Literal, Inferential, and Analytical Questions

Standardized tests will always require students to navigate a reading-comprehension section in order to assess their reading ability, and it is probably this part of any standardized test that strikes the most fear into the hearts and minds of educators. That’s because we know that reading is not only difficult to teach, but also difficult to learn, and that the ability for students to truly comprehend what they have read depends upon their mastering a complex set of skills. So let’s be clear. There is no strategy that can help a poor reader do well on a standardized test. The strategies we will speak of here are intended to be useful to those students who read at or above their grade level.

One of the most effective things you can do for your students is to clue them into the types of questions they will encounter on reading-comprehension tests. The elimination of the element of surprise will go a long way in helping your students do their best.

Reading-comprehension tests usually contain literal, inferential, and analytical questions about both fiction and nonfiction passages.

- **Literal Questions**: These kinds of questions require you to recall or locate a detail which appears in the passage. The best strategy to use here is to simply go back to the passage and find the information.

- **Inferential Questions**: These kinds of questions require you to make a deduction; to read between the lines of a passage; or to look for information that may be unstated. To answer these types of questions you have to use clues from the passage along with what you know to arrive at the correct answer.

- **Analytical Questions**: These types of questions require you to rely more on your own experience than the passage itself to arrive at the correct answer. Analytical questions often involve examining the author’s purpose or point of view.

Use the following story and practice test during whole group instruction. Have students practice answering reading comprehension questions, and identifying the types of questions being posed.
Mercury and the Woodman

By
Aesop

A woodman was chopping down a tree on the bank of a river. His axe accidentally flew out of his hands and fell into the water. The woodman was upset that he lost his axe. Suddenly Mercury appeared and asked him why he was so upset. The woodman told Mercury what happened. Mercury felt sorry for the man, so he dove into the river and brought up a golden axe. He asked the woodman if this was the one he had lost. The woodman said that it was not. Mercury dove a second time and brought up a silver axe. He asked the woodman if this was his axe. "No, that is not mine either," said the woodman. Once more Mercury dove into the river and brought up the missing axe. The woodman was happy to get his axe back. He thanked Mercury warmly. Mercury was so pleased with his honesty that he gave him the other two axes.

When the woodman told the story to his friends, one of them became jealous. He decided to try his luck for himself. So he went and began to chop a tree at the edge of the river. He let his axe drop into the water on purpose. Mercury appeared as before. When he found out that his axe fell in the river he dove in and brought up a golden axe. The fellow cried, "That's mine. That's mine." He reached out his hand for the prize. Mercury was so disgusted at his dishonesty that he refused to give him the golden axe. He also refused to get the axe that he let fall into the river.

Directions: Read each question and fill in the circle for your answer choice. After you have answered each question, tell whether the question is literal, inferential or analytical. Explain how you know what type of question it is and what strategies you used to help you find the correct answer.

1. How did the woodman lose his axe?
   A  He threw it away because it was broken.
   B  It accidentally flew out of his hand.
   C  His jealous friend stole it from him.
   D  Mercury stole it from him.

THINK! What kind of question is this?
2. Mercury decides to help the woodman because
   A he loves him.
   B he owes him a favor.
   C he feels sorry for him.
   D he promised him that he would.

THINK! What kind of question is this?

3. Why do you think Mercury helps the woodman?
   A He’s bored.
   B He’s trying to impress him.
   C He’s trying to win favor with the other gods.
   D He sees that the woodman is a humble hardworking man.

THINK! What kind of question is this?

4. Of what is the second axe that Mercury retrieves made?
   A silver
   B gold
   C wood
   D bronze

THINK! What kind of question is this?

5. Why is producing a gold and silver axe a good way to determine if the woodman is honest?
   A Woodmen love axes.
   B Woodmen rely on axes for their living.
   C People are often tempted by great wealth.
   D None of the above.

THINK! What kind of a question is this?
The Organization of Fiction and Nonfiction

Another good strategy with which students should be familiar is remembering how both fiction and nonfiction are organized. This will help them when they are confronted by questions that ask them to locate main ideas, problems, solutions, and supporting details. By the intermediate and middle-school grades, most students have internalized this structure, so here we are simply reminding them of what they already know.

Fiction:

- **The Beginning:** In most works of fiction, information about the main characters and setting comes at the beginning of the story.
- **The Middle:** In most works of fiction, information about the problem that the characters are trying to solve comes in the middle of the story.
- **The End:** In most works of fiction, information about how the characters solved their problems comes at the end of the story.

