



Beginning-of-Year Assessment (BOY)

Grade 8 Reading Standards

This BOY assessment is intended to assess current grade 9 students who completed grade 8 reading in the 2019-2020 school year.

Congratulations! You worked very hard in school to learn many new things. Taking this Grade 8 Reading Standards test is a great way to show your family and school what you learned. It is okay if you do not know all the answers. Just try your best. You are amazing! You are taking this test so adults can learn more about how to help you this year.

You can ask an adult for help if you do not understand the directions. You can use a dictionary and scratch paper for this test.

If you do not know the answer to a question, choose the answer you think might be correct. You must answer the questions on your own.

You are now ready to start. Take your time and remember that trying your best is what is important. You're awesome, and you'll do great!

BOY Assessment Grade 8 Reading Standards

Student _____
Class _____
Date _____

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

The Road Almost Taken

by Joe Holley

- 1 I was 5 years old that summer afternoon when my brother and I set off on our daring adventure. Kenny was 3.
- 2 Our prairie schooner, our Pinta-Niña-Santa Maria, was our little gray wagon. It used to be a little red wagon, but it had gotten so scarred and dented after a couple of years of rough treatment—running it into concrete-block back-porch steps will do that to a wagon—that we begged Daddy to paint it. He did one Saturday afternoon, but the only paint he had around the house was gray primer, which he swabbed on with a brush. So now our wagon was a dull, monochromatic gray.
- 3 “Take this list up to Miss Andrews’ (store).” Mama handed me a folded \$5 bill. “Put it in your pocket and don’t lose it,” she said.
- 4 Kenny and I had taken grocery runs before; the little neighborhood store was only a block and a half away. This time, though, I had a secret mission in mind. For months, weeks—who knows how a 5-year-old measures time?—I had yearned to branch out, to explore the next street over. Why? Because it was there, I suppose. That’s all I remember about motive.

- 5 But the next street over was off-limits—too close to the busy Dallas Highway, Mama said. We made the occasional foray up to Miss Andrews’ store on Parrish, but never went any farther.
- 6 On this day, though, my devious 5-year-old mind had concocted a plan. I’m not sure whether I shared it with Kenny, but he rarely questioned anything his big brother told him, so he would go along, regardless. I was excited, so I probably did tell him about the big adventure I was planning.
- 7 My blond-haired little brother sat cross-legged in the wagon. I flipped the handle back to him so he could steer while I pushed from the back. We rattled down our dirt driveway and onto the street. In my mind’s eye, I can still see us on that long-ago afternoon: two little boys in shorts beneath a glaring summer sun, both of us dusty and sweat-streaked, shirtless and barefoot.
- 8 We passed the light green house of our retired neighbors, the Wills, and their corn patch in the empty lot between our houses, the stalks yellow and withered. We passed Mrs. Rachle’s house and looked for Rosie, our playmate and best friend. She stayed with her grandmother during the day while her parents worked. She would probably be up for an adventure, but we didn’t see her. She might have been taking her afternoon nap.
- 9 Head down and bent over almost double, keeping a sharp eye out for painful goathead weeds that had snaked onto the shoulder of the road during the hot Central Texas summer, I pushed Kenny to the intersection with Parrish, a slightly busier street than Strickland. We looked both ways, twice, as we had been taught, and then scurried across the street and turned left for the half-block stretch to Miss Andrews’ store.
- 10 A bell jingled as we pushed open the screen door and walked into the small store, its wooden floor smelling of the oily red powder Miss Andrews used for sweeping. We picked up the items on our list—probably a loaf of bread, maybe a stick of butter for something Mama was fixing for supper—and set them on the counter, which was about eye-high for me. Mr. Byford, Miss Andrews’ son-in-law, rang them up. As we waited, I kept thinking about our secret adventure. I was excited, nervous, worried.

11 We hurried back outside. Kenny settled himself in the wagon, and I had him turn the handle toward the unknown. Soon we were trundling down the forbidden street, houses on one side, and, across a weed-choked bar ditch on the other, the back of gas stations and other businesses along the highway. As I pushed, I looked up occasionally, but I couldn't enjoy the new sights. I was feeling too guilty.

12 We were passing a vacant lot, and through the gap I could see our house on Strickland. That meant, of course, that anybody who happened to be looking could see us, as well. I couldn't stand it. "Turn around," I muttered to Kenny. We retraced our path back to Parrish. Passing the store, I saw Mr. Byford leaning out the door. He was beckoning to us.

