s brain can do. She has found that parrots are much smarter than scientists used to think. The word “birdbrain,” which means someone who isn’t very smart, certainly doesn’t apply to Alex.

4 Alex can identify over forty kinds of objects, five different shapes, five materials, and seven colors, and he can use his knowledge to solve problems and answer questions. For example, from a group of objects, he can pick out a number of things of a certain color, up to the number six. He can also make comparisons, such as bigger or smaller and same or different, between objects.

5 “Want wheat!” Alex says loudly. Irene explains to him that she doesn’t have any shredded wheat for him. “How about some crackers, Alex?” she asks.

GO ON
"No, no—want wheat!" he replies.

Because it's time for them to work, Irene ignores his request and shows Alex a tray with simple objects scattered over it: a yellow plastic key, a green wooden square, a five-cornered piece of yellow felt, a gray rawhide rectangle, a yellow paper triangle, a red plastic square, and a blue Play-Doh square.

“What material is green, Alex?” Irene asks.

Alex glances over the assortment, then answers, “Wood!” in his clear but croaky parrot voice.

“Good birdie,” says Irene as she nuzzles him and hands him the green square. Alex nibbles at it for a moment, then he drops it.

“How many yellow?” asks Irene.

Alex takes his time looking over the bright, colorful display on the tray.

“Three,” he answers.

Irene praises him again. “Good boy, good birdie,” she says as she hands him the yellow key to play with.

Alex mouths the key, nibbling at it gently before dropping it.

“Wanna go shoulder,” he announces.
“O.K., you can come onto my shoulder,” answers Irene. She puts out her hand. Alex climbs aboard, and she puts him on her shoulder. He rubs his head against Irene’s cheek. “Do you want some corn?” asks Irene.

“Soft corn,” answers Alex, and Irene holds out her hand with a few kernels on it. Alex carefully takes one kernel into his mouth and eats.

Alex has shown us that birds like parrots can understand categories such as shape, color, and size. They can solve problems and recognize numbers. Before Alex came along, scientists did not believe that animals with such small brains could do these things.

Alex uses his ability to talk outside of work sessions, too. At the end of the day, Irene tells Alex she is leaving.

“I’m going to dinner now,” she says. “You be good.”

“You be good,” Alex answers.

“See you tomorrow,” says Irene.

“Bye,” says Alex.

“Bye,” she responds.

“I love you,” croaks Alex.

Irene’s last words as she goes out the door are “I love you, too.”
1. What does the word “assistant” mean as it is used in paragraph 2?

A. helper
B. leader
C. neighbor
D. friend

2. Which sentence from the passage shows a cause and effect relationship?

A. “But there is one parrot who speaks more than a hundred words and actually understands their meanings.” (paragraph 1)
B. “Teaching Alex to speak words that he understands has let Irene talk to him directly.” (paragraph 3)
C. “In this way, Irene is finding out what sorts of things Alex’s brain can do.” (paragraph 3)
D. “He can also make comparisons, such as bigger or smaller and same or different, between objects.” (paragraph 4)

3. Read this sentence from paragraph 4.

Alex can identify over forty kinds of objects, five different shapes, five materials, and seven colors, and he can use his knowledge to solve problems and answer questions.

What is the best meaning of the word “identify” as used in this sentence?

A. feel
B. look at
C. pick up
D. recognize
How does the photograph add to the information in the passage?

A. It shows one way that Irene works with Alex.
B. It shows that Irene does not talk with Alex.
C. It shows that Alex is able to count objects.
D. It shows the few objects that Alex cannot name.

Which part of the passage best shows how Alex feels about Irene?

A. paragraph 9
B. paragraph 10
C. paragraph 17
D. paragraph 18

Which detail best supports the main idea of the passage?

A. Irene's parrot is named Alex.
B. Alex can find a green object when asked.
C. Irene sometimes puts Alex on her shoulder.
D. Alex has a croaky parrot voice.
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 8 through 14.

In 1881, Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross, an organization that helps people during times of need.

Excerpt from Clara Barton
by Stephen Krensky

1 “I was what is known as a bashful child,” Clara confessed in later years. This was not surprising considering that she was surrounded by her family and had little contact with strangers. But shyness was not considered a virtue. In the hope of correcting this deficiency, her parents decided to send her to a nearby boarding school. It was quite a change. At home, she had been the only student, learning from her brothers and sisters. Now there were 150 students filling several schoolrooms. And almost all of them were bigger and older than she was.

2 Clara was good at her studies, but speaking up with dozens of eyes staring at her was unnerving. She grew pale and lost weight. At the end of her first term, her parents, her teachers, and her family doctor held a meeting. They decided it would be best for Clara to return home.

3 But home had changed. Her family was moving down the hill to a 300-acre farm. The new house needed to be fixed, and Clara pitched in to help. Among other things, she learned how to hang wallpaper and make her own paints.

4 Some cousins came to live with the Bartons as well. Clara’s big sisters had stayed at the old house, which made the change feel even more dramatic. On the bright side, Clara’s cousins were closer to her own age. “From never having had any playmates, I now found myself one of a very lively body of six—three boys and three girls…”

5 Clara and her cousins explored the new farm thoroughly, learning the best spot to cross the streams and where to find the tastiest chestnuts. They played hide-and-seek and balanced on poles in the millstream. Clara’s parents, worried that she was becoming too much of a tomboy, forbade her from learning to ice skate. But it was a little late to rein Clara in now. She enlisted the boys to teach her secretly at night. They pulled her along, one on each side, which was fine, as long as the ice was smooth. But, as Clara remembered, “at length we reached a spot where the ice had been cracked and was full of sharp edges.” Here, she fell repeatedly, injuring herself seriously enough that her parents soon found out. They were not pleased, and Clara endured several weeks of their disappointment before life went on as before.

6 In warmer weather, she continued to practice riding—now with her own horse. Riding became second nature to her, and she remembered the skill well later in life. But not every advance was planned or predictable. In 1832, when she was 11, her brother David was helping
to build a new family barn. He was working on the ridgepole when a plank snapped beneath him and he fell to the ground. At first he seemed to be largely unharmed by the accident, but his internal injuries turned out to be serious.

7 No one had to tell Clara what she should do next, and she didn't need to ask. She simply knew it in herself. She took care of David day and night, rarely leaving his side. And he grew just as attached to her in return. Clara learned to administer his medicine and manage his treatment with great aplomb. Among her many duties was applying the leeches that were supposed to suck the bad blood out of David's body.

8 For two years, Clara tended to her brother, leaving him for only half a day in all that time. He recovered at last, no thanks to the leeches, due to rest and the ability of his body to heal over time.

9 Clara's devotion was not unheard of in the Barton family. Her great aunt Martha Ballard, who died a few years before Clara's birth, had been a well-respected midwife. She had delivered babies and treated illnesses across a wide swath of the wilderness of Maine. Caring for her brother had given Clara a special satisfaction. It was something she would always remember.

10 As delighted as Clara was to see David recover, she had trouble simply returning to a life of her own. The freedom to do as she pleased was no substitute for the feeling of usefulness she had felt nursing her brother back to health. She felt anxious and unsettled and cast about for some meaningful way to fill her time.

11 For the moment, she stayed busy doing chores around the farm and helping to look after her sister Sally's children. As time passed, though, she roamed farther from home, coming to the aid of poor families in the nearby countryside. Some had illnesses that she tended to. Others had money troubles, and she tried to point these families in a direction where they could get assistance.

1 ridgepole: the horizontal beam that runs along the peak of a roof; the upper ends of the rafters are attached to it

2 aplomb: confidence and skill
How do paragraphs 1 through 4 support a main idea of the article?

A. by describing how well Clara did at school
B. by showing how Clara's parents made decisions
C. by showing Clara's behavior around other people
D. by providing details about Clara's cousins

Why did Clara return from boarding school?

A. The people who cared for Clara were concerned about her health.
B. Clara was younger and smaller than most of the other students.
C. The teachers thought Clara could learn more at home.
D. Clara was unhappy because she missed her family.

Read this sentence from paragraph 5.

But it was a little late to rein Clara in now.

What does the phrase "to rein Clara in" suggest?

A. Clara was too old to play with her cousins.
B. Clara was often outside after dark.
C. Clara was determined to learn new things in the country.
D. Clara was unable to ride horses.
What do paragraphs 5 and 6 show about Clara?

A  Clara is active and adventurous.
B  Clara is obedient and intelligent.
C  Clara is quiet and cooperative.
D  Clara is creative and serious.

Why is paragraph 9 important for the article?

A  It explains why Clara was a good caretaker to her brother.
B  It shows a result of Clara's caretaking skills.
C  It suggests why Clara's great aunt inspired her.
D  It connects Clara and her desire to care for people to her great aunt.

How did Clara's relationship with her brother David most affect her life?

A  By doing chores for David, Clara realized she enjoyed living at home.
B  By caring for David when he was injured, Clara developed a desire to help others.
C  By giving David his medicine, Clara learned about effective medical treatments.
D  By being home when David fell to the ground, Clara felt responsible for his injuries.
Which detail would be most important to include in a summary of the article?

A. Clara learned how to ride horses at a young age.
B. Clara had a great aunt who was a skilled midwife.
C. Clara was seriously hurt while ice skating with her cousins.
D. Clara remembered how good it felt to care for her brother.
**Directions**
Read this passage. Then answer questions 1 through 7.

**Talking with Artists:**
**David Wiesner**
*compiled and edited by Pat Cummings*

**MY STORY**

1. I think that I always knew I wanted to become an artist. I can’t remember a time when I wasn’t drawing and painting pictures. My oldest sister and my brother were artistic, and watching them draw fascinated me. They had many different art supplies around the house. There was, and still is, something very appealing about art materials: Boxes of pastels, with incredibly colored, thin, square sticks, fitting snugly into the slots in their trays. Little ink bottles with rubber stoppers and pens with interchangeable metal tips. The look, smell, and feel of rich black ink going onto bright white paper in broad, flat strokes or thin, sharp lines. I found this captivating.

2. In our town, the housepaint and wallpaper store also sold art supplies. I loved looking at all the exotic things they had for sale. Sandpaper blocks to sharpen pencils. Rows of numbered pencils, and erasers that could be pulled like taffy. Thin drawers full of tubes of paint that seemed so much more grown up than the kind we used at school. Complicated easels and wooden boxes to hold everything.

3. My parents and friends soon saw that I had more than a passing interest in art. It came to define much of my image. Relatives gave me artist-related birthday gifts. At school I became “the kid who could draw,” a unique distinction, like “brainiest” or “best athlete”—but somehow different. A little weird, actually. I like that.

4. In my kindergarten class, we had an “art corner.” There was an easel with a large pad of paper and poster paints. One day I was painting a picture of a red house. I can vividly recall my intense frustration because this picture just didn’t look like I wanted it to.

5. As I got a little older, I began copying pictures: cartoons, comic books, and magazine illustrations. But mostly dinosaurs. I loved them. The *World Book Encyclopedia* published a book about the history of the earth, full of very realistic dinosaur pictures that I drew over and over again. They were in black and white and had a hazy quality to them (bad printing, I think). For a long time, even after I should have known better, I thought they were photographs of dinosaurs.

6. I found out a few years ago that these particular paintings are murals in the Chicago Field Museum. I’ve since seen them in person. They were painted by Charles Knight, the first and most famous painter of dinosaurs. They are still impressive, and they are in color!
My third-grade class wrote essays on what we wanted to be when we grew up. To me it was obvious. We read them aloud, and I told about the types of paintings I would some day try. I'd have turtles with paintbrushes tied to their backs walking around on a big sheet of paper (I got chuckles from the class and the teacher). Or I'd fill squirt guns with different colored paints and shoot at the canvas. I actually tried this with friends! Well, it sounded like a good idea.

One of the only discouraging childhood experiences about my artwork happened in the fourth grade. During study time I was drawing a picture. My teacher took it away and wrote an angry note home to my mother. "David would rather be drawing pictures than doing his work!!!" I couldn't believe it, three exclamation points. We didn't get along well for the rest of the year. School "art classes" were pretty uninspiring. I did my best work on textbook covers I made. Art never seemed to be taken as seriously as other subjects.

In the eighth grade, a big career day was held. Months before, we wrote suggestions for careers we wanted to hear about. On the big day, guest speakers from many fields came to talk. We each chose two sessions to attend, but there wasn't one that came close to an art-related field. I saw some guy talk about oceanography.

In high school it actually sank in that I was going to be an artist. My friends read catalogs and saw guidance counselors to pick what they'd study in college. I felt something was wrong. I already knew. I'd always known. I half expected to hear, "No, put away those paints and choose a real career." My parents were excited about my choice, too. As I looked into art schools, I felt like doors were being thrown wide open. Until then my art was a private thing, but at art school I found a place where everyone was "the kid who could draw."

GO ON
1. Why did Wiesner become interested in art?

A. He enjoyed watching family members draw.
B. He experimented with the birthday gifts he received.
C. He found fun pictures in comic books and magazines.
D. He browsed the supplies at the housepaint and wallpaper store.

2. Which quote best expresses the main idea of paragraphs 1 and 2?

A. "They had many different art supplies around the house." (paragraph 1)
B. "There was, and still is, something very appealing about art materials . . ." (paragraph 1)
C. "I loved looking at all the exotic things they had for sale." (paragraph 2)
D. "... paint that seemed so much more grown up than the kind we used at school." (paragraph 2)

3. Read this sentence from paragraph 7.

Well, it sounded like a good idea.

What does the sentence suggest?

A. The teacher did not approve of Wiesner's future painting plans.
B. The class was curious about the paintings Wiesner hoped to create.
C. Wiesner and his friends liked painting a canvas with squirt guns.
D. Painting with squirt guns did not turn out the way Wiesner expected.
4. Which statement describes how Wiesner’s parents felt about his college and career plans?
   A. His parents encouraged him to go to art school, yet they worried about his future career choices.
   B. His parents allowed him to choose his career, and they were glad he decided to go to art school.
   C. His parents knew he would rather do art than school work, and they accepted his choices.
   D. His parents raised him to be an artist, so they expected him to choose the right school.

5. Read this sentence from paragraph 10.
   As I looked into art schools, I felt like doors were being thrown wide open.
   What does the phrase “doors were being thrown wide open” suggest?
   A. Wiesner had always known that he would go to art school.
   B. Wiesner’s parents decided to allow him to attend art school.
   C. Wiesner found that art school offered many possibilities.
   D. Wiesner was invited by a large number of art schools.

6. Paragraphs 10 and 3 are connected because
   A. paragraph 10 confirms how surprised Wiesner felt about the label he was given as a child
   B. paragraph 10 shows how Wiesner’s friends responded to his childhood interest
   C. paragraph 10 tells how Wiesner finally found others who shared his creativity
   D. paragraph 10 describes how Wiesner’s image had changed

7. Which statement is most important to include in a summary of the passage?
   A. Wiesner was always interested in drawing and painting pictures.
   B. Wiesner was entertained by the process of drawing with black ink on white paper.
   C. Wiesner was always pleased to receive art-related gifts for his birthday.
   D. Wiesner was disappointed because no speaker came to talk about art-related fields.
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 19 through 24.

Bodies in Motion:
Mountain Biking
by Edith H. Fine and Judith P. Josephson

1 Can you bike up a rocky hill, through a creek, over a fallen log, and through a field of boulders?

2 If you're a mountain biker, you can—and love it!

3 Mountain bikers take their bikes where they never used to go, and they use special skills and equipment to do it. Would you like to try?

Getting Started

4 Mountain biking isn't like riding down the street; you need a bike that can handle the bumps, bangs, and rough treatment off-road riding can offer. Check with friends who already take part in the sport. What kind of bike works best for them?

5 Ask questions at bike stores, but remember, they want to sell you a bike, so think carefully about what they tell you. Getting yourself in shape is important, too. Biking calls for strong leg and arm muscles, so don't forget your deep knee bends and pushups. Before setting out, do your warm-ups and stretches. And when you're done, a cool-down period and more stretching will help you keep from getting stiff and sore.

Skills

6 Maneuvering your bike on off-road trails calls for skills not usually used around your neighborhood. For example, can you wheelie? On a trail, a wheelie might be the best way to get over a fallen log. Broadslides, bunny-hops, and jumps will also be a part of your arsenal as you attack a biking trail.

7 You should even brush up on your braking techniques (rely more on your rear brakes when biking off-road) and your gear shifting to make sure you perform both smoothly and confidently even when things are happening fast.
It's also a good idea to work on your bike-repair skills. When mountain biking, you could have a flat tire, a bent rim, or a broken spoke miles from help.

You should know how to fix these things yourself.

**Competition**

Mountain bikers compete in four kinds of events:

- **Cross Country**—The winner is the first to make it through a tough course filled with obstacles like sharp turns, logs, rocks, streams, and jumps.