Nonfiction:

- **The Beginning:** In most works of non-fiction, the main idea (and topic sentence) can be found at the beginning of the selection.
- **The Middle:** In most works of non-fiction, elaboration of the main idea, in the form of supporting details, can be found in the middle of the selection.
- **The End:** In most works of non-fiction, a summary of the main idea can be found at the end of the selection.

Use the following fiction and nonfiction passages and practice tests during whole-group instruction. Have students practice answering reading-comprehension questions. Encourage them to justify their answers.
The Organization of Fiction and Nonfiction (cont.)

The Pied Piper
Adapted by the Brothers Grimm

In Upper Saxony there is a town called Hamelin. It is located in the region of Kalenberg. Hamlin is located right where two large rivers join together.

In the year of 1384, this town was infested by so many rats that they ate all of the corn the people had been storing for the winter months. They tried everything to chase away the rats but nothing worked. One day a stranger came to town. He was taller than most men. He wore colorful clothes. He told the townspeople that he could get rid of the rats if they would pay him a fee. The townspeople agreed.

The stranger took a flute from his jacket. As soon as he started to play, all of the rats came out of their holes and followed him. The stranger led them straight to the river. The rats ran into the river and were drowned. When he returned, he asked for his money. The townspeople refused to pay. The next day there was a fair in the town. The stranger waited for the older townspeople to go to church. He took out another flute and began to play a song. All the boys in town above the age of fourteen gathered around him. He led them to the neighboring mountain, named Kopfberg. Underneath this mountain was a sewer for the town. It is also where criminals were executed. All of the boys disappeared and were never seen again. A young girl who was following them saw what happened and brought the news of it to the town.

Directions: Read the passage and then fill in the answer circles for your choices. Think about how you know which is the correct answer.

1. Where is this story set?
   A) Kopfberg Mountain
   B) The town of Hamlin
   C) Weser
   D) Hamel

THINK! How do I know?

2. Who is the main character in this story?
   A) a young girl
   B) the narrator
   C) the Pied Piper
   D) the boys

THINK! How do I know?

3. The Pied Piper is described as being
   A) shorter than most men.
   B) rather plump.
   C) very devious.
   D) taller than most men.

THINK! How do I know?
4. What problem does the Pied Piper agree to solve?
   A To rid the town of the rats.
   B To play the flute at festivals.
   C To discipline the badly behaved boys.
   D He doesn’t agree to do anything.

THINK! How do I know?

5. How does the Pied Piper drown the rats?
   A He chases them into the water.
   B He lures them to the water.
   C He sets traps along the river.
   D He gathers them up in a sack.

THINK! How do I know?

6. What part do the townspeople play in the disappearance of the boys?
   A They round them up and take them away.
   B They refuse to pay the Pied Piper.
   C They have nothing to do with it.
   D They give the Pied Piper permission to take them away.

THINK! How do I know?

7. It is likely that the rats and the boys followed the Pied Piper because
   A they were not very bright.
   B they liked him.
   C he promised them something.
   D he had magical powers.

THINK! How do I know?

8. The theme of this story is
   A don’t trust strangers.
   B honor your debts.
   C don’t live in a town with rats.
   D don’t listen to flute music.

THINK! How do I know?
Earthquakes

The ground shakes when the crust of the Earth moves. This is called an earthquake. It can be caused by the crust sliding, volcanic bursts, or man-made explosions. Earthquakes that cause the most damage come from the crust sliding.

At first, the crust may only bend because of pushing forces. But when the pushing becomes too much, the crust snaps and shifts into a new position. Shifting makes wiggles of energy that go out in all directions. These are like ripples that you see when a stone is dropped in water. They are called seismic waves. The waves travel out from where the center of the earthquake is located. Sometimes people can hear these waves. This is because they make the whole planet ring like a bell. It must be awesome to hear this sound!

The crust moving may leave a crack, or fault, in the land. Geologists, scientists who study the Earth’s surface, say that earthquakes often happen where there are old faults. There are weak places in the crust. Where there are faults, earthquakes may happen again and again.