13 I knew what had happened. Mama had seen us through the vacant lot and had called him. I could imagine what she said: "If those boys come back by, Mr. Byford, tell 'em I said they better get home this minute!" I knew we were in trouble. I hoped it wasn't trouble big enough that she'd tell Daddy when he got home from work.

14 I pushed the wagon through the bottle cap-strewn gravel in front of the store. Standing in the sun, I squinted up toward Mr. Byford, who stared down at me, the hint of a smile on his face. "You boys forgot your groceries," he said, holding out the brown paper bag.

15 I took the bag from him and put it in the wagon behind Kenny. We headed straight home, where Mama was blissfully unaware of her sons' errant adventure.

16 I went outside and sat on the front-porch steps, chin in both hands, elbows on my knees. Behind the Thomases' house across from ours, I could see the other road—the road almost taken. Maybe I'd try again someday. Maybe when I was 6.

"The Road Almost Taken" by Joe Holley, published in *Texas Co-op Power*, May 2009. Text copyright © 2009 by Joe Holley. Reprinted by permission of the author.

1. Read the following dictionary entry.

stretch \ˈstrech\ n

1. something that seems beyond what is normal
2. the length or extent of an area
3. a continuous period of time
4. the amount of elasticity of something

Which definition best matches the way the word stretch is used in paragraph 9?

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

2. What does the sensory language in paragraph 7 help the reader understand?

- A. The doubts the author had about being able to complete his adventure
- B. The difficulty the author had pushing his wagon along the street
- C. The distance between the author's house and the store
- D. The details that the author remembers most vividly about that day

3. Paragraphs 8 and 9 are mainly a description of —

- A. the way the author and Kenny worked together to push the wagon along
- B. the typical routine the author followed when he went to the grocery store
- C. the different neighbors the author saw on the way to the grocery store
- D. the safety measures the author took when walking along the shoulder of the road

4. The author describes his experience in a way that highlights —

- A. how significant he thought going to the next street was when he was five years old
- B. how long it took him to push the wagon to the neighborhood store when he was a boy
- C. how important it was for him to take care of his little brother when they were younger
- D. how much he worried about following his mother's rules when he was a child

5. What is the main theme of the selection?

- A. Breaking the rules usually leads to a negative outcome.
- B. People often have a strong desire to explore the unknown.
- C. People tend to forget things when they are in a hurry.
- D. Going to a new location can be an exciting experience.

6. What is the best summary of the selection?

- A. When he was five years old, the author decided to venture down a forbidden street after buying some groceries for his mother. The author went partway down the new street but turned around because he was afraid of getting caught. When the shopkeeper waved him down on the way home, the author was sure his mother knew what he had done. Even though he wasn't in trouble, the author went straight home.
- B. As a five-year-old, the author had wanted to explore the next street over, even though his mother thought the street was dangerous. One day, after he shopped for groceries at the corner store for his mother, he pushed his wagon down the forbidden street. He then turned around after only a few minutes.
- C. When the author was five years old, his mother often asked him to take his wagon to the corner store down the street and pick up groceries for her. On one occasion the author tried to explore a different street on his way home. But because he forgot to take the groceries with him, he had to go back to the store, where the clerk was waiting outside for him.
- D. One day when he was five, the author made a plan to explore a street after getting groceries for his mother. He took his wagon along his normal route to the store, but then he traveled down the other street after he bought the groceries. When he reached a vacant field, he thought he would be caught, so he returned home.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Dog-Walk

by Mary Balazs

Over the years, my dog has worn a path
edging a vacant field.
Experience has taught her to avoid thistles and stinging
nettle.

- 5 From thousands of walks, she's learned where plantain
are soft—
to expect from pokeweed and piled stones,
from certain crevices,
exhilarating scents.

- 10 Leaving the house, she pulls hard on her leash—
her head into the wind, her nose and ears working.
At the pasture's high fence
she thrusts head and neck past chains
linking the paired gates,

- 15 wedging her wide shoulders farther,
farther toward the pasture's air—

- until hinges, closed locks, stop her, still straining,
here, in this narrow place,
her front quarters extending as far as they can go
20 toward those regions she yearns for:
fenceless acreage, the lots of desire
she is denied.

- She trudges slowly returning home,
her walk shambling,
25 her leash slack.