- **Hill Climbs**—Bikers compete to see who can ride their bikes up a steep, obstacle-filled hill.

- **Trials**—Not a speed race: bikers try to cross really tough obstacles like boulder piles, ledges, and ditches without putting a foot down, stopping, or falling. Judges observe and penalize riders who make errors.

- **Downhills**—Racers zoom down a downhill course. The rider with the best time wins.

**Safety**

Don't forget your safety precautions. Always wear a helmet, and arm and knee pads are a good idea, too. Also, remember to keep your equipment in great condition. Take care of your bike, and it will take care of you!
19  According to the authors, why should readers who want to mountain bike ask questions?

A  to figure out if they can do mountain biking tricks
B  to figure out if they are ready for mountain biking
C  to learn where they are allowed to ride their bikes
D  to make sure they choose the right type of bike

20  How does the information in paragraphs 4 and 5 support a main idea of the article?

A  by explaining how to prepare for mountain biking
B  by giving details about the difficulty of mountain biking
C  by showing how mountain biking can be painful
D  by describing what muscles are used in mountain biking
Read this sentence from paragraph 6.

Broadslides, bunny-hops, and jumps will also be a part of your arsenal as you attack a biking trail.

What does "arsenal" refer to in this sentence?

A  a type of event
B  a type of brake
C  a collection of skills
D  a place to mountain bike

According to the "Competition" section of the article, why do some mountain biking events need to be watched closely?

A  to keep track of riders' times
B  to keep track of riders' mistakes
C  to make sure riders wear helmets
D  to make sure riders are staying safe
According to the authors, how will training, learning about bike equipment, and wearing helmets and pads help riders?

A  Riders will be prepared to safely enjoy mountain biking.
B  Riders will win mountain biking competitions.
C  Riders will not get stiff and sore after biking.
D  Riders will not get lost while biking.

Which sentence from the text best summarizes a main idea of the article?

A  "Check with friends who already take part in the sport." (paragraph 4)
B  "Ask questions at bike stores, but remember, they want to sell you a bike, so think carefully about what they tell you." (paragraph 5)
C  "Maneuvering your bike on off-road trails calls for skills not usually used around your neighborhood." (paragraph 6)
D  "The winner is the first to make it through a tough course filled with obstacles like sharp turns, logs, rocks, streams, and jumps." (paragraph 11)
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 36 through 42.

Excerpt from High Volume

Hearing loss is on the rise.
Listening to MP3 players at high volumes can damage young ears.

1 Yahaira likes listening to rap and hip-hop music on her MP3 player, and she likes it loud! “It doesn’t have the same effect when it’s quiet,” says the 14-year-old student from New Rochelle, N.Y.

2 Yahaira and other teens should pay attention to a recent study that shows that hearing loss has been rising among U.S. teens. Researchers at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, Mass., found an increase of 30 percent in hearing loss since the early 1990s. About one in five teenagers now have some degree of hearing damage.

3 The researchers did not say why hearing loss has risen, but other experts have strong suspicions. One likely culprit, they say, is MP3 players. “These are very powerful instruments,” says Tommie Robinson Jr., a professor of pediatrics at George Washington University.

Damaged Hairs

4 An MP3 player can be hazardous to hearing when its decibel level is turned up too high. A decibel is a unit that indicates how loud a sound is. High-decibel sounds can damage tiny, delicate nerve endings, called hair cells, in the inner ear, according to Robert Novak, a professor of speech, language, and hearing science at Purdue University.

5 If a sound is loud enough, the damage can be permanent. A loud sound can shake the membrane on which the hair cells sit—“like an earthquake,” he says. That vibration can break or even uproot hair cells. “When that happens, the hair cells are finished,” he adds. Human ears cannot regrow hair cells.

Turn It Down

6 What is a safe volume level on your personal stereo? Novak suggests setting it to a comfortable volume in a quiet room. From then on, don’t turn the volume above that level no matter where you are. “You should be able to hear someone talking to you at a normal conversational level from a distance of 3 feet,” says Novak. If others can hear your music, the volume is too high.

7 Yahaira admits that sometimes after listening to loud music, her ears make a ringing sound. That could be a sign that her habit of listening to loud music is damaging her hearing. She plans to start playing her music quieter.

8 “Hearing is the one sense that enables humans to most easily use language and develop speech and build relationships,” says Novak. “So we need to protect that very special sense.”

GO ON
The LOUDNESS War

9  The loudness of today's music may not be totally under your control. Music companies have been deliberately turning up the volume. It's a trend called the loudness war.

10  Play a CD from the 1980s or '90s. Then play a newly released tune. Don't touch the volume control. You'll probably notice that the new CD sounds louder than the old one. Why? Sound engineers who create CDs are using dynamic range compression, a technology that makes the quiet parts of a song louder and the loud parts quieter. The overall effect of compression is a louder recording.

11  Many musicians and sound engineers aren't pleased. They say that compression is driving down the quality of today's music, making it sound flat and blaring. Gary Hobish, a sound engineer, explains that music should be a combination of loudness and softness. "This is one of the things that gives our music dimension," he says. But music companies want to make music louder so it will stand out. That's important in the competition among recording companies.

12  What about listeners? Many people listen to music on the go in noisy places and through headphones, all of which reduce sound quality. So young listeners may not notice the poorer quality of modern recordings. "To their ears," says Hobish, "the music sounds fine because they've never compared it to anything else."

How an Ear Hears

13  Sound waves travel down the outer ear's auditory canal and strike the tympanic membrane (ear drum), causing it to vibrate. The vibrations are transmitted through the middle ear by three ossicles (tiny bones). The third ossicle sends waves through a fluid inside the cochlea, an organ in the inner ear. The cochlea contains about 15,000 hair cells, which respond to the waves. The hair cells relay signals by way of the auditory nerve to the brain, which interprets the signals as sounds. No sound is heard until a signal reaches the brain.
What does the simile "like an earthquake" in paragraph 5 help the reader understand?

A  that volume can strongly affect parts of the ear  
B  that hair cells are easily damaged  
C  how our body is unable to re-grow hair cells  
D  how much damage the ear can take

How do paragraphs 4 and 5 connect to paragraph 6?

A  Paragraphs 4 and 5 explain how hearing loss can occur, and paragraph 6 explains how to prevent it.  
B  Paragraphs 4 and 5 show what damage can occur, and paragraph 6 shows how it affects people.  
C  Paragraphs 4 and 5 describe how the ear can be damaged, and paragraph 6 describes how people react to the damage.  
D  Paragraphs 4 and 5 explain why ears get damaged, and paragraph 6 explains why protecting hearing is important.

Which evidence best supports a claim made by the author in paragraph 4?

A  "If others can hear your music, the volume is too high." (paragraph 6)  
B  "Yahaira admits that sometimes after listening to loud music, her ears make a ringing sound." (paragraph 7)  
C  "So we need to protect that very special sense." (paragraph 8)  
D  "Music companies have been deliberately turning up the volume." (paragraph 9)
According to paragraphs 9 through 12, how is the music business today different from the business in the 1980s or 1990s?

A. Today's music companies control the volume of music more than in the past.
B. Today's music companies compete against each other more than in the past.
C. Today's listeners of music like their music louder than they did in the past.
D. Today's sound engineers make music sound clearer than it did in the past.

Which paragraph best explains how loud noises can damage our hearing?

A. paragraph 1
B. paragraph 5
C. paragraph 7
D. paragraph 13

Which information explained in paragraph 13 does the drawing help the reader understand?

A. the shape of the parts of the ear
B. the position of the parts of the ear
C. the order in which sound waves strike the parts of the ear
D. the size of sound waves when moving through the parts of the ear
Which idea is most important to include in a summary of the article?

A Music is not as powerful when played at quiet volumes.
B Powerful instruments cause most hearing loss.
C Choosing to play music quietly can protect hearing.
D Music companies determine safe volume levels.
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 1 through 6.

Many motion pictures have exciting and thrilling action scenes. The people who perform in these scenes are called stunt performers. They often stand in for the movie stars when the risk of injury is greater.

Excerpt from Stunt Performers
by Tony Hyland

1. Do you want to be a stunt performer?
2. Could you be a stunt performer, performing spectacular stunts in front of an audience or movie camera?
3. Stunt performers perform aerial acrobatics in circuses or dangerous stunts for the movies. Circus performers can swing on the flying trapeze high above the audience. Stunt actors can crash speeding cars in movie stunts.
4. We all love watching exciting stunts. Most people will enjoy the show and go home. For the stunt performers, this is the day's work. They'll be back doing more spectacular stunts the following day.
5. Stunt work is an extreme job. The training is hard and the stunts can be dangerous. But performers enjoy the thrill of their work and push themselves hard to do more spectacular stunts.
6. Perhaps you could be a stunt performer one day.
   Stunt actor or circus performer?
7. Stunt actors work in movies and television shows. They work hard to make it look as if someone else is doing the stunt. Circus performers work just as hard to be the stars of the show.
Stunt actors dressed up as the stars in a movie do all the dangerous and difficult scenes. Movie scenes can be edited to cut out some parts and put others in. Film crews can take hours to shoot an action scene. The audience only sees a few exciting moments.

Circus artists perform spectacular stunts live, in front of an audience. If the stunt goes wrong, there is no chance to do it again.

Life as a stunt performer

Stunt actors lead a busy and energetic life. They must be fit and strong. Many start off in martial arts or gymnastics, where they learn to develop flexibility and fall safely.

Experienced stunt actors learn many extra skills such as horse riding, working with explosives, and scuba diving. Some become specialists in one skill, such as stunt driving.

Stunt actors work wherever movies or television shows are made. Hollywood is known as the movie capital of the world. Other places with busy movie or television studios include Vancouver in Canada, and Queensland in Australia. Stunt actors often work on location. This means filming in remote places such as deserts, jungles, and mountains. Stunt actors working on these jobs are away from home for weeks, or even months.

Circus life

Circus life is also busy and active. Performers need to be strong and agile. They need a good sense of balance and a head for heights. The circus is not a place for shy people; circus performers enjoy being the center of attention. Most circus acts are performed to music. The rhythm of the music gives the performers cues for each section of their act.

Many circuses travel from town to town. They stay for a week, and then move on. Circus performers are used to this traveling life. Many have no other home but the circus. They live in large caravans or trailers. Circus families often travel together, with the children learning to join their parents' act. Circus children don't usually go to school. They study by correspondence, or have a teacher who travels with the circus.
Risks and dangers

15 Stunt performers of all types know that their jobs are risky. They don't let the risks stop them. Their skills and training usually keep them safe. Some of the risks for stunt performers are:

16 Falls Stunt performers are used to falls, and know how to land safely. But a fall from the highwire or trapeze can be deadly.

17 Sports injuries Stunt performers are hard on their bodies. They often suffer exactly the same sprains and knee damage that sports stars do.

18 Fire and explosions Movie fires and explosions are spectacular, but if something goes wrong, stunt actors can be badly hurt.

19 Accidents A slight miscalculation, or a piece of damaged equipment, can cause a bad accident. That's why performers practice their stunts and check their equipment closely.

20 Bad weather Wind and rain on a movie set can create unexpected hazards for stunt actors.
Which sentence from the article best explains why stunt performers are willing to do such a dangerous job?

A  "For the stunt performers, this is the day's work." (paragraph 4)

B  "But performers enjoy the thrill of their work and push themselves hard to do more spectacular stunts.” (paragraph 5)

C  “They work hard to make it look as if someone else is doing the stunt.” (paragraph 7)

D  “This means filming in remote places such as deserts, jungles, and mountains.” (paragraph 12)

Based on paragraphs 10 through 12, what must stunt actors do to train for their jobs?

A  They must work to get their bodies ready for action and in good shape.

B  They must live in far off places.

C  They must learn to be either a gymnast or a martial artist.

D  They must become specialists in horse riding, working with explosives, and scuba diving.

Based on the article, why do some stunt actors spend long periods of time away from home?

A  They need to live in different parts of the world to be able to help the actors.

B  They need to hike and climb in deserts, jungles, and mountains to help them stay in shape.

C  They need to travel to the different places where movies and television shows are filmed.

D  They need to go to different places to learn new skills from experts.
Based on the article, music helps circus performers by

A calming their fears when they are in front of an audience
B reminding them of home when they are performing in new places
C letting them know when to begin and end parts of their shows
D allowing them to relax during difficult stunts

How do paragraphs 15 through 19 support the author's main points?

A They show that stunt performing has too many dangers.
B They give details about how stunt performers train their bodies.
C They show how stunt performing is something everyone can do.
D They give details about the types of danger stunt performers face.

Which paragraph best supports a main idea of the article?

A paragraph 7
B paragraph 10
C paragraph 13
D paragraph 19
Don't think robots are a part of your life? Think again! They're in more places than you might know. In factories, robots put together everything from toys to cars. Some homes have robots that vacuum floors or mow the lawn. And more robots are soon to come. Experts predict that by 2025 we could have robots in every household!

Featured here are robots that have made news lately for the innovative ways they help people at home or at work. You might be living or working with one of them one day!

Like a Human

Robots don't expect any thanks for all the work they do for us. After all, they don't have feelings. But that may be changing with Nexi, a robot created by scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Nexi can move its face to show anger, happiness, or sadness. It can also raise its eyebrows to show surprise.

Humans can communicate using facial expressions. That's why researchers want Nexi to use them too. “Facial and body expressions help to develop trust and understanding between a person and robot,” explains robotics researcher Sonia Chernova. She helped develop Nexi at MIT.

Nexi was designed to work with people in groups. People will be better able to work on a team with Nexi if it can communicate like they do.

Nexi can also talk, identify human faces, follow a person with its gaze, and pick up small objects.

Household Helpers

How would you like a robot to help clean up your toys, or one that plays hide-and-seek with you? Nao (NOW) can be programmed to do both those activities, and more. A two-foot-tall robot, Nao was designed by a company in France to be a helper and companion.
Nao can talk and walk. It can also remember faces, voices, and places. And it can be programmed to assist with daily tasks, such as checking e-mail. Experts on robotic inventions say that robots like Nao are here to stay. They predict that about 12 million home-service robots will be sold over the next few years. Nao is expected to be available in stores soon.

**Robots at Work**

Need a lift out of bed? RIBA, short for “Robot for Interactive Body Assistance,” will lend its helpful arms! Some patients at hospitals and nursing homes have a hard time getting in and out of bed. RIBA can gently lift a patient out of bed and help him or her into a wheelchair. The robot can safely pick up and carry people weighing as much as 135 pounds. RIBA’s inventors in Japan made RIBA look like a teddy bear to cheer up patients. RIBA can also recognize faces and voices, and respond to spoken commands. Experts say RIBA could be helping nurses at hospitals in as few as five years.

**Water Bots**

Robots that work in water—and resemble familiar sea creatures—are making a splash too. One of them is a robotic fish. Researchers at MIT built the robo-fish to swim in water to detect pollution. It can also locate submerged ships or oil and gas pipelines.

Other new underwater robots look like clams, manta rays, and lobsters. The two-foot-long robotic lobster has eight legs to crawl along the seafloor. It may one day help the U.S. Navy check for underwater weapons.

There’s even a robotic penguin! Engineers in Germany designed it. Called the AquaPenguin, it uses flippers to paddle and can move in all directions. Real penguins can’t swim backward, but AquaPenguin can! Still, AquaPenguin is meant to show just how life-like technology can be.
Why do scientists want to create robots that imitate human facial expressions?

A  to encourage people to buy robots to do their tasks
B  to encourage people to pay more attention to robotic work
C  to help create a better connection between robots and people
D  to help establish a reason for robots and people to work together

Which evidence best supports the idea that robots could be in every household by the year 2025?

A  Robots can perform daily tasks.
B  Robots can work in many places.
C  Robots can show human emotions.
D  Robots can replace human workers.
45 Which evidence best supports the idea that Nao will be a popular invention?

A  Nao is able to talk and walk.
B  Nao has a number of different uses.
C  Nao is the first robot to pick up toys.
D  Nao has been praised by robotic experts.

46 Based on the article, which statement best explains what Nexi, Nao, and RIBA have in common?

A  They interact and communicate with humans.
B  They have many possible military applications.
C  They can perform medical services that pose difficulties to people.
D  They are designed to imitate human emotions and facial expressions.
What does the expression “making a splash” (paragraph 10) mean?

A  getting soaked  
B  swimming along  
C  creating excitement  
D  cleaning up

Which detail best shows that robots can perform tasks that are difficult for humans?

A  “They’re in more places than you might know.” (paragraph 1)  
B  “Some homes have robots that vacuum floors or mow the lawn.” (paragraph 1)  
C  “You might be living or working with one of them one day!” (paragraph 2)  
D  “It can also locate submerged ships or oil and gas pipelines.” (paragraph 10)
Which detail would be most important to include in a summary of the article?