Sometimes, when earthquakes happen under the ocean floor, they cause huge sea waves. These waves are called tsunamis. They can travel across the ocean as fast as 598 miles per hour. Tsunamis can produce waves over 49 feet high. During the 1964 Alaskan earthquake, giant waves caused most of the damage to the towns of Kodiak, Cordova, and Seward. Some waves raced across the ocean in the other direction to the coasts of Japan.

Although earthquakes are usually frightening, keep in mind that the distance to the center of the Earth is 3,960 miles. Most earthquakes begin less than 150 miles below the surface. Earthquakes are not a sign that the Earth is unsteady.

Directions: Read the passage and then fill in the answer circles for your choices. Think about how you know which is the correct answer.

1. Earthquakes are caused by
   A. a giant sound beneath the ground.
   B. explosions and the crust sliding.
   C. volcanoes.
   D. B and C
   E. none of the above.

   THINK! How do I know?

2. Huge waves that rush across the ocean can be caused by
   A. tsunamis.
   B. storms.
   C. earthquakes beneath the ocean.
   D. waves as high as 49 feet.

   THINK! How do I know?
3. Seismic waves are compared to
   A. ripples in water.
   B. a bell ringing.
   C. faults in the ground.
   D. none of these.

**THINK! How do I know?**

4. An effect of earthquakes is
   A. faults or cracks in the ground.
   B. pushing forces building up.
   C. an unsteady planet.
   D. a stone dropped in the water.

**THINK! How do I know?**

5. The author’s purpose in this passage is
   A. to scare the reader.
   B. to inform the reader.
   C. to entertain the reader.
   D. to bore the reader.

**THINK! How do I know?**

6. When earthquakes happen under the ocean floor they sometimes cause
   A. tidal waves.
   B. jet stream.
   C. tsunamis.
   D. None of the above

**THINK! How do I know?**

7. You read in the newspaper that an old fault has been discovered nearby. What might happen?
   A. It will swallow you alive.
   B. An earthquake might happen there.
   C. A flood might happen there.
   D. Not a thing.

**THINK! How do I know?**

8. An appropriate title for this passage might be
   A. When Earthquakes Attack!
   B. Giant Waves from Nowhere
   C. How Earthquakes Happen
   D. The Mysteries of Our Earth

**THINK! How do I know?**
**Homographs**

**Directions:** Read each sentence carefully. Find the homograph. Fill in the correct answer circle.

### Samples

I didn’t think the test was fair.
- A. fair
- B. test
- C. think
- D. none of these

Please put the cows in the stable.
- E. cows
- F. put
- G. stable
- H. none of these

### Questions

1. I am learning how to play the bass guitar.
   - A. learning
   - B. bass
   - C. guitar
   - D. how

6. If you refuse to cooperate, you will be fined.
   - E. cooperate
   - F. fined
   - G. you
   - H. refuse

2. When he dove into the pool the crowd applauded.
   - A. applauded
   - B. when
   - C. dove
   - D. none of these

7. The gusts of wind were so strong they blew the roof off of the barn.
   - A. wind
   - B. barn
   - C. gusts
   - D. strong

3. Much of the southwest part of the United States is desert.
   - A. part
   - B. much
   - C. of
   - D. desert

8. The digest contained the complete stories of O’ Henry.
   - A. stories
   - B. digest
   - C. contained
   - D. none of these

4. The toys were recalled because of lead paint.
   - A. lead
   - B. toys
   - C. toys
   - D. none of these

9. I do not recall the details of the movie.
   - A. not
   - B. movie
   - C. recall
   - D. the

5. While pizza and tomato pie are similar, there are minute differences.
   - A. pizza
   - B. minute
   - C. pie
   - D. differences

10. They rose when the president entered the room.
    - E. president
    - F. entered
    - G. they
    - H. rose
Homophones

Directions: Read each sentence carefully. Find the homophone. Fill in the correct answer circle.

Samples

a female member of your family
A ant
B aunt

the one who inherits a throne
C air
D heir

1. to speak in front of others
   A aloud
   B allowed

2. past tense of eat
   C eight
   D ate

3. a red vegetable.
   A beat
   B beet

4. the act of rendering something useless
   C to break
   D to brake

5. talons of an animal
   A clause
   B claws

6. confused
   C daze
   D days

7. something you bake with
   A flower
   B flour

8. empty space
   C hole
   D whole

9. what you breathe through
   A knows
   B nose

10. head of the school
    C principle
    D principal
Synonyms

Directions: Look at the underlined word in each sentence. Find a synonym for that word. Fill in the correct answer circle.