Courtesy of the Estate of Mary W. Balazs

7. Which words from the poem show that the speaker is unsympathetic to the dog's wish?
- A. linking the paired gates
 - B. pasture's high fence
 - C. the lots of desire
 - D. she is denied
8. In the first stanza, the poet uses the words "Over the years" and "From thousands of walks" to —
- A. show that the dog still finds the walk exciting
 - B. suggest that each walk follows the same sequence of events
 - C. illustrate what the dog enjoys about going on a walk
 - D. describe the reasons why the pasture is off-limits

9. The imagery in line 11 helps the reader —
- A. visualize the dog’s enthusiasm at the beginning of the walk
 - B. understand why the speaker keeps the dog out of the open pasture
 - C. focus on the parts of the walk that the dog finds most appealing
 - D. appreciate the close relationship between the dog and the speaker
10. In contrast to line 10, the last line of the poem shows that the dog now feels —
- A. confident
 - B. defeated
 - C. relaxed
 - D. lonely

11. In lines 20 through 22, the speaker observes that the dog wants to —

- A. return to the comfort of her home
- B. explore new areas beyond the fence
- C. follow the familiar path around the field
- D. take breaks during the walk with the speaker

Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to each question.

from
The View from Saturday

by E. L. Konigsburg

Noah Writes a B & B Letter

- 1 My mother insisted that I write a B & B letter to my grandparents. I told her that I could not write a B & B letter, and she asked me why, and I told her that I did not know what a B & B letter was. She explained—not too patiently—that a B & B letter is a *bread and butter letter* you write to people to thank them for having you as their houseguest. I told her that I was taught never to use the word you are defining in its definition and that she ought to think of a substitute word for *letter* if she is defining it. Mother then made a remark about how Western Civilization was in a decline because people of my generation knew how to nitpick but not how to write a B & B letter.
- 2 I told her that, with all due respect, I did not think I owed Grandma and Grandpa a B & B. And then I stated my case. Fact: I was not just a houseguest, I was family; and fact: I had not been their houseguest by choice because fact: She had sent me to them because she had won a cruise for selling more houses in Epiphany than anyone else in the world and if she had shared her cruise with Joey and me instead of with her husband, my father, I would not have been sent to Florida in the first place and fact: She, not me, owed them thanks; and further fact: I had been such a wonderful help while I was there that Grandma and Grandpa would probably want to write me a B & B.
- 3 My brother Joey had been sent to my other set of grandparents, who live in a normal suburb in Connecticut. “Is Joey writing a B & B to Grandma and Grandpa Eberle?”
- 4 “Even as we speak,” Mother replied.
- 5 “Well, maybe he has something to be thankful for,” I said.
- 6 Mother drew in her breath as if she were about to say something else about what children of my generation were doing to Western Civilization, but instead, she said, “Write,” and closed my bedroom door behind her. I opened the door and called out to her, “Can I use the computer?”
- 7 She said, “I know you can use the computer, Noah, but you *may* not.” I was about to make a remark about who was nitpicking now, but Mother gave

me such a negative look that I knew any thoughts I had had better be about bread and butter and not nitpicking.

8 I gazed at my closed bedroom door and then out the window. Door. Window. Door. Window. There was no escape.

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What's on Your Mind?

Jefferson County News

November 2013

A Little Common Courtesy, Please

- 1 A few weeks ago I found a box of my great-grandmother's things in the attic, and in it was Emily Post's 1922 book *Etiquette*. As I flipped through the yellowing pages, I couldn't help but chuckle at some of the advice—such as serving both hot and cold tea at an afternoon tea party. But the book did cause me to wonder about what should matter today when it comes to etiquette and manners. I think that common courtesy is no less important today than it was in the past.
- 2 It's true that we live in a fast-paced world now, and technology has contributed to the "instantness" of our society. People have less patience with everything and everyone around them. But managing our digital lives does not justify our being rude to people in the real world.
- 3 Case in point: I was at the grocery store a few days ago, and a guy on his cell phone blocked the aisle with his cart while vigorously typing out a book-length text message. Finally another shopper said, "Excuse me!" and tried to squeeze by, but even when the guy noticed her, he refused to move until he was finished tapping out his message. To him, sending that text was more important than helping the people around him have an enjoyable shopping experience.
- 4 Later in the checkout lane, I heard a mother ask her child to say "thank you" to the teenager who bagged their groceries. So adults want their kids to have good manners, clearly. They tell their children not to interrupt when others are talking. Children are taught to apologize when they've been disrespectful to a schoolmate. We teach these manners to children so that they can use them throughout their lives. Apparently some adults, like the novelist in the aisle, need a refresher course. Imagine the confusion children feel when adults refuse to practice the simple courtesies they themselves preach.