A  A robotic penguin was designed by engineers in Germany.
B  Because Nexi can raise its eyebrows, it can express feelings and emotions.
C  Nao is a two-foot-tall robot that can be programmed to perform several tasks.
D  Because some new robots act like humans in many ways, they will work well with people.
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 31 through 37.

Pioneer Fun
by Kerrily Sapet

1 Can you imagine life without video games or trips to the mall? For pioneer children growing up in the 1800s, the nearest town could be days away by horseback or covered wagon. Trips to the town store were treats for children, as families might only visit them a few times a year. Inside the store, pioneer children glimpsed toys, but none that ran on batteries or electricity.

2 Town stores featured candy, jump ropes, marbles, books that were designed to teach children good behavior, china and paper dolls. But even these simple toys were expensive. Most pioneer families had little money for fun and games. Parents needed to spend their hard-earned money on items that they couldn't make themselves, such as tools, nails, and shoes.

3 Without store-bought toys, pioneer children made their own fun out of what they had. This could be difficult too, as pioneers wasted nothing. Families used every precious item. They braided small scraps of fabric into rugs, made jelly from apple peels, and wrote with homemade ink created from water and soot. Short on money and supplies, kids used their imaginations, creating toys out of stones, sticks, buttons, cornhusks, wood, broom straws, and scraps of fabric.

4 Pioneer children made dolls, simple wooden tops and whirling toys, shaped marbles and beads out of clay, and played counting games. They created their own fun, making stepping stone bridges, sliding on frozen streams, and inventing new games to play. Some of the games they played have been memorized and handed down from generation to generation and are still played today, like hopscotch, jump rope, hide and seek, and “Mother, May I?”

5 Today, pioneer crafts and games are just as much fun. Step back in time and try your hand at making these toys from over 100 years ago.
Pioneers were definitely handy with a needle and thread, as clothes, blankets, pillows, and most other items were made by hand. Frontier children made this toy if their mother had an extra button. If she didn’t, they might have been lucky enough for their father to whittle them a button, and then the same toy was called a buzzsaw.

**Stuff You Need**
- piece of string twice as long as your arm
- large button with two holes

**Make it:**
1. Thread the string through the buttonholes. Tie the ends in a knot, forming a loop.
2. Hold each end of the string, so that the button is in the middle.
3. Swing the button in a circle to wind up the string.
4. Pull your hands apart and push them together again. The button will whirl and sing as it swings.
TIN CAN LANTERN

Pioneers had no electricity so after sunset and before sunrise they used candlelight. To carry candles they used lanterns, which lit the inside of their dark barns and cabins, but protected against fire.

Stuff You Need (Adult help is suggested)

• empty tin can (any size will work, just make sure it doesn’t have sharp edges)
• hammer
• different size nails
• 12-inch long piece of wire

Make it:

1. Fill a can with water and place it in the freezer until the water is frozen. The ice will give you a hard surface to hammer against.
2. Draw a pattern on the outside of the tin can.
3. Use the hammer to punch holes in the can with the nails, according to your pattern. The more holes you make, the more the candlelight can shine through.
4. Make two nail holes near the top of the can on opposite sides for stringing a handle.
5. String the wire through the holes at the top. Wrap the ends of the wire around the holes a few times to secure the handle.
6. Place a small candle or tea light on the bottom of your lantern.
   Watch for the interesting shadows it will create!
31 Which information most contributes to the organization of paragraph 1?

A the comparison to the toys of today
B the explanation of the problem of transportation
C the mention of the cause for only a few trips to town
D the use of words and numbers that indicate periods of time

32 Which sentence gives the best evidence that readers can relate the article to their own lives?

A “Town stores featured candy, jump ropes, marbles, books that were designed to teach children good behavior, china and paper dolls.” (paragraph 2)
B “Without store-bought toys, pioneer children made their own fun out of what they had.” (paragraph 3)
C “Some of the games they played have been memorized and handed down from generation to generation and are still played today, like hopscotch, jump rope, hide and seek, and ‘Mother, May I?’ ” (paragraph 4)
D “Step back in time and try your hand at making these toys from over 100 years ago.” (paragraph 5)
Which sentence best supports a main idea of the article?

A  "For pioneer children growing up in the 1800s, the nearest town could be days away by horseback or covered wagon." (paragraph 1)

B  "Most pioneer families had little money for fun and games." (paragraph 2)

C  "Without store-bought toys, pioneer children made their own fun out of what they had." (paragraph 3)

D  "Today, pioneer crafts and games are just as much fun." (paragraph 5)

In the “Whirligig” instructions, which step relates to positioning an object?

A  step 1

B  step 2

C  step 3

D  step 4
Step 1 for making a tin can lantern is helpful because

A. nails will not puncture the hard surface created by the ice inside
B. it allows the lantern maker to avoid smashing in the side of the can
C. a hard surface will allow the lantern maker to draw detailed patterns
D. it allows the lantern maker to avoid scratching the surface of the can

Which definition of "secure" best matches its use in step 5 of "Tin Can Lantern"?

A. to remove from danger
B. to get for oneself
C. to protect an area
D. to attach firmly
37. Which object was most likely useful for the entire family?

A. dolls  
B. whirligigs  
C. tin can lanterns  
D. clay marbles and beads
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 23 through 29.

Road to the Red Planet

by Tyrus Cukavac

1. It takes me 17 hours and 5 different airplanes to get from New York City to the spot on Earth that’s most similar to the planet Mars. I finally arrive on Devon Island, in Canada. It is about 900 miles from the North Pole. Now I have some idea of what it’s like to be on the Red Planet.

2. Humans are many years away from being ready to go to Mars. But some scientists are already getting ready for the trip. Every summer, 25 to 30 experts gather on Devon Island. They are part of the Haughton Mars Project. Through this project, the scientists do research to prepare for future space exploration.

Much Like Mars

3. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) scientist Pascal Lee started the project in 1997. He’s come to the island every summer since then. Lee tells me that he chose Devon Island partly because it has an impact crater. That is a large hole in the ground caused by a meteorite. The surface of Mars is filled with such craters. With its frigid desert environment, Devon Island’s Haughton Crater comes closest to the craters on Mars.

4. However, Devon Island isn’t exactly like Mars. For example, on Mars, temperatures can drop to as low as -200°F. That’s about four times as cold as it ever gets on the island. But like Mars, no one lives on Devon Island.

5. For most of the year, the island’s terrain is covered in snow. That means people can work there only during the summer months, when the average temperature is about 34°F. (In fact, the island gets 24 hours of sunlight most days during the summer!)

6. At Haughton Crater, I watch the scientists perform experiments to practice working in a Mars-like environment. Some wear spacesuits as they walk across the terrain. Others test how well their robot rovers collect rock and soil samples. The scientists even set up a greenhouse. This is to see how plants might grow under mostly lifeless conditions.

7. “We’re giving ourselves tasks that are very similar to what humans on Mars would have to do,” Lee tells me.

No Help From Outside

8. The scientists must also be able to get by without any help or additional supplies from the outside world. That is just as it would be if they were on Mars. For much of the time,
cell-phone and Internet service is very limited on Devon Island. But this actually helps the scientists. How? It lets them figure out what they would need to make human explorations of Mars successful and safe.

“This is what the earliest pioneers must have experienced when they started building a town,” says Lee.

A Future on Mars

Scientists have been studying Mars for decades. Recent robot missions there found possible signs of frozen water. This suggests that life may have once existed on Mars. It might even exist there now. (Experts say that such life would be tiny, probably no bigger than a single cell.) Human exploration of Mars could help provide answers about whether life was ever there.

NASA officials have said that they hope to put astronauts on the Red Planet by 2030. Until then, the scientists I have met at Haughton Crater are working to make sure that humans will be ready for such an adventure.
23. What does the word “terrain” mean as it is used in paragraph 5?
   A. bodies of water
   B. plant life
   C. surface features of the land
   D. area with small amounts of rain

24. Which detail best reflects the main goal of the Haughton Mars Project?
   A. “Now I have some idea of what it’s like to be on the Red Planet.” (paragraph 1)
   B. “That means people can work there only during the summer months . . .” (paragraph 5)
   C. “Others test how well their robot rovers collect rock and soil samples.” (paragraph 6)
   D. “Recent robot missions there found possible signs of frozen water.” (paragraph 10)
25. Which sentence best supports the main idea of paragraphs 3 through 5?

A  "It is about 900 miles from the North Pole." (paragraph 1)
B  "It lets them figure out what they would need to make human explorations of Mars successful and safe." (paragraph 8)
C  "Scientists have been studying Mars for decades." (paragraph 10)
D  "NASA officials have said that they hope to put astronauts on the Red Planet by 2030." (paragraph 11)

26. Which evidence best supports the point the author makes in paragraph 11?

A  Scientists are practicing tasks they might perform on Mars.
B  Scientists work on the island during the summer months.
C  Scientists have gathered on the island since 1997.
D  Scientists are limiting phone and Internet use.
27. The **main** reason no one lives on Devon Island is because the island

A. is difficult to reach
B. has no Internet service
C. is cold most of the year
D. has continuous sunlight all summer

28. How have recent robot missions to Mars affected future exploration by humans?

A. The missions determined when humans can safely travel to Mars.
B. The missions suggested that humans will be able to survive on Mars.
C. The missions discovered proof of life on Mars that only humans can confirm.
D. The missions raised new questions about life on Mars that humans may answer.
Why does the author quote Dr. Pascal Lee throughout the article?

A  Dr. Lee is the scientist on the island who has the most information about Mars.
B  Dr. Lee was hired by NASA to be the next scientist to explore Mars.
C  Dr. Lee started the Haughton Mars Project and has remained involved since its beginning.
D  Dr. Lee lives at the research site on Devon Island and conducts experiments throughout the year.
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Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 36 through 42.

Two Days With No Phone
by Sarah Jane Brian

Experts worry that teen texting is out of control. Could you give up your phone for 48 hours? Our brave volunteers did.

Instead of sleeping, Kenny Alarcon, 16, often texts with his friends through the night. “You get an urge,” explains the teen, who lives in the Bronx in New York City. “When I get a text, I’m itching to respond to it even if I want to sleep.”

Franchesca Garcia, a high school senior from Providence, Rhode Island, has also felt the need to stay constantly connected. We asked how many texts she sent and received each day. “I don’t know . . . maybe 1,000?” she answered. “It’s too many to count.”

It probably won’t surprise you that teens are texting more than ever before. Some experts are worried about how all that texting is affecting teenagers’ lives.

Teens in Trouble?

One concern is that students might not learn correct grammar and spelling if most of the writing they do is made up of text messages. Some people also worry that because teens text so much, they don’t spend enough time talking with others face-to-face. That could be hurting their relationships with friends and family.

Plus, all that texting (and time on social media) takes away from hours that could be spent studying, exercising, pursuing a hobby, or just relaxing.

Dr. Elizabeth Dowdell is a professor at Villanova University in Pennsylvania. She says that many people expect to be able to access anyone or to be accessed by anyone at any time. “It’s very appealing, especially to a middle or high school student,” she explains. “The problem is, there’s no downtime.” And people need downtime—especially when it comes to sleep.

Sleep Texting

Both Franchesca and Kenny told us that they wake up several times during the night to text. Kenny even sleeps with his phone beneath his pillow.

Dr. Dowdell says that it’s common for teens’ sleep to be interrupted by texts. Sometimes teens even send texts filled with nonsense words when they don’t wake up all the way. She has been studying this trend, which she calls “sleep texting.”

GO ON
Why is sleep texting a problem? “Adolescents need a solid 8, 10, even 11 hours of sleep to really function and to think clearly,” reports Dr. Dowdell. If they regularly lose sleep, she adds, teens may start having trouble in school. They may become grumpy, angry, or depressed. A lack of sleep can lead to weight gain and even obesity. That’s because many people turn to junk food for quick energy when they are tired.

The 48-Hour Challenge

According to Dr. Dowdell, teens need to learn that they can—and should—turn off their phones sometimes. So we decided to have Kenny and Franchesca do an experiment.

These were the rules: No phone for 48 hours. No computer or Internet either, unless it was for schoolwork. No Twitter, no Instagram.

Would these two teenagers be able to do it?

“I think I’m going to feel really isolated,” Kenny worried. Franchesca was nervous but brave. “I’m excited for the challenge,” she said. “I don’t know what’s going to happen.”

Kenny and Franchesca handed their phones to their mothers for safekeeping. The challenge was on.

The Results

We caught up with Kenny and Franchesca after 48 phone-free hours. “Wow, it was pure torture,” Kenny joked. But though life with no phone wasn’t easy, he admitted “it had benefits.”

Sure, Kenny missed his friends, and he was sad at times. But he also felt relief from the constant texting. “Sometimes it’s teenager drama, people gossiping,” he explained. “I felt less stressed because I didn’t have to be involved.”

Instead of texting, Kenny went to the gym and caught up on schoolwork. The first night, he told us, “I slept for 18 hours!” He also spent time sitting with his family and talking. Kenny’s mom helped him with homework for the first time in two years. Said Kenny, “I felt closer to my parents.”

Franchesca had an even happier result when she put away her phone. “I loved it!” she said. “I was going to the gym and hanging out with friends and playing basketball. I had a wonderful experience.” She slept better too.

Franchesca decided to continue the experiment for a while. “I think I’ll be so much smarter and healthier,” she explained. “Everybody in the world should try it.”

Kenny doesn’t plan to give up his phone again. But he now knows that he can live without it. Said the teen, “It was a reality check.”
Which evidence best supports the claims the author makes in paragraph 4?

A  “They may become grumpy, angry, or depressed.” (paragraph 9)
B  “Sure, Kenny missed his friends, and he was sad at times.” (paragraph 16)
C  “Kenny’s mom helped him with homework for the first time in two years.” (paragraph 17)
D  “I had a wonderful experience.” (paragraph 18)

What does Dr. Elizabeth Dowdell suggest when she says “people expect to be able to access anyone or to be accessed by anyone at any time”? (paragraph 6)

A  Teens need to stay available by phone at all times.
B  Many teens want to own a phone that receives texts.
C  Constant phone use is a behavior of teens that cannot be changed.
D  Teens are so used to having phones that nonstop texting has become a habit.

How does the author organize paragraphs 15 through 20?

A  by describing the events of the experiment in the order that they happened
B  by explaining the goals and directions of the experiment
C  by showing the reasons for doing the experiment with the two teens
D  by comparing the effects that the experiment had on the two teens

What can the reader infer from paragraphs 17 through 20?

A  Asking teens to live without their phones will help them become smarter.
B  Teens may not realize how different their lives can be without their phones.
C  Teens around the world will enjoy experimenting with their phone use.
D  Expecting teens to give up their phones is not realistic.
How were Kenny's and Franchesca's reactions to the 48-hour challenge different?
A Only Franchesca benefitted from better sleep with no texting interruptions.
B Only Franchesca fully appreciated the freedom of having no phone.
C Only Kenny participated in physical activities instead of constant texting.
D Only Kenny spent time talking with people after giving up the phone.

Which statement best expresses a main idea of the article?
A "Some experts are worried about how all that texting is affecting teenagers' lives." (paragraph 3)
B "If they regularly lose sleep, she adds, teens may start having trouble in school." (paragraph 9)
C "Kenny and Franchesca handed their phones to their mothers for safekeeping." (paragraph 14)
D "Franchesca decided to continue the experiment for a while." (paragraph 19)

Which detail would be most important to include in a summary of the article?
A Kenny admits to sleeping with his phone under his pillow.
B Franchesca claims to exchange a thousand texts per day.
C The teens engage in gossip and drama without their phones.
D The teens have more free time when they give up texting.
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 25 through 31.

You CAN Run a Mile!
by Betsy Dru Tecco

Have you ever tried to run a mile? If your school participates in the President’s Challenge, chances are you have taken the Physical Fitness Test. One of the five activities in that test is the endurance run/walk. That activity asks you to complete a 1-mile distance as fast as you can. As your body becomes more conditioned to the exercise, you’ll get the endurance to go even farther and faster.

Prepare Yourself

“Running a mile is a great accomplishment—no matter how long it takes. But to perform your best in the mile run, and to feel good doing it, you really need to prepare properly,” says Larry Greene. He is an exercise science expert, a former professional distance runner and coach, and a coauthor of *Training for Young Distance Runners.*

One way to start running is to join a school team or a local running club that has a good coach, advises Greene. A coach can teach you correct running form—that’s how you hold your body and move your arms and legs. Good form is important for avoiding injuries and doing your best, Greene says, but it’s not something you can learn completely on your own. A coach can also remind you to pace yourself. “If you start too fast, you’ll have to slow down or stop due to fatigue,” he explains. “If you start too slowly, you might not achieve your time goal.”