Sample

Not everyone enjoyed his performance.
A disliked C hated
B liked D sad

1. After I finished my math homework, I ran an errand for my mother.
   A uncompleted
   B completed
   C studied
   D copied

2. The film was so frightening that several people had to leave the cinema!
   E few
   F scared
   G many
   H theatre

3. The view from the top of the building was spectacular.
   A disappointing
   B obstructed
   C boring
   D amazing

4. I hadn’t eaten in six hours so I was famished.
   E full
   F hungry
   G queasy
   H nauseous

5. Some reptiles can be very aggressive if they feel threatened.
   A calm
   B fearful
   C combative
   D quick

6. The food at the party was delicious.
   E tasty
   F nasty
   G salty
   H none of these

7. It’s a good idea to be cautious when you cross the street at a busy intersection.
   A reckless
   B terrified
   C happy
   D careful

8. The weather was so dreadful the carnival had to be cancelled.
   E beautiful
   F rainy
   G awful
   H hot

9. I wanted to buy the shoes, but they were just too expensive.
   A pricey
   B cheap
   C small
   D ugly

10. The aroma of the Thanksgiving dinner was making my mouth water.
    E taste
    F smell
    G saltiness
    H none of these
Antonyms

Directions: Look at the underlined word in each sentence. Find an antonym for that word. Fill in the correct answer circle.

Sample

The story about the girl and her horse was very sad.
A. depressing  C. happy
B. mournful  D. none of these

1. He was feeling very energetic after winning the race.
   A. active  B. awake  C. lazy  D. silly

2. The desert was arid and hot.
   A. dry  B. cold  C. temperate  D. wet

3. It's important to be polite when meeting new people.
   A. rude  B. friendly  C. funny  D. intelligent

4. His lecture about genetics was quite fascinating.
   A. interesting  B. boring  C. amazing  D. lengthy

5. By the time we got to the campsite we were so weary we had to go right to bed.
   A. tired  B. fatigued  C. energized  D. happy

6. She was absolutely elated by the gift we bought for her birthday.
   A. disappointed  B. happy  C. thrilled  D. none of these

7. The moves of the dancers were very graceful.
   A. nimble  B. clumsy  C. difficult  D. odd

8. The puzzle was extremely complex.
   A. simple  B. complicated  C. ornate  D. dense

9. The coastline was completely obliterated by the hurricane.
   A. drenched  B. built-up  C. destroyed  D. none of these

10. The monument was of colossal proportions.
    A. small  B. huge  C. uneven  D. rough
Directions: Read each sentence carefully. Find the sentence that shows the proper use of italics. Fill in the correct answer circle.

Sample

A The Wizard of Oz is a classic movie.
B The Wizard of Oz is a classic movie.
C The Wizard of Oz is a classic movie.
D The Wizard of Oz is a classic movie.

1.  
A Our teacher assigned the book Bridge to Terebithia.
B Our teacher assigned the book Bridge to Terebithia.
C Our teacher assigned the book Bridge to Terebithia.
D none of these

2.  
E My favorite song from The Lion King is Circle of Life.
F My favorite song from The Lion King is Circle of Life.
G My favorite song from The Lion King is Circle of Life.
H My favorite song from The Lion King is "Circle of Life."

3.  
A My grandmother never misses the show Wheel of Fortune.
B My grandmother never misses the show Wheel of Fortune.
C My grandmother never misses the show Wheel of Fortune.
D none of these

4.  
E My local newspaper is called The Philadelphia Inquirer.
F My local newspaper is called The Philadelphia Inquirer.
G My local newspaper is called The Philadelphia Inquirer.
H My local newspaper is called The Philadelphia Inquirer.

5.  
A I have subscribed to Sports Illustrated for two years.
B I have subscribed to Sports Illustrated for two years.
C I have subscribed to Sports Illustrated for two years.
D none of these

6.  
E The songs of Elvis Presley are considered standards.
F The songs of Elvis Presley are considered standards.
G The songs of Elvis Presley are considered standards.
H The songs of Elvis Presley are considered standards.
Gerunds

Directions: Read each sentence carefully. Find the gerund or gerund phrase. Fill in the correct answer circle.

Sample

Singing is one of my father’s favorite things to do.