5 Emily Post defined *manners* as "a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others." And that's still a pretty good way to go about conducting ourselves. Everyone should try being more courteous. It makes you feel good. And the person to whom you extend the courtesy will feel good too.



12. Use the first selection to answer the following question.

Based on Noah’s conversation with his mother in paragraphs 3 through 7, the reader can conclude that —

- A. Noah will not be able to avoid fulfilling his mother’s request
- B. his mother knows that writing the letter may take a long time
- C. Noah thinks his grandparents will not appreciate receiving the letter
- D. his mother believes that Joey’s letter will be more sincere than Noah’s letter

13. Use the first selection to answer the following question.

Read this dictionary entry.

<p>due \ˈdū\ <i>adj</i> 1. expected to occur at a specific time 2. able to meet an obligation 3. accepted as appropriate 4. being a cause of</p>

Which definition best matches the way the word due is used in paragraph 2?

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

14. Use the first selection to answer the following question.

Noah's response to his mother's demand adds to the conflict by —

- A. increasing the tension between Noah and his mother
- B. forcing his mother to take away his privilege of using the computer
- C. leading his mother to doubt what she has taught him about respect
- D. causing Noah to have to listen to his mother lecture about letter writing

15. Use the first selection to answer the following question.

The first-person point of view allows the author to —

- A. emphasize the mother's struggle to understand Noah's feelings
- B. show the mother's opinion about B & B letters
- C. highlight the contrast between the two brothers' experiences
- D. share Noah's feelings about his situation

16. Use the first selection to answer the following question.

Which sentence from the excerpt best illustrates Noah's conflict?

- A. *My mother insisted that I write a B & B letter to my grandparents.*
- B. *"Is Joey writing a B & B to Grandma and Grandpa Eberle?"*
- C. *She explained—not too patiently—that a B & B letter is a bread and butter letter you write to people to thank them for having you as their houseguest.*
- D. *My brother Joey had been sent to my other set of grandparents, who live in a normal suburb in Connecticut.*

17. Use the second selection to answer the following question.

By referring to the man in the grocery store as a "novelist," the author —

- A. depicts writers as being self-absorbed in their work
- B. illustrates why grocery stores are interesting places to observe people
- C. suggests that technology has increased our ability to stay in touch with friends
- D. emphasizes the man's rudeness by exaggerating how long he took to write a text message

18. Use the second selection to answer the following question.

The examples in paragraphs 3 and 4 reinforce the author's point that being courteous —

- A. guarantees that others will show their appreciation by being kind in return
- B. is not something that should be practiced only at a young age
- C. requires time and energy but is still worthwhile
- D. is less important for adults than for children

19. Use the second selection to answer the following question.

The author supports the central argument of the article mainly by —

- A. describing personal observations
- B. referring to facts on the subject
- C. sharing quotations from experts on the subject
- D. comparing rules from the past with rules from the present

20. Use the second selection to answer the following question.

By referring to Emily Post in both the beginning and ending of the article, the author —

- A. implies that etiquette focuses too much on others' feelings and not enough on a person's own actions
- B. suggests that traditional ideas about etiquette do not apply to the digital etiquette needed today
- C. implies that hosting a party based on the information from Emily Post's book would be difficult today
- D. communicates that even though some etiquette rules may be outdated, the need to have manners is still important today

21. Use both selections to answer the following question.

What is one difference between Noah's mother in the excerpt and the author of the article?

- A. Noah's mother thinks that computers are not useful tools, while the author understands the value of technology.
- B. Noah's mother believes it is young people who are not courteous, while the author believes that some adults also lack courtesy.
- C. Noah's mother applauds the behavior of others, while the author criticizes the behavior of others
- D. Noah's mother encourages her sons to appreciate their elders, while the author explains how adults need to demonstrate more respect for young people.

22. Use both selections to answer the following question.

Read this sentence from paragraph 4 of "A Little Common Courtesy, Please."

We teach these manners to children so that they can use them throughout their lives.

Which event from "The View from Saturday" best demonstrates this message?