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Fun Run

To make your run more fun, add a silly challenge after each lap. For example, run one lap, and then stop and dance like a rock star for a minute. Then continue running. After your second lap, pretend you are a monkey climbing a tree.

Come up with new challenges to do after each lap. What are some other goofy things you could do after each lap? What are some ways you can add other types of exercise between each lap?

GO ON
The library and the Internet can improve your running. “When I first started competing in track and cross country at age 12, I benefited so much from reading...about the sports,” Greene says. “Learn as much as you can by reading running books, magazines, and Web site articles.”

**Start With Short Distances**

To train for a mile run, start by running a short distance, such as one-quarter mile. Over the next few weeks, slowly increase the distance by one-eighth or one-quarter of a mile at a time. That gives your body time to adjust to each new challenge. (It can also lower your risk of injury.) Don’t forget to congratulate yourself after you complete each new distance—with a big gulp of water.

**Stay Safe**

If you ever feel too tired to keep going, stop. “Don’t push yourself when running becomes painful,” Greene says. And never run outside alone—have a workout partner who will run with you. Warm up, stretch, and cool down together. Check each other’s posture as well as your running form. Having someone else watch you run will help you make sure you are running both safely and efficiently. It helps to pass the time too!

**First Place Finish!**

Demian L. started running about a year and a half ago at his school in Brooklyn, N.Y., and then he joined another running program, called the Mighty Milers. He’s come a long way. This past spring, Demian qualified for a national running event: the USA Track and Field National Youth Indoor Track and Field Championships in Chicago. Demian, now in fifth grade, took first place in the 1,500-meter race for his age group. He ran the distance, which is nearly 1 mile, in 5 minutes and 44 seconds. That is superfast! “It felt really good and was a big confidence builder,” he says. To train for the race, Demian ran three times a week and did stretching exercises and other sports. He likes the way running keeps him fit and feeling good. “Running makes me happy!” he says.
In paragraph 2, the details about Larry Greene are important because they suggest why

A coaches need running experience
B his book is full of good ideas for running
C young people need special training
D his advice about training can be trusted

Based on the article, what is the main reason it is helpful to join a team or a club?

A You can have fun running with people.
B You can improve by working with a coach.
C You can learn to change your time goals.
D You can learn to run far without getting tired.

Why is the text box “Fun Run” included in the article?

A It provides ideas for training that add to suggestions given in the article.
B It gives an opinion about training that is different from the rest of the article.
C It suggests that a silly approach to running is better than the article’s serious approach.
D It provides evidence to support the article’s claim that people can become better runners.
Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

As your body becomes more conditioned to the exercise, you'll get the endurance to go even farther and faster.

Which paragraph best supports this claim?

A paragraph 2
B paragraph 3
C paragraph 5
D paragraph 6

Based on paragraph 6, what does it mean to run “efficiently”?

A to stretch and cool down correctly
B to use correct speed and form
C to train with another person
D to avoid any danger
Which sentence **best** expresses the main idea of the article?

A  “If your school participates in the President's Challenge, chances are you have taken the Physical Fitness Test.” (paragraph 1)

B  “But to perform your best in the mile run, and to feel good doing it, you really need to prepare properly,” says Larry Greene.” (paragraph 2)

C  “To train for a mile run, start by running a short distance, such as one-quarter mile.” (paragraph 5)

D  “Don’t push yourself when running becomes painful,” Greene says.” (paragraph 6)

Based on information in the text box “First Place Finish!” what can the reader conclude about racing?

A  Running in races can encourage people to work hard.

B  Competing in races is something every runner must try.

C  Training three days a week is necessary to win races.

D  Winning championship races requires joining a program.
Directions
Read this passage. Then answer questions 35 and 36.

Back to the Future
by Terri L. Jones

1. What will the future bring? To answer that question, you need to know what is possible. You also need imagination.


Home, Sweet Robot

3. In the 1950s, a science fiction book described an amazing house. It was a house of the future. Robots did all the chores. They cooked and cleaned. They set the table and vacuumed.

4. Today, robots really are on the job. They vacuum floors, cook meals, and build cars. Robots are even exploring outer space.

5. Disneyland had a “smart” house, too. The house almost ran itself. Today, many homes are run by automatic controls. Microwaves can cook meals in just minutes.

Cities in Space

6. Some ideas from the past were out of this world. How does a city in space sound? Some people thought we would live on the moon by the 1990s!

7. How would this work? Well, people would use hydroponics to grow their food. That means the plants would grow without soil. Energy from the sun would supply power.

8. Today, astronauts do live in a space station. They stay only a few months at a time, though. Some farms grow plants without soil. Many homes on Earth use power from the sun. But a city in space is still many years away.

Phone + TV = Future

9. People had telephones and television in the fifties. A clever writer put the two together!

GO ON
Dick Tracy was a comic book character. He used his watch as a phone. The watch also let him see people while he talked to them. In real life, no one had a watch like Tracy's.

Today, many people watch videos on their cell phones. People use webcams to see each other on the Internet. What was only in stories 50 years ago is really possible today!

Up, Up, But Not Away

Some people don't just imagine the future. They try to build it. Take the jetpack. This is a backpack with a small rocket engine. You put the pack on. You rev it up. Then you take off!

The jetpack isn't as great as it seems. It can't carry very much fuel. So it can't go very far. Also, the fuel is dangerous. It gets very, very hot! And the pack's loud engine can hurt your ears.

Still, a jetpack is a fun idea. Maybe one day someone will make the pack work. Until that time, you better count on the bus.

Getting from Here to There

Another cool idea was the flying car. It had wings. The car really worked! Flying cars didn't completely catch on. Maybe they were hard to park.

In one science fiction story, people jumped on moving belts to get around. That wasn't such a crazy idea. Today "people movers" carry travelers through airports. Escalators carry people up and down. There are even moving sidewalks in some places.

People in the 1950s dreamed of a car that drove itself. Today, the car is still a dream. But in time, that dream may come true, too.

Fast Forward

In 1950, the only computers were very big. Each one filled a whole room! No one had a personal computer. Then someone invented the computer chip. The tiny chip let engineers build small computers. Now, millions of people have their own computer at home.

The future of the fifties is here. Think about your future.
According to “Back to the Future,” why is using your imagination important? Use two details from the passage to support your response.

Why does the author of “Back to the Future” use subheadings? Use two details from the passage to support your response.
Northern leopard frogs migrate twice per year in and out of lakes and ponds in Minnesota. This migration can be dangerous for the frogs so volunteers help carry them across the roads.

Beware of Frogs!

by Roxa Crowe

1 At the end of the long, dreary afternoon, banks of gray, ominous clouds hovered over Lake Independence in Minnesota. It was Halloween.

2 In the shadows of the oak trees stood two women and a boy. Rain splattered and soaked the dense accumulation of fallen leaves. Then it trailed off to a slow drizzle. Darkness sat down heavily on the Baker Park Reserve.

3 A soft thump sounded in the spongy leaves. First just one, then a second, a third ... quiet bumps in the night.

4 "Sounds like the frogs are headed our way," a hushed voice said.

5 Madeleine Linck and the two volunteers listened as the frogs approached the drift fence. Two and a half feet high, the fence of black plastic consisted of eight 100-foot lengths, staked down parallel to the highway. About every 30 to 50 feet along the fence, a five gallon plastic bucket was sunk in the ground and filled about one-third full with lake water.

6 Fall migration of the northern leopard frogs had begun. The frogs migrate twice a year. In the spring the frogs migrate out of the lake to the breeding ponds. In the fall they come back to the deep lake to hibernate on the bottom.

7 Bright lights flashed as a pickup truck hummed down County Road 19, which separates the marshes and woods from the lake. Frogs follow the same route in and out of the lake that they have for thousands of years. During each month-long migration period, the frogs face a high fatality rate on the highway. They also create a hazardous situation for motorists. Mashed frog bodies can be very slippery.

8 A quiet plop. The first frog had encountered the fence. It hopped along the edge looking for a way around it. A splash announced the frog had landed in one of the buckets. More splashes followed as the frogs tried to navigate the fence.
Linck swished her hand around in the cold bucket and pulled out a frog. She slipped it into her plastic pail and fished for another. Carrying her cargo of frogs across the road to the weeds near the edge of the lake, she tipped the pail on its side. Quiet rustlings told her that the frogs were slithering out into the grasses.

“They always know which way to go,” she said. “They never turn back and try to go the other way.”

The three people spent most of the night carrying more than 2,000 frogs across the road.

“That was the most frogs we ever had in one night,” Linck said. “Some nights we just get a few frogs, and on others we get several hundred.”

Linck, wildlife technician for the Three Rivers Park District in Plymouth, Minnesota, has organized the spring and fall frog ferry since 1994.

“Usually the juveniles come first in the fall,” she said. “They’re followed by the mature males and mature females. Females are the largest. You can tell a mature male by his swollen thumb pad which is really enlarged in the spring. The old frogs are the last. They wait until after the frost. Sometimes you can see them coming across the snow.”

Migration for these frogs is a ghoulish nightmare. The frog ferry is one way to temporarily solve the problem. Frog Crossing signs are helpful for warning drivers, and have been installed in a few areas in the eastern United States and western Europe.

Toad tunnels are another way of dealing with the problem. Drift fences guide the animals to the tunnels under the road, allowing them to cross safely.

“I hope the highway department considers putting in a bridge or a large box tunnel when they upgrade the road in a few years,” Linck added.

On dark, wet nights around Halloween, signs posted along County Road 19 say, “Beware of Frogs!” Although not accompanied by any trolls or goblins, the frogs can still be very dangerous.
What feeling does the author create in paragraphs 1 and 2? Use two details from the article to support your response.

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What is the main idea of paragraphs 15 through 18? Use two details from the article to support your response.

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Both articles focus on animals that need help. Why do these animals need help? How is the help these animals need similar and different in both articles? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to
- explain why the animals in both articles need help
- explain how the help these animals need is similar and different in both articles
- use details from both articles to support your response
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 43 and 44.

Excerpt from A Home for the President
by Patricia West

1 The White House has stood as an important symbol of the U.S. presidency for over two centuries. It has seen a wide range of occupants and visitors from all over the world. In spite of its endurance, the home of the U.S. presidency has changed a lot. It was not the home of every U.S. President. It was not always called the "White House." In fact, it was not always white.

George Washington Plans a Presidential Home

2 When George Washington became the first President of the United States, the nation did not yet have a capital city. The government's headquarters at that time was in New York City and later moved temporarily to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Several of the thirteen original states wanted the honor of hosting the capital. A compromise was worked out between the Southern states and the Northern states. In exchange for Thomas Jefferson's support of a bill Alexander Hamilton favored, Hamilton agreed to urge his fellow Northerners in Congress to vote to put the capital in the South.

3 President Washington was asked to name the exact location of the new capital. He chose a 10-square-mile spot on the Potomac River. This spot had been the home of several Native American tribes. By 1791, European settlers were living there.

4 The first plan for the President's House was for a huge, grayish stone building, much like a European palace. The building was designed by the distinguished Frenchman, Pierre L'Enfant. Washington rejected his plan and announced a competition calling for a new architect. James Hoban, of South Carolina, won the contest and laid the cornerstone of the President's House in 1792.

5 To this day, Americans should feel indebted to George Washington. He supervised every detail of the building, which was just one-fifth the size called for in the original plan. Unfortunately, Washington was the only U.S. President who never got to live in the beautiful building.

6 It took eight years to build the President's House. No one could guarantee that Congress would provide enough money for construction. It was hard to bring building materials to the swampy area. Mosquitoes buzzing everywhere in the steamy summer heat made the workers' lives miserable.

7 By 1800, the President's House was barely finished. Only six rooms were completed. Even in these rooms, the plaster walls were still damp.
A New Home in “Wilderness City”

It would be misleading to say that Washington, D.C., was a grand city at the start of the nineteenth century. When President John Adams and First Lady Abigail Adams moved into their new home, Washington, D.C., was quite a mess. The unpaved streets became a sea of mud whenever it rained. Potholes and tree stumps made travel by horse and carriage dangerous. Pigs roamed the streets eating the garbage dumped there. Conditions were so rough and dirty that some people called the capital “wilderness city.” Abigail Adams had to hang laundry inside the house to dry because it would have gotten dirty all over again on an outside clothesline.

In spite of the hardships, the Adamses appreciated their home. Calling the house “the President’s Palace,” President Adams wrote to a friend, “May none but honest and wise Men ever rule under this roof.” His wife commented that “this House is built for ages to come.”

A new President moved into the house in 1801. President Thomas Jefferson said that the big stone house was large enough for “two emperors, one Pope, and the Grand Lama.” Since he didn’t think that Presidents should live in a palace, he called his new home simply “the President’s House.” Jefferson had good taste, and he furnished the house beautifully. He also had three large rooms on the main floor (the Blue Room, the Red Room, and the Green Room) painted in the colors that are still used today.

With all that space at his disposal, Jefferson loved to entertain at home. His guests included foreign heads of state, Native Americans, and ordinary citizens.

Disaster in the President’s House

The next President, James Madison, was away in 1814 when he received word that the British were marching on Washington during the War of 1812. First Lady Dolley Madison hurriedly packed up important state papers and sent them away. At the last minute, when British troops were storming the capital, she saved a large portrait of George Washington by ripping it from its frame. Then she fled in disguise.

British soldiers feasted on the food they found on the banquet table. They set the President’s House on fire, along with all the other government buildings in the city. Only a torrential rainstorm saved the house from total destruction. By the next day, all that remained standing were four soot-blackened exterior walls. The architect, James Hoban, was asked to use his original plans to rebuild the President’s House. While the Madisons lived elsewhere, the famous house was rebuilt.

1 War of 1812: a war between the United States and Great Britain lasting from 1812 to 1815
How do paragraphs 2 and 3 contribute to the development of "Excerpt from A Home for the President"? Use two details from the article to support your response.

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How did the home of the President change from 1800 through 1814? Use two details from the article to support your response.

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GO ON
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 48 and 49.

On a May afternoon in Siberia, Yuri Khudi and his sons, members of the nomadic Nenets people of northern Russia, were hunting along the bank of the Yuribey River when they discovered something amazing.

Excerpt from Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time!
by Christopher Sloan

1. As Yuri and his sons stood around the little body lying on the sandbar, they were shocked by what they had found: a perfectly preserved baby woolly mammoth. It was frozen solid.

2. These animals disappeared from this part of the world about 11,000 years ago, but mammoth bones and tusks are a relatively common find in Siberia. It’s so cold in this Arctic region of Russia that the frozen soil, called permafrost, has acted as a giant freezer, preserving the carcasses of many animals that lived there long ago. As the top layer of permafrost begins to thaw in the spring, the bony remains of mammoths often appear as if they have burst from the frozen ground. But Yuri and his sons had never seen anything like this before—a baby woolly mammoth with all of its flesh in place. It looked like it could have died yesterday. They didn’t dare touch it.

3. Mammoths play a powerful role in Nenets mythology. The story goes that woolly mammoths are giant beasts herded by gods of the underground. If the animals come to the surface and see sunlight, they die. Some Nenets say that mammoths will bring bad luck or even death to the people who touch their remains.

4. So it was with both fear and respect that Yuri Khudi and his sons looked at the baby mammoth. Uncertain what to do, they left the mammoth exactly where they found it and returned to camp. Yuri decided to seek the advice of Kirill Serotetto, a trusted friend who had lots of experience in the Arctic as an expedition outfitter and knew the value of mammoth bones. To get to Yar Sale, where Serotetto lived, Yuri rode his snowmobile 90 miles (145 km) to Novyy Port then boarded a helicopter to Yar Sale.

5. After hearing Yuri’s story, Serotetto rushed him to the director of the museum, who notified the local police. Yuri had stumbled onto something big. Hours later, Yuri, Serotetto, and a few policemen were flying toward the place where Yuri had made his discovery. Finally, they landed near the site. The baby mammoth was gone!
Yuri's stomach dropped. He was afraid no one would believe him now. Without a body there was no reason for the police to stick around, so they flew back to Yar Sale. Serotetto stayed behind with his friend to investigate further.

Yuri knew that prehistoric animal remains, especially tusks, were valuable and could fetch a lot of money from fossil collectors or carvers. After making some inquiries, he and Serotetto learned that Yuri's cousin had snatched up the baby mammoth and carted it off on his sled to Novyy Port. There he had traded the valuable find to a store owner in exchange for two years' worth of food and some equipment.

Yuri and Serotetto had to move fast if they were going to save this precious treasure. By the time they arrived in Novyy Port, the little mammoth was propped up in the store and was already causing a stir. People were taking pictures of it with their cell phones. Yuri's heart sank when he saw that stray dogs in town had already gnawed off the baby's tail and most of one ear. But the rest of the body was still in perfect condition. They had to get the mammoth to a safe location fast! Serotetto, with the help of the local police chief, explained the importance of the find to the owner. Finally, after much discussion, he agreed to give up the mammoth.