A is  C my father’s favorite things to do
B singing  D one of my

1. Hiking is a very challenging hobby.
   A challenging
   B hiking
   C very
   D none of these

2. She devotes so much time to her running that she has little time for anything else.
   E devotes
   F so much time to
   G running
   H for anything else

3. The teacher is erasing the board.
   A teacher is
   B the board
   C erasing the board
   D no gerund present

4. My brother says that house painting is hard work.
   E is
   F hard work
   G house painting
   H none of these

5. I got a good grade on the test by studying every night.
   A by studying
   B got a good grade
   C I
   D no gerund present

6. I am looking forward to visiting Washington, D.C.
   E looking forward
   F I am
   G am looking
   H to visiting

7. My teacher is really good at solving word problems.
   A solving
   B is
   C word problems
   D none of these

8. Fighting is wrong.
   E is
   F fighting
   G wrong
   H no gerund present

9. Since I’ve been in 5th grade, telling corny jokes is what I’m known for!
   A telling corny jokes
   B is what
   C known for
   D none of these

10. Her commitment to working for children is admirable.
    E her commitment
    F to working
    G working for children
    H none of these

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Directions: Read each sentence carefully. Find the sentence that has the correct punctuation. Fill in the correct answer circle.

Sample

A. The new student is from Baltimore Maryland.
B. The new student is from, Baltimore Maryland.
C. The new student is from: Baltimore Maryland.
D. The new student is from Baltimore, Maryland.

1. A. Please bring don’t forget the following: passport, ticket, and directions.
B. Please bring don’t forget the following, passport, ticket, and directions.
C. Please bring don’t forget the following: passport: ticket: and directions.
D. Please bring don’t forget the following - passport - ticket, and directions.

2. F. Rachel Ray is a great cook and I love to watch her television program.
F. Rachel Ray is a great cook, and I love to watch her television program.
G. Rachel Ray is a great cook: and I love to watch her television program.
H. none of these

3. A. The play is scheduled for November 3 2008.
B. The play is scheduled for November 3 2008?
C. The play is scheduled for November 3, 2008.
D. The play is scheduled for November, 3, 2008.

4. E. Franklin said the following an apple a day keeps the doctor away!
F. Franklin said the following: An apple a day keeps the doctor away.
G. Franklin said the following, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.”
H. Franklin said the following: “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.”

5. A. They, my classmates, will collect the coats for the homeless shelter.
B. They my classmates: will collect coats for the homeless shelter.
C. They: my classmates, will collect coats for the homeless shelter.
D. They my classmates will collect coats for the homeless shelter.

6. E. Can you believe that our school took first second and third prize?
F. Can you believe that our school took first, second and third prize.
G. Can you believe that our school took first, second, and third prize?
H. none of these

7. A. I said I would help at the fair, but I won’t clean the barn.
B. I said I would help at the fair but I won’t clean the barn.
C. I said I would help at the fair: but I won’t clean the barn.
D. I said I would help at the fair—but I won’t clean the barn.

8. E. She lives in Philadelphia Pennsylvania, right near the Liberty Bell.
F. She lives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, right near the Liberty Bell.
G. She lives in Philadelphia: Pennsylvania—right near the Liberty Bell.
H. none of these
Niagara Falls

Niagara Falls is considered one of the world's most spectacular waterfalls, so it is not surprising that it has been a popular tourist destination for hundreds of years. The falls are located both in the United States and in Canada. They straddle the international border between the two countries, which is located in Niagara Falls, New York and Niagara Falls, Ontario.

Niagara Falls really refers to two separate waterfalls. The Horseshoe Falls are located in Canada and they drop about 172 feet. The American Falls are located in the United States and they drop approximately 70 feet. One of the most outstanding features of the Horseshoe Falls is its width. It is a staggering 2,600 feet across. John Daly, a professional golfer, attempted to hit a golf ball over the width of the falls, but fell short with every try.

Niagara Falls was created when glaciers receded during the last ice age, about 10,000 years ago. As these glaciers moved over the land, they carved huge channels and holes in the surface of the earth. Then, when the glaciers melted, the water filled these channels and holes, which became rivers and lakes. The Great Lakes emptied into the Niagara River and the water eroded the landscape, eventually creating Niagara Falls. When Niagara Falls is at its peak, about six million cubic feet of water flows over the crest line. Niagara Falls is the most powerful waterfall in North America. It is a huge source of hydroelectric power.