- A.** Noah's mother insists that he write a thank-you letter to his grandparents.
- B.** Noah's mother expresses concern about the youth of her sons' generation.
- C.** Noah explains why he believes he should receive a thank-you letter.
- D.** Noah points out that his brother has something to be thankful for.

23. Use both selections to answer the following question.

How are Noah's mother in the excerpt and the mother of the child in the article similar?

- A. They show respect for the ideas presented by Emily Post.
- B. They are ashamed about how their child has behaved.
- C. They point out how their child can be courteous to someone.
- D. They believe that children today do not know how to act in public

24. Use both selections to answer the following question.

Read this sentence from "A Little Common Courtesy, Please."

I think that common courtesy is no less important today than it was in the past.

Which character from "The View from Saturday" holds a similar belief?

- A. Joey
- B. Noah
- C. The mother
- D. The Grandparents

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

What Can We See in a Logo?

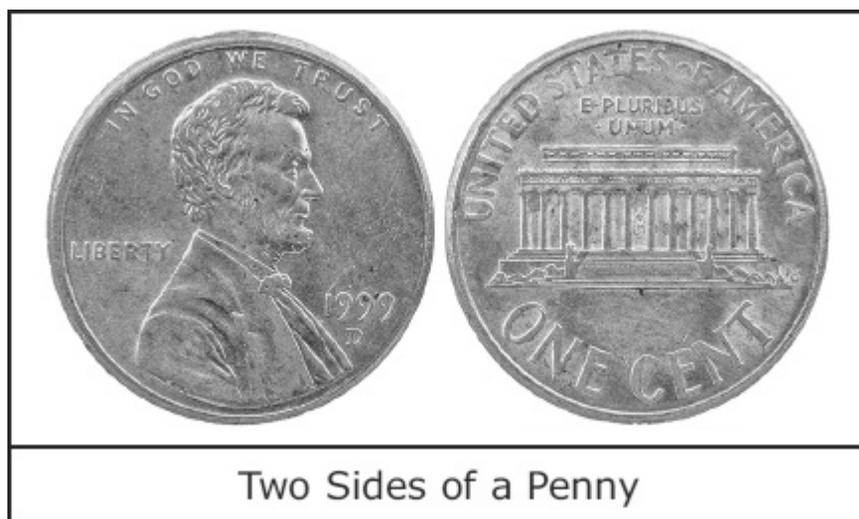
- 1 The typical person is bombarded by hundreds of logos each day. We see them on signs, vehicles, television, and even on the clothes we wear. Logos are distinct images used to represent brands. There are logos such as the famous Nike “swoosh,” the colorful rings to identify the Olympic Games, and the United States Postal Service eagle emblem, just to name a few. All of these logos are designed to attract our attention. They also help us remember a product or service connected to that image. However, research conducted at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) supports the idea that remembering what a logo looks like is a very difficult task.

- 2 In 2015 researchers at UCLA gave 85 students a simple assignment. They had to draw the Apple logo purely from memory. Most of the students were Apple users, so they had the opportunity to look at the logo every day. Surprisingly, only one student in the study could accurately draw the logo from memory. Many of the sketches the other students made were flawed. Some of them drew the basics right but missed minor details of the design—no bite out of the apple or the wrong number of leaves. At first the researchers thought the problem might be that the students were just not very good at drawing. They decided to ask the students to look at several different images and choose the logo that was most accurate. Less than half of the students could detect the correct image.



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- 3 The UCLA Apple study is not the first time our ability to remember the details of images has been tested. In the 1970s researchers asked a group of people to draw a penny from memory. Participants were instructed to show the images and words just as they appear on the coin. Like the Apple study, most people could not precisely depict the image. Participants were unable to correctly identify which way Lincoln was facing or where the word "Liberty" was placed on the coin. While the penny is not technically a logo, it is an object with which people have frequent interaction. So why is it so difficult for people to recall the details of images, such as logos, that they see every day? Researchers have developed a theory they think might help to explain this blind spot in our memories.