SAFE AND SOUND

At last the baby mammoth was in the hands of museum staff at Yar Sale. Now they needed to find a place where she would be preserved and taken care of. The calf was packed onto a helicopter and flown to the Shemanovsky Museum in Salekhard, a regional capital of Siberia. The director there immediately called Bernard Buigues, a French explorer who had become an expert in mammoths and who had established a center for preserving mammoth remains in the Siberian town of Khatanga. When Bernard heard the exciting news, he offered to organize an international team of experts to study the baby mammoth. The team would include researchers from Russia, the United States, and Japan.

It would take several weeks for the team to assemble in Salekhard. To keep the carcass frozen, it was placed in a freezer. Bernard was the first member to arrive. When he saw the baby mammoth, he was struck by how tiny she was—only 33 inches (84 cm) high and 110 pounds (50 kg) in weight. "I was fascinated by her lifelike expression. Her smiling mouth, her front legs seemingly in motion—it was as if she had been enjoying herself." He couldn't wait for the rest of the team to meet her.
What is the meaning of the phrase "perfectly preserved" in paragraph 1 of "Excerpt from Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time"? Use two details from the article to support your response.

What is a main idea of the article "Excerpt from Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time"? Use two details from the article to support your response.
In “Excerpt from Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time!” and “Excerpt from Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: My Adventures on Ampato,” what challenges did the discoverers face? How did these challenges affect their decisions about what to do with the mummies? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- describe the challenges the discoverers faced
- explain how the challenges affected their decisions about what to do with the mummies
- use details from both articles to support your response
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 50 and 51.

In September of 1995, Dr. Johan Reinhard and his climbing partner, Miguel Zarate, climbed a peak of the volcano Nevado Ampato. While climbing, they found pieces of pottery, wood, grass, and other materials that told them that over 500 years earlier the Incas had been on this part of the mountain.

Excerpt from Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: My Adventures on Ampato
by Johan Reinhard

1 I stopped to take notes while Miguel continued along the ridge. He whistled, and I looked up to see him with his ice ax raised.

2 When I reached him, he pointed without saying a word: Even from 40 feet away, it was possible to see reddish feathers sticking out near the top of the ridge. We had both seen feathers like this on Inca statues at other sites, and so we knew instantly they would most likely be from a feathered headdress.

3 Although the feathers were only about 10 feet down from the top, the slope was steep and slippery—a mix of gravel and sand over ice. A slip would have meant certain death. Miguel weighed far less than I did, so I tied a long sling onto him and held him as he climbed down to uncover a statue made of a rare seashell, with a reddish feathered headdress. Nearby, also covered with gravel, were two more statues, one gold and one silver.

4 Their textiles were so well preserved, they looked new.

5 The feathers that had been exposed were still in good condition. This meant that the gravel in which the statues had been buried had fallen away only days before. Indeed, the statues could have fallen farther down the slope at any moment.

6 Back on the summit ridge, we saw stones that had formed a corner of a building. Most of the structure had fallen down one of two naturally formed gullies that dropped 200 feet to the inside of the crater. From the ridge we could not see where these led. So I wrapped two stones in yellow plastic that I had carried in case we needed to mark our way. I threw a stone down each of the gullies, thinking “It’ll be a miracle if we ever see them again.”

7 We then climbed down off the ridge and scrambled our way around beneath it. We soon spotted yellow plastic below us where the rocky slope met the ice pinnacles where we had been climbing to the summit only a few hours before.

GO ON
A little farther we saw what looked to us like a mummy bundle lying on the ice.

It seemed so unlikely to find a mummy out in the open, we literally couldn't believe our eyes. Miguel said, "Maybe it's a climber's backpack."

Only half joking, I replied, "Maybe it's a climber."

As we drew closer, I knew from the stripes on the cloth that it was probably a mummy bundle. This would mean only one thing: The Incas had performed a human sacrifice on the ridge top. The bundle containing the victim had been buried in the structure that had collapsed when part of the summit ridge crashed into the crater.

I knew that even a partially frozen body would be invaluable for science. A frozen body is like a time capsule, which allows scientists to look back into the past and find out things difficult to know otherwise—such as what foods were eaten, what diseases and bacteria existed, who was related to the mummy, where it came from, and much more.

I grew more excited as I remembered that only three frozen mummies had been recovered in all of South America.

Descending toward it, we found fragments of a torn textile. A seashell, two cloth bags containing food offerings (maize kernels and a maize cob), llama bones, and pieces of Inca pottery were strewn about on the slope above the bundle.

After I photographed these items, Miguel used his ice ax to cut loose the bundle from the ice.

He turned it on its side for a better grip. Both of us were momentarily stunned as the body turned.

We looked straight into the face of a young girl.

She was the first frozen female mummy found in South America!

Her dried-out features made me fear that we had arrived too late. However, the bundle weighed about 90 pounds, which meant the body was still frozen. A dried-out mummy would have weighed much less.

I wondered what to do next. If we left the mummy behind in the open, the sun and volcanic ash would cause further damage. Climbers might find her and take her and the other artifacts as souvenirs or to sell. The ground was frozen rock hard, and it was impossible to bury the mummy. A heavy snowfall could cover the summit and make recovery impossible....

I decided that we should try to carry the mummy and the statues down the mountain.

1 invaluable: extremely valuable
According to "Excerpt from Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: My Adventures on Ampato," why is the discovery of the mummy significant? Use two details from the article to support your response.

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Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for question 51 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 13 and 14.
In "Excerpt from Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time!" and "Excerpt from Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: My Adventures on Ampato," what challenges did the discoverers face? How did these challenges affect their decisions about what to do with the mummies? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- describe the challenges the discoverers faced
- explain how the challenges affected their decisions about what to do with the mummies
- use details from both articles to support your response
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 50 and 51.

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Excerpt from Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: My Adventures on Ampato
by Johan Reinhard

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4 Their textiles were so well preserved, they looked new.

5 The feathers that had been exposed were still in good condition. This meant that the gravel in which the statues had been buried had fallen away only days before. Indeed, the statues could have fallen farther down the slope at any moment.

6 Back on the summit ridge, we saw stones that had formed a corner of a building. Most of the structure had fallen down one of two naturally formed gullies that dropped 200 feet to the inside of the crater. From the ridge we could not see where these led. So I wrapped two stones in yellow plastic that I had carried in case we needed to mark our way. I threw a stone down each of the gullies, thinking “It’ll be a miracle if we ever see them again.”

7 We then climbed down off the ridge and scrambled our way around beneath it. We soon spotted yellow plastic below us where the rocky slope met the ice pinnacles where we had been climbing to the summit only a few hours before.
A little farther we saw what looked to us like a mummy bundle lying on the ice.

It seemed so unlikely to find a mummy out in the open, we literally couldn't believe our eyes. Miguel said, "Maybe it's a climber's backpack."

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As we drew closer, I knew from the stripes on the cloth that it was probably a mummy bundle. This would mean only one thing: The Incas had performed a human sacrifice on the ridge top. The bundle containing the victim had been buried in the structure that had collapsed when part of the summit ridge crashed into the crater.

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Descending toward it, we found fragments of a torn textile. A seashell, two cloth bags containing food offerings (maize kernels and a maize cob), llama bones, and pieces of Inca pottery were strewn about on the slope above the bundle.

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I wondered what to do next. If we left the mummy behind in the open, the sun and volcanic ash would cause further damage. Climbers might find her and take her and the other artifacts as souvenirs or to sell. The ground was frozen rock hard, and it was impossible to bury the mummy. A heavy snowfall could cover the summit and make recovery impossible....

Thoughts rushed through my mind. It could take weeks, if not months, to get a government permit that would allow me to return and recover the mummy. Obtaining the funding to organize a scientific expedition could take even longer.

I decided that we should try to carry the mummy and the statues down the mountain.

\[1\text{ invaluable: extremely valuable}\]
According to "Excerpt from Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: My Adventures on Amparo," why is the discovery of the mummy significant? Use two details from the article to support your response.
Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for question 51 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 13 and 14.
In “Excerpt from Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time!” and “Excerpt from Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: My Adventures on Ampato,” what challenges did the discoverers face? How did these challenges affect their decisions about what to do with the mummies? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- describe the challenges the discoverers faced
- explain how the challenges affected their decisions about what to do with the mummies
- use details from both articles to support your response
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 37 and 38.

Excerpt from Double Dutch: A Celebration of Jump Rope, Rhyme, and Sisterhood
by Veronica Chambers

1 Tahira Reid was an eight-year-old girl living in the Bronx, a borough of New York City, when she came up with her first invention. There was a poster contest for kids in the third grade, and the theme was: "What would you like to see in the future?" It was the year the Space Shuttle Challenger was launched, and almost everyone drew a picture of astronauts, rockets, or people who lived on the moon. But Tahira thought an invention should be practical, as well as imaginative. Although she was just a little girl, she had already grasped the credo of history's finest inventors.

2 As a third grader, Tahira's biggest problem was that she didn't have anyone to turn double Dutch for her when she came home from school. Before, in between, and after classes, she could jump whenever she wanted, surrounded by girls who also loved to turn and jump. In her neighborhood, however, there weren't any kids her age, and Tahira couldn't jump double Dutch alone. She came up with the idea for a machine that would turn the ropes for you.

GO ON
You just push a button, and voila! Two ropes would spin like eggbeaters before you. Tahira’s poster won first place in the contest. She was too little to figure out how to make the machine, though, and just had to jump when she was at school.

Ten years later, Tahira was a student at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, studying mechanical engineering. In one of her first design courses, she was again presented with an inventing problem. Her professor asked her to draw up plans for a machine that challenged the limits of sports. At first, Tahira was stumped. She kept thinking about traditional games such as football and basketball, and she came up with nothing at all. Then she remembered her third-grade poster project. What she knew about football she could squeeze on the head of a pin, but what she knew about double Dutch could fill an entire book.

With a team of fellow students, Tahira invented the automatic double-Dutch machine—a real-life embodiment of her third-grade dream. With this device, ropes are connected to two wheels on opposing metal posts. After an engine is turned on, the ropes spin into action. Although it took more than a year to get the machine to actually work, Tahira got an A in the course. Even better, her device has been exhibited at museums such as the Smithsonian Institution and featured in newspapers and on television shows across the country. She even holds a patent for her invention. If you go to the U.S. Patent Office in Washington, D.C., you can find her name in the registry: Tahira Reid, inventor of the automatic double-Dutch device. To this day, the thought makes her dreamy. “Everyone paid attention,” she says. “I remember thinking, This is a historic moment—no one’s ever jumped double Dutch without turners before.”

Even now that she’s grown up, Tahira still loves to stop and watch when girls in her old neighborhood are playing double Dutch. “It’s like a sorority,” she says. “You are sisters in this love of double Dutch. When you get together, there are no pretenses or barriers. You all share these happy memories of being girls in the rope.”
In paragraph 3 of "Excerpt from Double Dutch: A Celebration of Jump Rope, Rhyme, and Sisterhood," what does "At first, Tahira was stumped" mean? Use two details from the article to support your response.

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In "Excerpt from Double Dutch: A Celebration of Jump Rope, Rhyme, and Sisterhood," what did Tahira think about the sport of double Dutch as an adult? Use two details from the article to support your response.

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GO ON
Both “Excerpt from Double Dutch: A Celebration of Jump Rope, Rhyme, and Sisterhood” and “Excerpt from It’s Our World, Too!” are about a young person’s solution to a problem. Describe a problem each one faces. How are the ways they solve their problems similar and different? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- describe a problem each young person faces
- explain the similarities and differences of their solutions to the problems
- use details from both articles to support your response
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 39 and 40.

Excerpt from It's Our World, Too!
by Phillip Hoose

1  Something about the battered old bicycle at the garage sale caught ten-year-old Justin Lebo's eye. What a wreck! It was like looking at a few big bones in the dust and trying to figure out what kind of dinosaur they had once belonged to.

2  It was a BMX bike with a twenty-inch frame. Its original color was buried beneath five or six coats of gunky paint. Now it showed up as sort of a rusted red. Everything—the grips, the pedals, the brakes, the seat, the spokes—were bent or broken, twisted and rusted. Justin stood back as if he were inspecting a painting for sale at an auction. Then he made his final judgment: perfect.

3  Justin talked the owner down to $6.50 and asked his mother, Diane, to help him load the bike into the back of their car.

4  When he got it home, he wheeled the junker into the garage and showed it proudly to his father. “Will you help me fix it up?” he asked. Justin's hobby was bike racing, a passion the two of them shared. Their garage barely had room for the car anymore. It was more like a bike shop. Tires and frames hung from hooks on the ceiling, and bike wrenches dangled from the walls.

5  After every race, Justin and his father would adjust the brakes and realign the wheels of his two racing bikes. This was a lot of work, since Justin raced flat out, challenging every gear and part to perform to its fullest. He had learned to handle almost every repair his father could and maybe even a few things he couldn't. When Justin got really stuck, he went to see Mel, the owner of the best bike shop in town. Mel let him hang out and watch, and he even grunted a few syllables of advice from between the spokes of a wheel now and then.

6  Now Justin and his father cleared out a work space in the garage and put the old junker up on a rack. They poured alcohol on the frame and rubbed until the old paint began to yield, layer by layer. They replaced the broken pedal, tightened down a new seat, and restored the grips. In about a week, it looked brand new.
Justin wheeled it out of the garage, leapt aboard, and started off around the block. He stood up and mashed down on the pedals, straining for speed. It was a good, steady ride, but not much of a thrill compared to his racers.

Soon he forgot about the bike. But the very next week, he bought another junker at a yard sale and fixed it up, too. After a while it bothered him that he wasn’t really using either bike. Then he realized that what he loved about the old bikes wasn’t riding them: it was the challenge of making something new and useful out of something old and broken.

Justin wondered what he should do with them. They were just taking up space in the garage. He remembered that when he was younger, he used to live near a large brick building called the Kilbarchan Home for Boys. It was a place for boys whose parents couldn’t care for them for one reason or another.

He found “Kilbarchan” in the phone book and called the director, who said the boys would be thrilled to get two bicycles. The next day when Justin and his mother unloaded the bikes at the home, two boys raced out to greet them. They leapt aboard the bikes and started tooling around the semicircular driveway, doing wheelies and pirouettes, laughing and shouting.

The Lebos watched them for a while, then started to climb into their car to go home. The boys cried after them, “Wait a minute! You forgot your bikes!” Justin explained that the bikes were for them to keep. “They were so happy,” Justin remembers. “It was like they couldn’t believe it. It made me feel good just to see them happy.”

On the way home, Justin was silent. His mother assumed he was lost in a feeling of satisfaction. But he was thinking about what would happen once those bikes got wheeled inside and everyone saw them. How would all those kids decide who got the bikes? Two bikes could cause more trouble than they would solve. Actually, they hadn’t been that hard to build. It was fun. Maybe he could do more...

“Mom,” Justin said as they turned onto their street, “I’ve got an idea. I’m going to make a bike for every boy at Kilbarchan for Christmas.” Diane Lebo looked at Justin out of the corner of her eye. She had rarely seen him so determined.
When they got home, Justin called Kilbarchan to find out how many boys lived there. There were twenty-one. It was already June. He had six months to make nineteen bikes. That was almost a bike a week. Justin called the home back to tell them of his plan. "I could tell they didn't think I could do it," Justin remembers. "I knew I could."
In paragraph 2 of "Excerpt from It's Our World, Too!" what made the bike seem "perfect" to Justin? Use two details from the article to support your response.

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Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for question 40 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 15 and 16.
Both "Excerpt from Double Dutch: A Celebration of Jump Rope, Rhyme, and Sisterhood" and "Excerpt from It's Our World, Too!" are about a young person's solution to a problem. Describe a problem each one faces. How are the ways they solve their problems similar and different? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- describe a problem each young person faces
- explain the similarities and differences of their solutions to the problems
- use details from both articles to support your response
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 41 and 42.

Excerpt from Printer's Ink

by Jerry Miller

1 When Benjamin Franklin was 12, he went to work in his brother James's print shop. Ben had trouble getting along with his brother, but he loved being a printer. Who wouldn't have loved it? Print shops were great places to be, whether you were interested in politics, science, books—or the local gossip.

2 In Ben Franklin's day, printers did more than just run the printing presses. Many printers published newspapers. When Ben was a man, he opened his own print shop in Philadelphia. Soon, he started publishing a weekly newspaper called The Pennsylvania Gazette. Later, he began a second newspaper, in German, to serve Pennsylvania's many German settlers. He published one of America's first magazines, too.

3 Ben Franklin also published books: novels, schoolbooks, medical books for doctors, and more. He printed books about new scientific discoveries. And he became friends with many of the people who wrote those books.