Because of the great beauty of Niagara Falls, and its breathtaking height and width, it has always been attractive to daredevils. Sam Patch dove into the falls from a tall tower in the nineteenth century and lived to tell the tale. Annie Edson Taylor was the first person to travel over the falls in a barrel. She too survived, but others died in their attempts to defy Niagara Falls. Niagara Falls has also been the scene of several tightrope walkers who tiptoed across the falls on high wires. The most spectacular event, known as the "Miracle at Niagara," was not a planned stunt at all, but a frightening accident.

In 1960, seven-year old Roger Woodward fell over the Horseshoe Falls. Passengers traveling on the Maid of the Mist tossed a preserver to the young boy, who was wearing a life vest. They were amazed to see that he survived without injury. Back at the top of the falls, Roger's sister, who was only 20 feet away from the rim of the Horseshoe Falls, was pulled to safety by a tourist. Roger's incredible ordeal made international news.

Niagara Falls has been, and will probably continue to be a source of great wonder and fascination for people from all over the world.
Reading Comprehension: Nonfiction (cont.)

Directions: Fill in the correct answer circle.

1. In what two countries is Niagara Falls located?
   A. Canada and Ontario
   B. Canada and Niagara Falls, New York
   C. Canada and the United States
   D. Canada and New York

2. What do the falls straddle?
   E. the Niagara River
   F. the Great Lakes
   G. an international border
   H. a tightrope

3. How do you think the Horseshoe Falls got their name?
   A. They were discovered by someone named Horseshoe.
   B. They are shaped like a horseshoe.
   C. The native Indians referred to them that way.
   D. none of these

4. Why do you think John Daley wanted to hit a golf ball across the Horseshoe Falls?
   E. to practice his golf swing
   F. it was part of a tournament
   G. it is a long distance and he considered it a challenge
   H. all professional golfers do this

5. What does the word *hydroelectric* mean?
   A. electrical power that is produced from Niagara Falls
   B. electrical power that is produced by the wind
   C. nuclear power that is produced by water
   D. electrical power that is produced by using water

6. To what does the “Miracle of Niagara” refer?
   E. Annie Edson Taylor’s trip over the falls.
   F. Sam Patches dive into the falls.
   G. a tightrope walker
   H. the survival of Roger Woodward

7. What is the *Maid of the Mist*?
   A. a boat
   B. a car
   C. a train
   D. a canoe

8. Why did Roger’s sister have to be pulled to safety?
   E. She fell over the falls with her brother.
   F. She couldn’t swim.
   G. She was screaming for help.
   H. She was dangerously close to the rim of the falls.
The Tower of London

What do the ghost of Anne Boleyn, the Duke of Exeter’s Daughter, and eight ravens have in common? At one time or another they all called the Tower of London home.

The Tower of London was originally built by William the Conqueror, after the Norman Conquest in about 1078. Of course, many English monarchs have made modifications to the Tower so that the way it looks now is not how it looked way back in the 11th century! King Richard the Lionheart had a huge wall built around the original tower and installed a moat that he filled with water from the Thames River. The moat was perfected by Henry III. During the 13th century, Edward II enclosed the Tower in a second wall. Throughout its history the Tower has been used as a fort, a palace, and a prison.

During the reign of King John, famous for signing the Magna Carta, a menagerie was installed in the tower. A menagerie is a collection of rare and wild animals. The Tower of London’s menagerie included lions and camels. A lion’s skull, dated to around 1280, was found in the Tower not that long ago. It was during the 18th century that this kind of royal zoo was open to the public. The price of admission was either three cents or a live cat or dog, which could be fed to the lions!

These days the only animals still living in the Tower are the ravens. There are eight of them with names like Thor, Bran, and Hugin. Legend has it that if the ravens leave the Tower of London, the English monarchy will fall. These birds are cared for by a Ravenmaster, who is also one of the Yeomen Warders, a kind of guard.

The Tower of London has been the scene of many an execution. In fact, several famous events in English history were played out within its high, stony walls. There are those who claim that the Tower is haunted. Some say that you can see the ghost of Anne Boleyn (sent to her death by her husband Henry VIII) wandering about the Tower, and carrying her head under her arm.

The Tower of London, like many fortresses of yore, had torture chambers. These were places where criminals, and other people, who were seen to be a threat to the monarchy, were taken to confess to crimes either real or imagined. The Duke of Exeter’s Daughter, more infamously known as “the rack,” stretched and pulled its victims.