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- 4 Logos are typically designed to be simple and easy to recognize with a quick glance. Yet the frequent exposure to these logos can actually make our brains overlook them. This process is known as “attentional saturation.” It would be challenging to try to remember every single thing that crosses our path. We take in so much information every day that the brain works to spot information that does not need to be stored. It allows this unimportant information to fade from our memory. Our brains actually signal us to ignore information we do not think we will need to remember.
- 5 The details of product logos are just the kind of information our brains tell us we do not need. This may be discouraging to logo designers and to companies that use these eye-catching logos. But there are still many business experts who believe in the importance of a recognizable logo.
- 6 Even though the brain is accustomed to ignoring unnecessary details, it is also programmed for recognition. When we see images such as logos over and over again, we become familiar with them. This constant exposure leads to something scientists refer to as gist memory. “Gist memory” means that our brain remembers the basic idea without all of the details. This general sense of memory has its own benefits. When we see that “swoosh” or the apple with a bite out of it, we are acquainted with the image. We may not be able to draw a perfect outline of the logo, but we are able to recognize the image. When people are able to recognize an image, it can make them feel like they really know the product behind the logo. In fact, familiarity with a prevalent logo can even make people feel more comfortable about purchasing or using certain products.
- 7 Logos are everywhere we look today. A fancy design or a thoughtful color combination may be a good start for a logo concept, but there are other factors to consider. Those establishing a logo need to know that people will only remember what they believe is worthwhile. A clever design may be interesting, but most people will forget the details—especially if our brains have anything to say about it.

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25. "Gist memory" occurs when the brain —

- A. recalls specific details
- B. remembers a general idea
- C. connects information
- D. overlooks common images

26. In paragraph 6, the word prevalent means —

- A. elaborate
- B. creative
- C. vital
- D. widespread

27. What example of “attentional saturation” does the author provide in the selection?
- A. Companies use memorable logos to represent their brands.
 - B. Participants in a study could not recall details of images seen every day.
 - C. Business experts believe that product logos are important.
 - D. Researchers gave students a simple assignment to complete.
28. Which sentence from the selection suggests that companies may want to reconsider their approach to branding their products?
- A. *We see them on signs, vehicles, television, and even on the clothes we wear.* (paragraph 1)
 - B. *Researchers have developed a theory they think might help to explain this blind spot in our memories.* (paragraph 3)
 - C. *The details of product logos are just the kind of information our brains tell us we do not need.* (paragraph 5)
 - D. *But there are still many business experts who believe in the importance of a recognizable logo.* (paragraph 5)

29. The author mentions common name brands in the first paragraph most likely to —

- A.** create a connection with the reader
- B.** define key terms for the reader
- C.** offer an opinion to the reader about the topic
- D.** introduce the reader to the main idea of the selection

30. What is paragraph 2 mainly about?

- A.** The skill it takes to identify a logo from several images
- B.** The popularity of a certain technology brand
- C.** The poor drawing ability of students
- D.** The results of a research study

31. How does the author organize the selection?

- A.** By describing how logos are problematic and then offering solutions on how to improve them
- B.** By presenting research about logos and then explaining how logos are perceived by the brain
- C.** By listing familiar logos and then showing how those logos are influential in advertising
- D.** By comparing common objects to logos and then contrasting the theories about logos

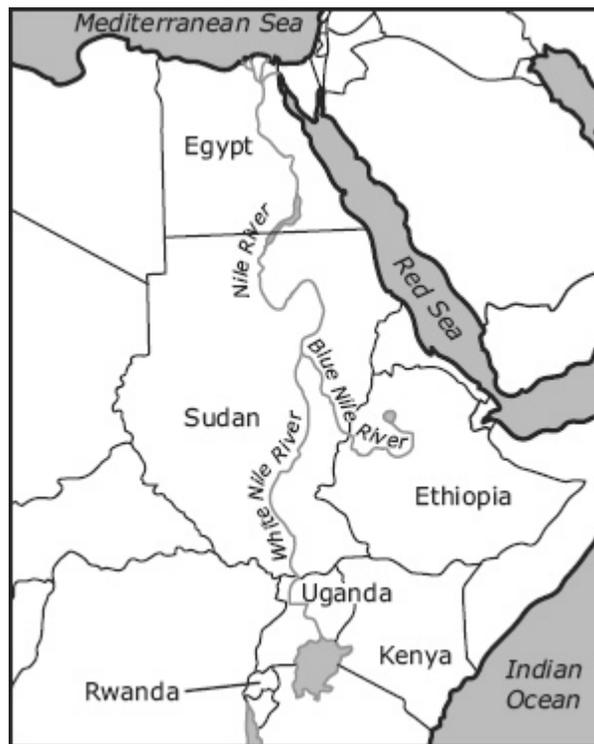
Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Adventuring on the Nile