4 One of Ben Franklin's most famous works—and his first big success—was Poor Richard's Almanack. Ben wasn't the only printer to publish an almanac. Everyone used almanacs—helpful books that contain all sorts of useful information like calendars, weather forecasts, moon phases, and planting advice. And everyone bought a new almanac each year. What was different about Franklin's almanac were his wise and funny sayings and useful, everyday advice. Ben's sayings became popular. Today, people still repeat many of them. "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise" is one of his sayings.
Franklin never quit printing. When he was 42, he retired from business. But printing was still his hobby. During the Revolutionary War, Franklin moved to France. In Paris, he kept a small printing press. When he had time, he printed essays for his friends to read.

Many people believe that Ben Franklin's autobiography, the story of his own life, was the first great book ever written by an American. Franklin wrote it when he was an old man, finishing it at the age of 82. He continued writing even on his deathbed. His last writings were essays against slavery.

Benjamin Franklin became famous as a scientist, inventor, writer, and statesman. But when he wrote his will, he began with the words: "I, Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia, printer..."
In "Excerpt from Printer's Ink," how are the main ideas organized in the article? Use two details from the article to support your response.
Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for question 42 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 15 and 16.
In “Excerpt from Printer’s Ink” and “Excerpt from Young Ben Franklin,” what quality about Ben Franklin is emphasized in both articles? How does each author support this quality about Ben Franklin? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a quality about Ben Franklin that is emphasized in both articles
- explain how each author supports this quality about Ben Franklin
- use details from both articles to support your response
Directions
Read this article. Then answer question 45.

Planes on the Brain
by Elisabeth Deffner

1 Kimberly Anyadike and her older sister, Kelly, have taken sibling rivalry to new heights. Sky-high, in fact.

2 On her 16th birthday, Kelly set a world record. She became the youngest African American female to fly four different fixed-wing aircraft in one day. Naturally, that inspired Kimberly to brainstorm ways to top her sister’s achievement.

3 At age 15, Kimberly became the youngest African American female to pilot a plane from coast to coast. “It was something that had never been done before by someone as young as me,” she explains.

4 Don’t let their friendly rivalry fool you. The Anyadike (pronounced on-yah-DEE-kay) sisters learned to fly together at Tomorrow’s Aeronautical Museum (TAM) in Compton, California. They took lessons in the same plane at the same time.

5 Their flight achievements earned them each a place in the record books—but at TAM, setting records is nothing new. In fact, the sisters first heard about TAM when they read about another record-breaker who’d learned to fly there. At age 14, Jonathan Strickland became the youngest African American male to pilot a plane and a helicopter on the same day.

6 Jonathan’s story inspired Kimberly to make one of her biggest dreams come true. She’d always wanted to fly. Ever since she learned to write, she’s included “jet pack” on her Christmas list! So she asked her mom if they could check out TAM, where Jonathan had gotten his aviation start. She and her sister took a demo flight—and the rest is history. (Literally!)

7 “We’ve been hooked on flying ever since,” says Kimberly, now 17, with a giggle. “We got bit by the flight bug!”

8 Movie stunt pilot Robin Petgrave founded TAM in 1998. Kids in the program learn more than just how to fly. They also learn how to set goals and make a plan to achieve them. For example, flight lessons cost money. Future pilots earn “museum dollars” by doing tasks around the museum, going through the flight simulator program, and doing community service. Kids even earn museum dollars when they get tutoring help with their schoolwork! After they’ve earned enough, they can use those dollars to pay for a flight lesson.

9 While they’re learning to fly, they’re also learning about aviation history.

10 They learn about the Tuskegee Airmen, the first African American military airmen in the United States. Kids at TAM have even been able to meet some of them.

GO ON
These pilots trained and fought during World War II, but the dangers of wartime weren't the only challenges they faced. They also encountered racism. In fact, the Army Air Corps called the African American pilot training program "the Tuskegee Experiment" because they weren't sure the trainees could be successful pilots.

But "they were amazing," says Kimberly. "They beat all odds."

That's why she dedicated her record-breaking flight to the Tuskegee Airmen: "to show them their legacy still lives on," she explains.

And they wanted to show her that they supported her as she tried to set an aviation record. Each time Kimberly landed on her flight from California to Virginia, Tuskegee Airmen met her plane.

The Anyadike sisters didn't set their aviation records at the same time, but two other TAM alumni did. Jimmy Haywood, then 12, and Kenny Roy, then 14, flew together to Canada. There, Roy became the youngest African American in the United States to earn his solo pilot's license. Haywood piloted the plane that flew Roy to Canada and back, making him the youngest African American to pilot a plane on a round-trip international flight.

"It challenges you, being here [at TAM]," says Roy. Kids at TAM know that if they want to fly, they can—they just have to work for it. They can earn the museum dollars to pay for lessons. They can come up with a plan and break an aviation record. Once they do that, they know they can do anything if they set their minds to it.

For instance, Kimberly Anyadike plans to become a heart surgeon. Kenny Roy, now 21, is a college student in the Air Force Reserve. He plans to become an Air Force officer and, later, a commercial pilot. (And maybe his little brother, Jeremiah Esters, 7, will follow in his footsteps. He's studying aviation at TAM now.)

Flying has changed these kids' lives—and setting records was just the icing on the cake.

That's exactly how it ought to be, says Petgrave. "We're not really all about the records," he explains. "These kids have been exposed to aviation at such a young age, they look at things differently."

And from their point of view, the sky is no longer the limit.
In paragraph 16, Kenny Roy says, "It challenges you, being here [at TAM]." What are some of the ways kids are challenged in the TAM program? What effects do these challenges have on the kids? Use details from the article to support your response.

In your response, be sure to
- identify ways that kids are challenged in the TAM program
- explain the effects of these challenges on the kids
- use details from the article to support your response
Strike Three! YOU’RE OUT!

by Jo Dewitt

Jackie Mitchell was born in 1914, at a time when women were not accepted in professional baseball. Jackie dreamed of becoming a great pitcher. She had been taught to pitch by baseball star Dazzy Vance when she was a young girl and trained with future major league players in Atlanta.

About that time in history, one of the great hitters of baseball, Babe Ruth, made a statement. “I don’t know what’s going to happen if they begin to let women in baseball. Of course, they will never make good. Why? Because they are too delicate.”

Jackie didn’t buy that. Soon after, Jackie signed with the Chattanooga Lookouts, a minor league baseball team. Manager Bert Niehoff spoke to the press and promised to help Jackie become a pitcher in the major leagues. Jackie was thinking about the immediate. The New York Yankees were coming to town, and the Lookouts were scheduled to play them in a pre-season exhibition game. Maybe she would get a chance to pitch against the greatest home-run hitter in the world, Babe Ruth.

The day of the game arrived, and it was pouring rain. The game was cancelled. The next day, Thursday, April 2, 1931, the rain stopped, and the game was about to start. Jackie was not sure how she should pitch to the Yankees, but she remembered what her father had told her. He said, “Go out there and pitch just like you pitch to anyone else.”

Jackie had an uncanny ability to guess the weakness of a batter. She could put both speed and curve on the ball. She had one pitch that no one could hit—a wicked, dropping curve ball. As Babe Ruth stepped to the plate for batting practice Jackie watched him closely, deciding how she would pitch to him.

Manager Niehoff put Clyde Barfoot in as the starting pitcher. After the first two Yankee batters got base hits and scored a run, Niehoff motioned for Jackie to come onto the field!
She waved Babe Ruth to the mound. She wound up and pitched. The ball was high. "Ball one," yelled the umpire. Jackie's next pitch was a curve ball, which curved and dropped when it reached the plate. Babe swung. "STRIKE ONE!" the umpire yelled. Jackie decided to give him a fastball, shoulder high. Jackie pitched, Babe swung. "STRIKE TWO!"

Jackie was feeling more confident. The next pitch was high, and Babe stopped his swing. But the ball dropped, going right over the plate. "STRIKE THREE! YOU'RE OUT!" yelled the umpire. Jackie had struck out the mighty Babe Ruth!

Next at the plate was Lou Gehrig, who was also a left-handed batter and a home-run hitter. Jackie decided on a pitch that most batters had trouble with—inside and just above his waist. She pitched, and Gehrig swung. Whoosh! Three times—Whoosh! She had struck out the Yankees' two best hitters! The crowd went wild.

A few days after this exhibition game, Baseball Commissioner Kenesaw Mountain Landis voided Jackie Mitchell's contract, claiming that baseball was "too strenuous" for a woman.

Although Jackie Mitchell did not have the same opportunities as men had in the game of baseball, Jackie Mitchell will always be remembered for her spirit and her determination as well as her talent. She is still remembered as "the girl who struck out Babe Ruth."
Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for question 34 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 15 and 16.
Jackie Mitchell played baseball during the 1930s. How did some people feel about women playing baseball during that time? How did Jackie Mitchell’s actions show how she felt about it? Use details from the passage to support your response.

In your response, be sure to:

- explain how some people felt about women playing baseball during the 1930s
- explain how Jackie Mitchell’s actions showed how she felt about women playing baseball
- use details from the passage to support your response
It's winter in Alaska—midnight—nine degrees above zero. And yet, there are people—grown-ups bundled against the cold; children are clothed in scarves, gloves, and fur-lined boots, outside, looking at the sky. Why? It is because the sky is putting on a show for them, a show we call the northern lights. Scientists call it the aurora borealis.

Sometimes the northern lights are soft clouds of white. Sometimes they dance across the sky in streaks of blue and green, yellow and red. What causes the northern lights? Why can they be seen only at night? And why do they change from night to night?

Scientists give us some answers. The Earth is a huge magnet, with two poles, the North Pole and the South Pole. The sun has storms that send out streams of tiny particles called electrons. Scientists call this stream the solar wind. It races off into space and is pulled toward our two poles by their magnetic force.

Reaching the Earth's atmosphere, the wind hits a stone wall, the magnetic field that surrounds the Earth, called the magnetosphere. Energy from the solar wind creates an electric charge. That is what makes the aurora borealis, or northern lights, near the North Pole; the aurora australis, or southern lights, are near the South Pole.

What makes the different colors? There is an easy answer for scientists. We've seen different-colored, neon signs. Imagine such huge lights hanging high in space—100 miles high. When electricity heats up gases, they turn colors. The electric charge in the magnetosphere goes through nitrogen in the air, and it glows with a blue light. Oxygen turns green or sometimes red. The stronger the solar wind, the stronger the electric charge and the more colorful the aurora are.

Because the southern aurora can be seen only in or near Antarctica, most people see the northern lights. To see them best, people look for them in
September or March. At that time, there are 12 hours of darkness, and the solar winds are usually stronger.

But why is this only at night? The auroras shine all day and all night, just as stars do. During daylight, the sun outshines them. The best time to see the northern lights is between midnight and 2:00 a.m. Is it worth staying up that late? You bet, especially when the solar wind is so strong that the lights are as colorful as they can be.

The northern lights take on different shapes: shimmering curtains, colored clouds twisting and turning, and arcs of colors covering the entire sky. They appear close to the North Pole. If you do not live in places like Alaska, Norway, or Canada, you probably won’t see them. But you can see pictures of them on an aurora website.

Our world is filled with beautiful sights. A midnight sky filled with color in a cold, cold climate is one of the most beautiful.
Why does the author ask questions throughout "The Aurora Borealis"? Use two details from the article to support your response.

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What is a main idea of "The Aurora Borealis"? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

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Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 43 and 44.

The Fejee Mermaid
by Elaine Pascoe

1 In the summer of 1842, New York City newspapers received a series of curious reports from the South. Writers from several cities wrote that Dr. J. Griffin, a British naturalist, had in his possession something truly amazing—an actual mermaid “taken among the Fejee Islands” in the Pacific Ocean. He was bringing the preserved specimen to New York on his way home to London from China, where he had bought it for the Lyceum of Natural History.

2 The newspapers jumped on the story, and curiosity began to build. Could the naturalist really have found a mermaid? The city would soon find out. Ads and flyers appeared, announcing an exhibition. For “one week only,” the public would have a chance to see a creature that had been known only through stories.

3 The mermaid was the talk of New York. People lined up to see it and to hear the scholarly Dr. Griffin speak about it. Most people had a bit of a shock when they actually laid eyes on the specimen, though. The Fejee Mermaid was not like the mermaids of fairy tales. Nor was it anything like the beautiful creatures pictured in the flyers advertising the exhibit. It was a small, dried, ugly thing—“the most odd of all oddities earth or the sea had ever produced,” one newspaper wrote. Its upper body looked more like that of a monkey than a maiden.

4 Some people said it was a monkey’s torso, joined to a fish’s tail. But other people were sure it was real. There was no telltale seam between the body parts. And on display alongside the mermaid were specimens of other unlikely animals. There was a flying fish, for example, and a platypus—a mammal with a duck’s bill and poisonous spurs on its rear legs. Naturalists had once thought the platypus was a hoax, but it turned out to be real. Perhaps the mermaid and the platypus were both what the announcements for the exhibit claimed: “links in the great chain which connects the whole animal kingdom.” After the weeklong exhibition, the Fejee Mermaid moved to the American Museum on Broadway. It drew crowds there for a month and went on tour to other cities. Everywhere the mermaid went, people paid to see it—whether they believed it was real or not. That was just what P. T. Barnum, the proprietor of the American Museum, had planned.

“People Love to Be Humbugged”

5 Phineas T. Barnum was probably the greatest showman in American history. In 1842 he had just bought the American Museum, which housed a dusty collection of oddities. He was determined to make it New York’s leading attraction. And when he saw the Fejee Mermaid, he knew he had found a way to bring people through the museum’s door.
6 The "mermaid" was just what it looked like—a dried monkey's body stitched to a dried fish's tail. Fake mermaids like this were nothing new. Sailors had been bringing similar curiosities back to America and Europe for many years. This one had been around since 1817, when a sea captain bought it in the Pacific. Believing that it was real, the captain paid a small fortune for it. He never made money from his investment. After he died, his family sold the mermaid to Moses Kimball, a Boston showman. Kimball leased it to Barnum for $12.50 a week.

7 How was Barnum able to turn this crude fake into an overnight sensation? With shameless hype. Barnum was a master at promotion. He didn't care whether people believed the mermaid was real or not. He knew that if he could create enough buzz about it, people would pay to see it.

8 The reports that appeared in New York newspapers were actually written by Barnum. He sent them to friends in Southern towns. The friends then mailed them to the New York papers over a period of weeks, in time with Dr. Griffin's supposed journey toward the city.

9 Griffin was no more real than the mermaid. The scholarly naturalist was actually Levi Lyman, a friend of Barnum's. He first took on the role in Philadelphia, where he allowed a small group of newspaper editors to have a peek at the mermaid. The stories they wrote helped build "mermaid fever" in New York. So did the flyers showing beautiful mermaids, which Barnum had printed.

10 Trumped-up science was part of the promotion, too. The first half of the 1800s saw a flowering of new theories and research in natural history. Barnum made his hoax more believable by having a "scientist" present it and by including actual animals such as the platypus in the exhibit. Of course, real scientists were quick to spot the fake. But that didn't stop Barnum. New ads urged people to see the mermaid and draw their own conclusions. "Who is to decide when doctors disagree?" the ads declared.

11 The Fejee Mermaid helped make Barnum's museum a huge success. It was just one of countless curiosities that filled the museum's five floors. Like the mermaid, many of the exhibits were fake. No one seemed to mind. As Barnum said, "People love to be humbugged."
Why did one newspaper say the mermaid was “the most odd of all oddities earth or the sea had ever produced” (paragraph 3)? Use two details from the article to support your response.
What main idea of "The Fejee Mermaid" is supported by paragraphs 8 through 10? Use two details from the article to support your response.
Directions
Read this passage. Then answer questions 37 and 38.

Balancing Rocks
by Stacy A. Nyikos

Have you ever tried standing on your head? Chances are, the first time you did, you fell down. It may even have taken a while to master this upside-down balancing act. Artist Sepp Bögle has a balancing act of a different nature. He balances rocks. He wasn't always a rock balancer. "I was a cook, and then a salesman, before I began to balance rocks," he says.

Years ago, Bögle and his daughter moved to a small town on the shores of Lake Constance in Germany. Bögle was sitting on a bench near the water one day, watching someone stack rocks on their flat sides. He decided to try it. It was easy—too easy. "I thought, What if I turn them on their pointy ends? Will they stand?" he says.

Incredibly, they did. "I've been doing it ever since," says Bögle.

The Last Tree

Bögle still lives and works in the small German town of Radolfzell where he and his daughter moved all those years ago. His studio is under the very last tree along a boardwalk called the Mole.
Tourists travel from all over Germany and other European countries to see the artist at work. Some come to figure out his trick. Bögle smiles at the doubters. "There is no trick, not like what they mean. I don't use glue or hidden supports. I listen to the rocks."