The Tower of London is also where the Crown Jewels are kept. The Crown Jewels are all of the things that monarchs wear in their official capacity. The jewels are kept in an area called Jewel House and are protected twenty-four hours a day by armed guards.

The Tower of London has a rich and intriguing history. It has been standing on the banks of the Thames for nine hundred years, and will probably be there in another nine hundred more.
Directions: Fill in the correct answer circle.

1. What is a monarch?
   - A a soldier
   - B a king or queen
   - C a palace guard
   - D a criminal

2. What is meant by the word *modifications* in the second paragraph?
   - E drawings
   - F paintings
   - G changes
   - H none of these

3. Which of the following would you expect to find in a menagerie?
   - A a rabbit
   - B a horse
   - C a donkey
   - D a leopard

4. What is Hugin?
   - E a monarch
   - F a torture device
   - G a raven
   - H a Yeomen

5. What is connected with the ravens in the Tower of London?
   - A the fate of the monarchy
   - B several executions
   - C a lion's skull
   - D the Crown Jewels

6. How do you think Anne Boleyn was executed?
   - E hanged
   - F shot
   - G beheaded
   - H stoned

7. What are "Crown Jewels"?
   - A jewelry that is worn on the head
   - B things that monarchs wear in their official capacity
   - C jewelry worn by Warders
   - D all of these

8. About how old is the Tower of London?
   - E 5 centuries
   - F 10 centuries
   - G 9 centuries
   - H 20 centuries
Reading Comprehension: Short Passages

Directions: Read the passages carefully. Then answer the questions that follow. Fill in the correct answer circle.

Judy Blume

As an author, Judy Blume mined her childhood for the concerns and problems faced by many of her characters. As a child, she said, she was like Sheila in *Otherwise Known as Sheila the Great* (1972): afraid of thunderstorms, attics, and learning to swim. At the age of nine, she and her brother moved to Florida for two years for her brother’s health. This period of her life influenced *Starring Sally J. Freedman as Herself* (1977), which Blume calls her most autobiographical book. Sally fears that her forty-two-year-old father will die because two of her uncles died at that age. Blume also had two uncles who had died young. Death eventually weighed on her mind for other reasons, too. She stated in the introduction to the British edition of *Sally* that she was just seven-years-old when World War II ended. She added that the war had affected her so much, it was very difficult to think of anything else. She knew that Adolf Hitler was a dangerous man because he wanted to destroy all the Jews in the world. And she was a Jew.

1. Which of the following is not true?
   A. Judy Blume uses problems from her own childhood in her books.
   B. Blume’s family moved to Florida to escape Adolf Hitler during World War II.
   C. *Starring Sally J. Freedman as Herself* is mainly about Blume herself.
   D. Both the character Sally and Judy Blume had uncles who died young.

Girls and Athletics

Although most people are aware that girls’ athletics offer the same physical benefit as boys’ athletics—overall fitness—recent studies have shown that girls’ participation in sports also carries some unforeseen benefits. First, girls who participate in sports report having fewer problems with depression and have higher self-esteem than those who don’t participate. Perhaps this partly accounts for why female athletes graduate at a higher rate, 69 percent, compared to 51 percent of girls who are not in sports. The outlook for even more young women participating in sports seems likely, especially since a survey of parents found that 83 percent believe that girls’ athletic programs are as important as boys.

2. Which of the following is not true?
   E. Female athletes get mental as well as physical benefits from sports.
   F. Most parents think girls’ sports are as important as boys.
   G. Being in sports interferes with girls graduating.
   H. More girls will probably be participating in sports in the future.
Mark Twain

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain) was born on November 30, 1835, in Florida, in a log village on the Missouri frontier. His parents had come there from the hills of Tennessee. When he was four, the family moved again to Hannibal, a larger town of five hundred people on the Mississippi River. His father, a merchant and trader, died when Clemens was twelve. His mother was unable to make him attend school regularly, so she arranged to have him be an apprentice to local printers, beginning his lifetime association with newspaper work, travel writing, and publishing. As a teenager, Clemens worked in his brother Orion's printing shop, a business that designed and typeset posters, newspapers, and notices. Using the name W. Spaminodas Adrastas Blab, Clemens wrote and published his first few humorous columns for a newspaper that came through his brother's shop. Clemens now had a trade that would allow him to satisfy an urge to travel.