That may sound strange, but the truth is that humans do this kind of "listening" all the time. When a baby tries to sit up for the first time, it's a balancing act. The brain has to combine information from the eyes, the muscles, and the balancing system of the inner ear to figure out how to keep the body upright. Balancing takes a lot of practice. Babies often spend at least six months practicing before they can sit up without falling over.

A similar but simpler feat is balancing a ruler on one finger. If either side is too long, the ruler will fall to the ground. The key is finding the point where the weight of each side of the ruler is equal. This spot is called the center of gravity. When you find it, the ruler rests on your finger in perfect balance.

A Balancing Act

Balancing rocks, as Bögle does, is harder. But why? A ruler offers clues. The center of gravity should be halfway along the length of the ruler—near the 6-inch mark on a 12-inch ruler.

In the rocks that Bögle balances, the center of gravity is much harder to find. These rocks can be shaped like lopsided eggs or pears and often have funny knobs, big bulges, or craggy points. The center of gravity is somewhere inside the rock. No marks show where to find it. And if the point on the end of the rock is small, it's hard to center the weight of the rock.

In addition, since Bögle balances many rocks on top of one another, the combined weight of the rocks has to be evenly balanced over the point the bottom rock stands on. It's like acrobats balancing one on top of the other. If their combined weight isn't perfectly balanced over the person standing on the ground, they'll topple over.

To balance the rocks, Bögle tries again and again. He uses spüren ("sense" or "feel" in German). He says he "listens" to the rocks and lets the rocks "tell" him how to balance them. He says for him, it's a kind of meditation.

For the visitors who journey to the last tree on the Mole, the balanced rocks are a wondrous sight to see.
37. Why does the author compare what Bögle does to someone standing on their head? Use two details from the passage to support your response.

38. How does the picture add to the reader's understanding of "Balancing Rocks"? Use two details from the passage to support your response.
Read this article. Then answer questions 40 and 41.

Building the Longest, Tallest, Fastest Scream Machines

by Shelly Akins

1  YOUR HEART RACES. You stood in line for hours to ride the new
monster coaster. Now, you’re being strapped in and warned to keep your
hands and arms inside the car at all times. A thought crosses your mind as
you are launched out of the station: How in the world do they build these
monster coasters?

The Design

2  “Amusement parks don’t make their own rides. They go to
manufacturers,” says Monte Jasper. He is in charge of coasters at Cedar Point
Amusement Park in Ohio. It’s his job to maintain the coasters they have and
to work on new ones.

3  Sometimes an idea for a new coaster begins at the amusement park.
Someone takes the idea to different building companies and asks them to
come up with a design for the coaster. Then the park picks the design that
works best for them. Other times, new coasters begin when a company has a
design. Then that company goes to different parks and tries to sell their
design. Either way, the builders and the park work together before
construction begins.

4  Roller coaster designs are based on several things: How high will the
coaster be? What will the surroundings look like? How much does the park
want to spend? Some coasters are designed to break records—tallest, steepest,
fastest, longest.

5  Until recently, coasters could not be over 250 feet high. The chains that
pull the cars on the coaster to the top of the first big hill weren’t strong
enough to lift the coaster higher than 250 feet.
But now coasters are made with cables, not chains. This new technology means that the sky's the limit for roller coaster height. As of September 2008, the highest roller coaster in the world is Kingda Ka at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson, New Jersey. It juts an amazing 456 feet into the sky!

"The cable lift works like an elevator," explains Jasper. "It is also steeper, smoother, and faster than a traditional chain lift."

Here's how it works: The coaster cars hook onto a constantly moving cable. The cable pulls the coaster to the top of the structure at a speed of about 22 feet per second. That's about 15 miles per hour...downtown. At the top, the hooks let go of the car, and it speeds down the other side at 100 miles per hour. Yikes!

Roller coaster cars don't have engines. Once they head downhill, the cars are on their own. Gravity takes over. The higher the hill, the more time gravity can pull on the car and the faster it goes. Think of it this way: If you ride a bike or a sled down from the top of a really big hill, you go faster and farther than if you ride down a little hill. Coasters work the same way.

**Putting It Together:**

"[Roller coaster] parts are shipped in 40-foot sections because that is the largest piece that will fit onto a truck," says Jasper. The park then puts the pieces together when they arrive. A big, new coaster costs about $25 million.

Once the coaster is completed, the park maintenance crew goes over the whole thing closely to make sure everything is working the way it is supposed to before the public is allowed to ride.

**Is It Safe?**

Very few people are hurt on roller coasters each year in the United States. In fact, it's much more dangerous to ride in a car to the amusement park than it is to go screaming down that coaster!

Computers control all parts of the coaster. These computers let the ride operators know of any problems with the cars or the tracks. Coasters make you feel like you are in danger but don't actually put you in danger.

**Coaster Wars**

Amusement parks are constantly battling to build higher, faster, longer, scarier coasters. Cedar Point is in the middle of such a war. They are
constantly looking for designs that are bigger and better than coasters that have already been built. "You could say that it's part of our identity," says Jasper.

Coaster wars mean bigger, better, more-thrilling coasters to ride. Who doesn't want that?
Why was switching from chains to cables in the building of roller coasters important? Use two details from the article to support your response.

Primary CCLS: RI.4.1:
Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Secondary CCLS: L.4.1 and L.4.2
Statewide Average Points Earned: 1.17 out of 2
See Short-Response (2-point) Holistic Rubric and the full-credit sample student response.
According to the article, why do some amusement parks continue to build new roller coasters? What factors do parks and builders consider when designing new roller coasters? Use details from the article to support your response.

In your response, be sure to
- explain why parks continue to build new roller coasters
- describe the factors that amusement parks and builders consider when designing roller coasters
- use details from the article to support your response
Primary CCLS: RI.4.2:
Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.


Statewide Average Points Earned: 1.80 out of 4

See Extended-Response (4-point) Holistic Rubric and the full-credit sample student response.
Directions
Read this passage. Then answer questions 32 and 33.

Excerpt from How To Convince Your Parents You Can . . . Care For A Kitten
by Stephanie Bearce

1. Would you like a furry pet that likes to jump, play, cuddle, and purr? If so, a kitten could be the perfect pet for you. Baby cats are called kittens, and they like to be with people. They enjoy playing games, chasing string, and batting balls with their paws. Kittens love sitting on a person's lap and being petted. They are small and like to live inside with people. Kittens make great pets.

2. Have your parents said that a pet would be too messy in the house? Kittens are neat and tidy animals. They do not often need a bath because they use their tongues and paws to clean their fur. Kittens are also tidy about their bathroom habits and quickly learn to use a litter box.

3. Do your parents say that a pet needs lots of room? Are they worried about exercising a pet? You can tell them that kittens do not need a lot of space. They are happy living in small apartments and are good pets for people who live in towns and cities. Kittens do not need to go to the park for exercise, and they do not need to be walked on a leash. They exercise by jumping and running around the house. Because they are so active, it is important to keep their play space clean and free from objects that could hurt them. Kittens must be supervised to ensure they don't tear up things they shouldn't—like furniture, carpets, or curtains.

4. Do your parents think it costs too much for a pet? You can tell them that kittens are not too expensive. You can adopt kittens from animal shelters, or you can look in the newspaper to find people who are giving away kittens for free. Kittens do not need lots of expensive food. Most kittens like to eat dry cat food. They only need about a cup of food a day. Kittens do need regular visits to the veterinarian. Every year your kitten will need shots to keep him or her healthy. This can cost over $100. Sometimes kittens can become ill, and they may need medicine from a veterinarian. This is another cost of having a kitten for a pet.
When kittens are happy they will purr. Purring is a deep rumbling sound in the kitten’s chest. It is fun to pet a kitten and make it purr.

Petting a kitten can also make you feel better when you have had a bad day. Doctors have found that when people sit quietly and pet a kitten, their hearts beat slower. That makes their blood pressure lower, and low blood pressure is a good thing. You can tell your family that having a kitten will be good for their health.

Kittens are fun to watch. They are great athletes. This is because they have a good sense of balance. If they jump or fall, they usually land on their feet. They have special muscles that help them twist their bodies in the air. Kittens have strong leg muscles. They learn to climb and jump when they are very young.

Kittens are smart and love to learn. Sometimes people think that you cannot teach a kitten tricks. That is because kittens are independent. They like to explore on their own and do what they want. But kittens can learn rules and how to obey. You can teach your kitten to come and sit, to lie down, and maybe even how to ring doorbells and flush toilets.

Today, kittens are some of the most popular pets in the world. You can find them in apartments in New York City. You can see them in Paris, France, or on farms in Missouri. Almost anywhere there are people, you will find kittens.
How are paragraphs 1 through 4 alike? Use two details from “Excerpt from How To Convince Your Parents You Can . . . Care For A Kitten” to support your response.

Why does the author include the cost of raising a kitten in the passage? Use two details from the passage to support your response.
New Life, New Pet!

November 4, 2008, was a night of big changes. Barack Obama had just been elected the first African-American president of the United States. He and his wife, Michelle Obama, and their young daughters, Malia and Sasha, were going to be the country’s next First Family. They would soon leave their home in Chicago and move into the White House in Washington, D.C. Sasha and Malia would start a new school. As the First Lady, their mom would become one of the busiest and most famous women in the world. Their dad was going to have the most important job in America.

In his victory speech, Barack Obama said, “Sasha and Malia, I love you both more than you can imagine. And you have earned the new puppy that’s coming with us to the White House.”

This was big news for Sasha and Malia. But over the years, First Families have had all kinds of pets: dogs, cats, mice, snakes, birds, elephants, sheep, horses, a hyena, a hippo, and even an alligator! Only three presidents in US history did not have a pet in the White House.

So why have pets been so popular with First Families? Maybe it is because pets can make a big house—like the White House—feel more like a cozy home. Pets can force a busy president to make time for fun. And pets can give friendship to someone doing a hard and sometimes lonely job.

A President’s Best Friend

Can you guess the most popular White House pet over the years? The dog, of course. In fact, every president for the last ninety years has had a dog. From terriers to retrievers, spaniels to collies, each pet has had a personality as unique as his or her president.

During his time in the White House, George W. Bush (president from 2001–2009) had three dogs. One was a Scottish terrier named Barney.

Barney’s biggest claim to fame was as the star of “Barney Cam.” For Christmas in 2002, Barney shuffled around the White House with a tiny camera attached to his collar. He filmed a “dog’s eye view” of the holiday decorations. This footage was added to the Bush family’s Christmas video and was put on the Internet. Millions of people watched and loved it!
After that, Barney Cam became a Christmas tradition in the Bush White House. Famous singers and athletes even appeared in some of Barney's videos.

In 2005, the Bushes got another Scottish terrier named Miss Beazley. She came to the White House as a ten-week-old puppy. Next to Barney, "Beezie" looked tiny. But a few loud barks at Barney told him she was no pushover.

Before either Barney or Miss Beazley arrived, there was Spot, an English springer spaniel. "Spotty" and Barney were good pals. The president sometimes took them on trips together in Marine One, the presidential helicopter. Spot usually got on without a fuss. But Barney? The president sometimes had to chase him around the lawn before he would go aboard.

Spot's mother, Millie, belonged to another First Family. Millie lived in the White House when George W. Bush's father was president. His name was almost the same: George H. W. Bush (1989-1993).

While Millie lived at the White House, she gave birth to Spot and her five brothers and sisters.

Besides being a mom, Millie was a best-selling author! *Millie's Book: As Dictated to Barbara Bush* was published in 1990. It sold more copies than a book the president wrote!

President Bill Clinton (1993-2001), First Lady Hillary Clinton, and their twelve-year-old daughter, Chelsea, came to the White House with only one pet—a cat named Socks.

Socks had joined the Clinton family about two years earlier. Chelsea was at her piano teacher's house for a lesson. Socks, then a stray kitten, was playing in the teacher's yard. When Chelsea held her hands out to the kitten, he jumped right into her arms! Even though Chelsea's parents were allergic to cats, they couldn't resist adding the kitten to their family.

As the First Pet, Socks became famous overnight. Letters to Socks poured in from his fans—especially kids. Some asked Socks to send them his "pawtograph."

Five years after moving into the White House, the Clinton family became dog owners. Buddy, a chocolate Labrador retriever, was just a puppy when he arrived at the White House.

Right from the start, he and the president were good friends. Buddy spent much of his time napping behind the president's desk in the Oval Office. At least once a day, Buddy dropped his ball at President Clinton's feet and started barking. He wouldn't stop until Clinton came outside to play fetch.
In "Excerpt from Presidential Pets," what is the most likely reason that Barack Obama decided to get a new puppy when he was elected president? Use two details from the article to support your response.

Primary CCLS: RI.5.1:
Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Secondary CCLS: L.5.1 and L.5.2
Statewide Average Points Earned: 1.45 out of 2
See Short-Response (2-point) Holistic Rubric and the full-credit sample student response.
According to "Excerpt from Presidential Pets," how have pets historically affected life at the White House? Use two details from the article to support your response.

Primary CCLS: RI.5.3:
Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

Secondary CCLS: L.5.1 and L.5.2
Statewide Average Points Earned: 1.30 out of 2
See Short-Response (2-point) Holistic Rubric and the full-credit sample student response.
Directions
Read this story. Then answer questions 25 through 27.

Emily lives in Washington, D.C., in 1908. This afternoon she has been invited by her friends to see her first motion picture. In 1908, motion pictures were silent, so piano music was played in the theater to help the audience understand what was happening on the screen.

Excerpt from *Wheels of Change*

by Darlene Beck Jacobson

1. We’re bundled under wool blankets to keep most of the chill off. With a jug of hot chocolate and a sack of Mrs. Cook’s sugar cookies, I hardly feel the cold.

2. Charlie does most of the talking, telling us about the things we’ll see. He’s been a couple times already, and since Rose and I are first timers, we nod our heads, nibble cookies, and listen. Charlie’s excitement captures us like lightning bugs until we’re glowing and buzzing with anticipation. Before I know it, we pull up in front of a store on Seventh Street. A huge sign in the window says: SEE THE WONDERS OF THE WORLD. HAVE SOME LAUGHS. ENJOY THE FINEST SONG AND DANCE ACTS AND MUCH MORE FOR ONLY 5 CENTS.

3. “Are we really going to see singing, dancing, and action all at once?” I ask. It’s hard to imagine so many exciting things at the same time.

4. “Just wait until you see!” Charlie crows.

5. Mr. Cook ties up the horse and helps us all out of the wagon. “Bring the hot chocolate and cookies,” he says.

6. “We can eat and drink while we watch the show,” Charlie explains.

7. To say it is unlike anything I’ve ever seen only tells part of the story.

8. We enter a room nearly the size of the carriage barn. There are some benches up front, but they’re taken. We sit in some straight-back chairs half-way down the room. No sooner do we sit than the lights dim, and a spotlight shines on the white wall in front of us. An enormous photograph fills up the light on the wall and starts to move.

GO ON
9 It moves faster.

10 When a train moves past open fields, mountains, and lakes, I gasp. I can almost feel the wind on my face as the train rushes by. There are comedy skits with famous folks from vaudeville telling jokes, slipping on banana skins, and singing funny songs. I watch dance pictures, and one about the American Revolution with people dressed in costumes.

vaudeville = a type of entertainment that was popular in the United States at the time of this story

11 I’m dizzy, wide-eyed and breathless, watching it all. When I think it can’t be any more exciting, a piano player begins music that starts out slow and easy. Once the action on the wall speeds up, the music does too, so I have the feeling I’m right in the middle of the fight between the cowboys and Indians. Then I’m chasing bank robbers down a city street. It’s as if it’s happening right now before us. Stories are told with signs spelling out what’s happening, and, through it all, the piano music fills the room.

12 The sights make me want to jump from my seat, but the piano music makes me want to dance, soar, and fly. It’s almost as good as being in the forge.

13 Almost—but not quite.

14 Still, I can’t take my eyes off the piano player. In the dark it’s hard to see what he looks like. His music makes the crowd laugh, cry, shout, and swoon, at just the right moments.

15 When it’s over and the lights come back on, the piano player faces the crowd and takes a bow.

16 My mouth falls open and I can’t stop staring at what I see.

17 A woman.

18 “Well, what do you think?” Charlie asks.

19 “I loved the song and dance parts,” Rose says, smiling.
“Did you see the woman playing the piano? I didn't know girls could have such a job.” I’m so excited I feel like it’s my birthday and Mama made my favorite applesauce spice cake.

“It was a lady?” Charlie scratches his head.

Rose, Mr. Cook, and I all laugh at his confused expression.

“How could you not know that?” I say.

Charlie shrugs. “I was so caught up in the action, I didn’t pay attention to anything else.”

“She made the action,” I say as we gather our coats and empty cups and head for the exit.

“You’re crazy,” says Charlie.

“What do you mean?” asks Rose.

“Do you think it would have been anywhere near as exciting to watch with no sound?” I say.

They all look at me, and Mr. Cook laughs and says, “By golly, Emily, that’s something I never considered. The moving pictures were entertaining, but that piano told you when there was danger, or tragedy, or just plain fun.”

“Exactly,” I say.
Why does Emily say that she and her friends are “glowing and buzzing with anticipation” in paragraph 2 of “Excerpt from Wheels of Change”? Use two details from the story to support your response.
What theme is supported by paragraphs 12 through 17 of "Excerpt from Wheels of Change"? Use two details from the story to support your response.
How are Rose's and Charlie's reactions to the piano music different in "Excerpt from Wheels of Change"? Use two details from the story to support your response.
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 28 and 29.

How Birds Beat the Odds

by Charles C. Hofer

Raising a nest of young birds is a lot of work. Parent birds have to keep their eggs safe from predators, shelter the chicks from weather, and find enough food for all those hungry mouths. Different kinds of birds do these things in different ways. But they all face the same challenge: making sure that there’s a next generation of birds.

The More, the Merrier

The Gambel’s quail lives in the deserts of the American Southwest. These ground-dwelling birds usually lay 10 to 12 eggs at a time in a shallow nest. That’s a lot of tiny mouths to feed.

Gambel’s quail chicks don’t need much attention. Just hours after hatching, they’re up and running. And they’d better be quick! These birds are a favorite prey of desert hunters like bobcats, snakes, and hawks. This means that only a few chicks will survive to be adults. By laying lots of eggs, adult quails increase the chances that at least some of their young will grow up to lay eggs themselves.

Try, Try Again

American robins are common backyard birds. They also lay many eggs—but not all at once. Instead, robins raise two to four batches of eggs over the summer.

Robins build cup-shaped nests that hungry predators like snakes or raccoons can easily raid. Building several nests in a season instead of just once makes it more likely that at least one clutch will survive to become adult robins.

Spiny Hideaway

Many birds try to improve their eggs’ chances by hiding their nests. The Gila woodpecker has found a great hiding place—inside the giant saguaro cactus. This woodpecker drills a hole in the cactus, where she lays about six eggs. Not many egg-stealers are willing to risk being stuck by the sharp spines.
According to the article "How Birds Beat the Odds," why does the Gambel's quail lay so many eggs? Use two details from the article to support your response.
In "How Birds Beat the Odds," how does the heading "Try, Try Again" relate to the information in paragraphs 4 and 5? Use two details from the article to support your response.
Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for question 31 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 15 and 16.
In "How Birds Beat the Odds" and "Meerkat Chat," what is one problem that birds and meerkats share? How do birds and meerkats try to solve this problem? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a problem that birds and meerkats share
- explain how birds and meerkats try to solve this problem
- use details from both articles to support your response
Earthwatch is a group of volunteers who study horned lizards in Arizona. The volunteers are helping us to know more about these lizards.

Looking Out for Lizards
by Deborah Churchman

1 There are 13 different species (kinds) of horned lizards. Most of them live in warm, dry places from southern Canada to Central America. (The species in this story is called the Texas horned lizard.) Scientists don't know much about any of them.

2 They do know that there seem to be fewer and fewer of these lizards around. People are building roads, houses, and malls in many of the places where the lizards once lived. Plus, some kinds of pesky ants may be pushing out the lizards' favorite food—harvester ants.

3 To save these lizards, people need to know a lot more about where they are and what they need. And that's why the Earthwatch group was helping to study them.

Wicked Cool

4 A horned lizard is one wicked-looking dude, with its sharp spikes and tough skin. But it's really a fat, harmless little creature with a slow, gentle way of life.

5 Horned lizards waddle around and scarf up ants—as many as 170 of them in one day. It takes a long time each day to catch that many ants—and a big, tough stomach to digest them.

6 That big stomach slows the lizard down. The lizard can't dash away from enemies, so it uses other tricks to stay safe.

7 For example, if a hawk flies overhead, the lizard flattens itself on the ground. That way it casts no shadow. (Shadows act as easy-to-see outlines.) The lizard's colors also help it blend into its sandy desert home.

8 If the lizard is attacked, it puffs up and hisses. And if the attack is from a fox or coyote, the lizard may shoot blood out of its eyes! Sounds pretty creepy, huh? Plus, the blood tastes really bad.
Even if the enemy does get hold of the lizard, those prickles make it tough prey to swallow. Yowch!

**Looking for Lizards**

The first thing the volunteers did to study horned lizards was find them. That's a lot harder than you'd think! The Earthwatch volunteers had to walk around all day in the hot sun just to find 10. As they caught each one, they put it in a mesh bag to keep it safe. They also marked the place where it had been found.

They took the lizards back to the lab to weigh and measure them and put little backpacks on them. (The backpacks held tiny radio transmitters.) They gave each lizard a number and put the lizards back where they'd found them. The transmitters helped the volunteers find the lizards again a few days later. The volunteers used antennas to pick up beeps from the transmitters and follow them to the lizards.

Once they found the numbered lizards again, the volunteers spent four hours each day keeping track of each one. The volunteers had to be very careful not to bother the lizards. They wanted to see how each one normally acted. The volunteers wrote down what the lizards ate, when and where they ate it, and whether they hung out in the sun or shade.

**Final Answers**

Finally, the volunteers scooped up a lot of lizard droppings and took them back to the lab. There, they looked through a microscope to see what was in the droppings.

What they found were a lot of ant heads. If the volunteers looked carefully, they could figure out which species of harvester or other ants the lizards were eating. It was yucky work, but at least they were out of the sun!

On the last day, the volunteers caught all of their lizards again and took off the animals' backpacks. Then they gently carried each one back to where it was found and set it free. It was sad to say goodbye. But it was good to know that their work helped scientists understand more about what horned lizards need. The more scientists know, the easier it will be for them to help save these gentle little creatures.
The Food Chain Gang

16 Texas horned lizards are part of a simple food chain. Plants such as mesquite (mess-KEET) grow seeds (1). Harvester ants eat the seeds (2). And horned lizards eat the harvester ants (3).

17 But when people move in, they often clear away the plants. That means fewer seeds to feed the ants—and fewer ants to feed horned lizards.
In the section "Looking for Lizards," why are the tools the workers use to study the lizards important? Use two details from the article to support your response.
Both articles focus on animals that need help. Why do these animals need help? How is the help these animals need similar and different in both articles? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to
- explain why the animals in both articles need help
- explain how the help these animals need is similar and different in both articles
- use details from both articles to support your response
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 30 and 31.

Meerkat Chat

by Karen de Seve

1 The afternoon sun bakes the hot desert sand. It's too hot to hunt—or even move. In the shade of a tree is a pile of brown fur, skinny tails, and tiny feet. A mob of 20 meerkats naps, waiting for the temperature to cool down so they can return to foraging for food.

2 No one notices that one curious youngster is more interested in exploring than sleeping. He scurries through the tall grass toward the edge of the family's four-square-mile home base. Then he stops, stands up on his hind legs, and looks around. Something is watching him.

3 A nearby goshawk eyes the meerkat and launches into flight. It can easily swoop down and nab the furry pup in its orange claws. The meerkat sounds the alarm. He squeals "danger, danger" into the air. The urgent call alerts his family, which runs to his rescue. The goshawk flies away, realizing that it can't win against a big group.

4 As meerkats know, danger lurks everywhere in the Kalahari Desert of South Africa. Strength in numbers is a survival skill for these burrowing animals. Another key to survival—out in the world or within the family—is communication. Meerkats have a collection of chirps, squeaks, and growls that mean different things.

5 "Meerkats have more than 30 different calls or vocalizations. These are different things they want to say," says Simon Townsend, a researcher at the Kalahari Meerkat Project in South Africa. The organization's scientists have spent years studying wild meerkat mobs. They're cracking the communication code to figure out what meerkats are saying—and how much they understand.

   Making the Call

6 Lookouts in a meerkat mob constantly scan the surroundings for danger. Up on hind legs, head in the air, looking, listening. Maybe it will be a bird in the sky or a snake in the grass. Maybe a wild cat is stalking from the bushes.

GO ON
Suddenly a shadow moves across the grass. A lookout gives a high-pitched call and everyone runs for the burrow. From the safety of the entrance, they all look at the sky to see the incoming threat. An eagle flies over the tunnels that the meerkat family calls home. But the eagle is a mile away and not interested in meerkats today.

To figure out if that alarm call had a specific meaning, researchers watch what the lookout saw and how the mob responds to his alarm. They also record the call with a microphone. The team has been collecting different calls to see what they mean. "We know a certain call is always made when they see something dangerous in the air or on the ground," Townsend says. "One call might mean, 'Look, danger on the ground.' Another might mean, 'Look, danger in the air.'"
Based on the article "Meerkat Chat," why is communication important to meerkats? Use two details from the article to support your response.
Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for question 31 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 15 and 16.

Answer
In “How Birds Beat the Odds” and “Meerkat Chat,” what is one problem that birds and meerkats share? How do birds and meerkats try to solve this problem? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a problem that birds and meerkats share
- explain how birds and meerkats try to solve this problem
- use details from both articles to support your response
Directions
Read this article. Then answer questions 32 and 33.

The California Gold Rush started in 1848 after gold was first found near Sacramento, California. It lasted through 1855. Many prospectors, or people hoping to become wealthy by finding gold, made the trip. These prospectors were also called forty-niners because so many of them came to California in 1849.

Rushing West
by Joan Holub

1. There were three main ways to get to California from the eastern United States. Each way was hard and dangerous. In 1848 and 1849, about forty-one thousand people went by sea in 697 sloops. About forty-eight thousand went overland.

2. Going overland was the cheapest way. To stay safe, travelers formed groups called wagon trains. Trails were rugged, so wagons pulled by oxen went slowly. If you walked, you could keep up with the wagons. But your shoes wore out fast, and your feet would get awfully sore.

3. Wagons crossed rivers, prairies, deserts, and steep mountains on the trip. West of Ohio, the country was mostly unsettled. There were no people or houses for many miles around.

4. It took seven months to get to California from East Coast cities such as New York. Two other major starting points were the Missouri cities of St. Joseph and Independence. From the Midwest, the trip was two thousand miles long and took five months. The Oregon, California, and Santa Fe Trails were the most popular wagon routes to the West.

GO ON
Most overland travelers made it to California if they stayed on schedule. They had to leave Missouri by the end of April in order to make it through the Sierra Nevada mountains before winter came. Otherwise, they might get trapped in the snow.

Many "overlanders" faced plenty of problems. Like accidents and snakebites. Or running out of food and water. Or broken wagons and injured oxen. Cholera was caused by drinking water polluted by bacteria. It killed 1,500 travelers in 1849.

Prospectors who could afford it went to California by sea. They paid fares of $200 to $1,000. Going by ship was faster than traveling by wagon train.

There were two main sea routes from the East Coast. Both usually sailed southward on the Atlantic Ocean from New York or Boston.

The longer route went around Cape Horn. That's at the southern tip of South America. From there, ships sailed north on the Pacific Ocean to San Francisco. This route was almost 15,000 miles long. It usually took five or six months to complete the journey. Fast clipper ships like the Flying Cloud could make the trip in three months. But there weren't enough of them to take everyone who wanted to go.

The shorter sea route (only 5,300 miles) went down the Atlantic coastline only as far as the Isthmus of Panama. The isthmus was a fifty-mile-wide strip of land connecting North America and South America. The east coast of Panama is on the Atlantic Ocean. Its west coast is on the Pacific.

At the isthmus, passengers got off their ships. They went forty miles up Panama's Chagres River in wooden canoes. Then, they traveled on mules through a jungle to Panama City on the Pacific side. There were wild animals such as crocodiles and monkeys in the jungle. Panama is near the equator. It was hot and humid. Some travelers caught diseases such as malaria and yellow fever from mosquitoes.
If all went well, the trip across the isthmus took only six weeks. However, prospectors might have to wait weeks in Panama City before a ship would arrive that was bound for San Francisco.

Today, traveling by ship often means enjoying a floating vacation. But life aboard a ship in the 1840s and 1850s was very different. The food had bugs and mold. The drinking water wasn’t always clean. Sometimes ships ran out of both before the trip was over. There were rats on board. If passengers were injured or sick, they were on their own. There might not be a doctor to help them. There were terrible storms, especially near Cape Horn. Some ships sank.

Still, ships left for California almost every day in 1849. Shipping companies advertised all around the world for passengers. This fueled gold fever in faraway places such as China, Australia, and Europe. But the ads didn’t mention the problems passengers would face on the voyage.

Many prospectors kept diaries and sent letters home. A man named S. Shufelt, who sailed from New York to California in 1849, wrote in a letter to his cousin, “I have left those that I love as my own life behind & risked every thing and endured many hardships to get here, & I want to make enough to live easier & do some good with, before I return.”

Like all forty-niners, he hoped his struggles would pay off. In gold!
How does the first map contribute to the understanding of "Rushing West"? Use two details from the article to support your response.

Why is the letter included in paragraph 15 of "Rushing West"? Use two details from the article to support your response.
Directions
Read this passage. Then answer questions 27 through 29.

The Great Horned Owl

by Shirley Anne Ramaley

1 There's a call in the air. "Whooo, hoo-hoo, hoo, hoo." It almost sounds like, "Who's awake, me too." There is only one bird that sounds like this—the great horned owl. It can be heard about anywhere, because these owls live in mountain forests, desert canyons, city parks, and even on some rooftops of homes. They are very widespread and adapt easily to many environments. They live all over North America, Central America, and certain regions of South America.

2 Great horned owls hunt just about anything that's not too big for them. They like insects and scorpions, great blue herons, snakes, jackrabbits, mice, other birds, and lots more. They also like cats, so keep your cat inside. Another delicious meal for a great horned owl is a skunk! The world is just one big smorgasbord for this big owl.

smorgasbord = meal with many foods
3 Its wing span can reach five feet—that's the size of many shorter adults! There are no predators that hunt this owl. It is the great horned owl that is the top predator.

4 When it hunts, it likes to sit and wait. It can hear the smallest sound, like the squeak of a tiny mouse from far away. Its excellent vision in low light makes it the perfect night hunter.

5 Like all raptors, or birds of prey, great horned owls use their feet instead of their beaks to capture prey. They have powerful feet with curved, sharp talons. The hooked beak is for cutting and tearing meat. Not much gets away from this big bird!

6 They are the only owls with ear tufts. Scientists disagree on why they have them, but it is a very interesting feature. Some people say the owl lowers the ear tufts like a dog when it's upset. If you see one, take a good look at the ear tufts. Maybe it will let you know what it thinks of you.

7 Their ears are offset, and not even like those of people and most other animals. This means their ears are slightly tilted in different directions. They are able to determine something's location and establish the distance between two points. The owl tilts its head until the sound is equal in both ears. This pinpoints the direction and distance of the sound of the possible prey.

8 A common belief is that an owl can turn its head completely around. Actually, while it can rotate its head 270 degrees, it can't turn completely around. (If it could, that would be 360 degrees.) Unlike our eyes, owls' eyes are fixed in their sockets. They can't move their eyes up and down. Instead, they move their entire head.

360 degrees = a full circle

9 The eyes are really big. If a great horned owl was as tall as a human, the eyes would be as big as oranges!

10 The owl has something else that helps it hunt. Its flight is silent. The feathers are soft, like fleece. This deadens the sound as air rushes over the wings while the owl is in flight. At night, as the owl flies silently toward its prey, the prey animal has no idea it's in danger.
The owls nest in January and raise their families in winter. The female sits on the eggs, and the male brings her food. The eggs take about a month to hatch. For a while, the babies, or “owlets,” huddle under the mother’s wings. Gradually, the little heads will peek out and eventually move out from under their mother’s wings. Both parents closely guard the owlets.

The owlets start walking around the nest in about another month, often crowding each other. The parents usually sit nearby, perhaps in a tree branch, and guard the nest. Don’t ever go near a great horned nest. Those parents won’t like it, and they aren’t afraid to attack anything that threatens the family.

The parents bring food to the nest to feed the owlets. Soon the owlets begin to flap their wings, getting ready for the day when they fledge, or fly away from the nest. The closer they get to fledging, the more they practice flapping their wings. When they are about six weeks old, it’s time to go. They don’t all leave at the same time, but usually within a few days of each other.

At six weeks old, owlets start walking outside the nest. They are able to fly well when they reach nine to ten weeks old.
How does the picture of the great horned owl support the information in the passage? Use two details from the passage to support your response.
How are paragraphs 3, 7, and 9 of "The Great Horned Owl" alike? Use two details from the passage to support your response.
In “The Great Horned Owl,” how are the ideas in paragraphs 4 and 10 related? Use two details from the passage to support your response.

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GO ON