3. Which of the following is not true?
   A. Clemens' mother had trouble with him after his father died.
   B. Clemens began working in a printing shop as a teenager.
   C. Clemens' mother's decision to make him go to work was a wise choice.
   D. Clemens worked for a printer named W. Spaminodas Adrastas Blab.

The Iceman

During a few days of unusually warm weather in 1993, hikers in the Tyrolean Alps—a mountain range that borders Italy and Austria—came upon a startling sight. Trapped in the melting ice and snow was the body of a man. Police were summoned to the scene, but soon the authorities realized that this was not a case of a recent hiker who had lost his way. "The Iceman," as newspapers called him, is the oldest and best-preserved human body ever found. Careful examination by anthropologists showed that the wind and cold had dried the flesh like a mummy's. He had been in mid-life, about 5' 3" tall, weighing 110 pounds. His dark hair and beard were cut short. But how long ago had he journeyed into the Alps? Radiocarbon tests conducted on his body and tools—including the grains of grassland pollen found on his wool clothing—indicated that the Iceman had lived before Mohammed, Christ, or Buddha. He was at least 5,000 years old!

4. Which of the following is true?
   A. The Iceman died in 1993.
   B. For some reason, the Iceman was taking a mummy into the Alps.
   C. Hikers lost their way and froze to death.
   D. At first, no one realized how old the Iceman's body was.
Mount Rushmore

Mount Rushmore is a spectacular sculpture located in the state of South Dakota. The sculpture depicts the heads of four American presidents: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Teddy Roosevelt. The sculpture was intended to commemorate the first 150 years of American history, and the artist, Gutzon Borglum selected each president for a different reason. Washington was selected because he is considered the father of the United States; a man who saw the country through the American Revolution, and its first president. Jefferson was selected because he not only authored the Declaration of Independence, but doubled the size of the United States with the Louisiana Purchase. Abraham Lincoln was the nation’s president during the Civil War, and was responsible for the Emancipation Proclamation, which abolished slavery in the United States. Teddy Roosevelt was president during the construction and completion of the Panama Canal, a waterway that joined the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Each president’s head is about 60-feet-tall and each nose about 20-feet-long. It took Borglum and 400 other people 14 years to complete the sculpture.

5. Which of the following is not true?
   A. Abraham Lincoln was president during the Civil War.
   B. The nose of each president is 20 feet long.
   C. Thomas Jefferson was the nation’s first president.
   D. George Washington is considered the father of the country.

6. What was the importance of the Panama Canal?
   1. It doubled the size of the United States.
   2. It joined the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
   3. It abolished slavery.
   4. The Declaration of Independence was written there.
Directions: Read each topic carefully. Write a persuasive essay that takes a firm position either for or against the given topic.

Topic #1: In many states it is now illegal to talk on a cell phone while driving a car. In most cases, however, police officers do not have the right to pull a driver over unless they are doing something else illegal in addition to talking on a cell phone. Do you think that police officers should have the right to pull drivers over for talking on a cell phone only?

Topic #2: In an attempt to promote healthy eating, your school is considering removing any and all lunch menu items that contain trans fat, sugar, and caffeine. This would include the removal of such items as soda, candy, pizza, hamburgers, and grilled cheese, to name a few. Do you think your school has a right to impose a healthy diet on its middle school students, or should the students have a right to choose?

Topic #3: Many adults often feel that violence in some video games and in the lyrical content of some popular music adversely affects young people. Do you think that listening to violent lyrics and playing violent video games can make a young person violent?

Topic #4: In order to address bullying in school, some administrators are considering implementing a strict no-bullying policy. The policy is a three-strikes model, meaning that if the same person is caught bullying on three separate occasions they will be expelled from school. Do you think this policy will reduce and or eliminate bullying in school?

Topic #5: A newspaper recently reported that a boy of the age of fifteen committed a homicide while robbing a small grocery store. If he is tried as an adult and found guilty he could either face the death penalty or life imprisonment. Do you think the boy should be tried as an adult?

Topic #6: Many products that people use, including cosmetics, shampoos, perfumes, and medicines are developed by performing tests on animals like cats, dogs, and rabbits. Some of these tests are painful and sometimes the animals die as a result of the tests. Should people be permitted to perform any tests they want on animals, or should there be restrictions on the types of tests to which animals are subjected?