- 1 “It has rapids, waterfalls, jungle, canyons, deserts, hippos, crocs, long flat beautiful sections, huge beautiful sandbars,” Pasquale Scaturro says. “There is no other river in the world that can compare.” The river that Scaturro is describing has been the subject of human curiosity and a home to civilizations for thousands of years: the Nile. The river has long been a significant agricultural and transportation fixture in northeastern Africa, crucial to the people who depend on it. And yet no one had ever made the journey from its beginning to its end by boat. Scaturro is a geophysicist and a world-famous guide and explorer. His job in oil and gas exploration and his love of adventure have led him on expeditions in some of the wildest, roughest parts of the world. In 2004 he and filmmaker Gordon Brown completed the first-ever descent of the Nile River, from its headwaters in Ethiopia to its mouth at the Mediterranean Sea. Their journey was documented in the IMAX film *Mystery of the Nile*.

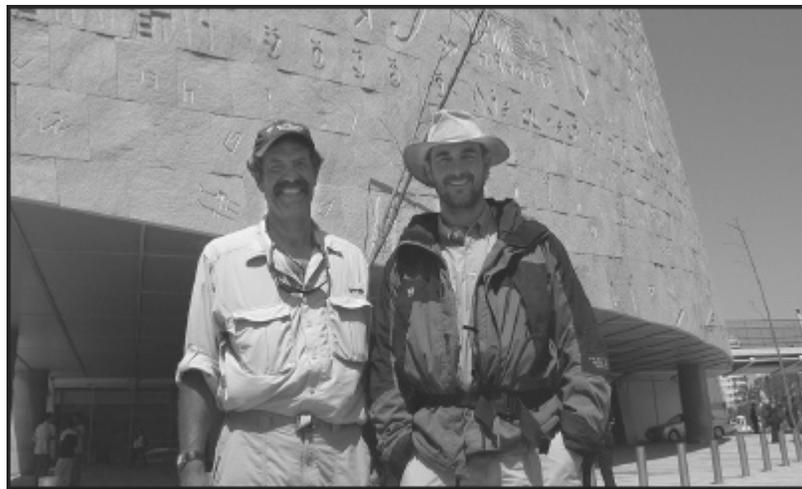
- 2 The Nile is the longest river in the world. When including the headwaters of both the Blue Nile and the White Nile, the Nile measures more than 4,100 miles. The White Nile begins in Rwanda, and the Blue Nile begins in Ethiopia; they meet in Sudan to form the Nile River, which flows through Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. The river covers terrain that includes mountains, deserts, gorges, lakes, valleys, dams, waterfalls, and large cities. It flows through the largest lake in Africa; it winds through capital cities; it grazes ancient cities as well as world-renowned antiquities such as the pyramids.

3 Until Scaturro and Brown's expedition in 2004, no one had successfully traveled the length of the river beginning from the Blue Nile, which is often considered the source of the Nile because it provides more than 85 percent of the water in the Nile River. Scaturro and Brown launched their watercraft from the Springs of Sakala, the origins of the Blue Nile in the Ethiopian highlands, in late December 2003. Their watercraft included two 16-foot inflatable rafts and a two-person kayak. A small support crew, which at times included a journalist, an archaeologist, a photographer, and a hydrologist, joined the men and aided with some of the planning. But the bulk of the navigating, paddling, and filming—Brown was shooting their adventure with a 70-pound IMAX camera—fell to Scaturro and Brown.



- 4 The pair traveled 3,250 miles in four months. During their journey they encountered disease-carrying mosquitoes, sand storms, extreme heat, and armed bandits. Several stretches of the river pass through areas of unrest or civil war. Many sections of the Nile have life-threatening rapids, leading some to liken the river to Mount Everest in terms of adventure and danger. Scaturro and Brown's boats flipped in the white water more than once. A crocodile attacked Brown's kayak and took a bite out of his oar. In several areas the river proved impassible, and the team was forced to briefly portage their boats or send the boats down dangerous waterfalls or rapids unmanned while they bypassed the area on foot.
- 5 But for all the dangers they encountered, they also met with awe-inspiring sights and experiences. Scaturro noted in his journal that for much of their time on the Nile in Sudan, they saw "absolutely not a single other tourist, adventurer, traveler, or any other westerner.... Basically, we have had the entire Nile River to ourselves. What an adventure."

6 From the white-water gorges of Ethiopia to the desert plains of Sudan to the urban pollution near heavily populated Egyptian cities, Scaturro and Brown experienced the best and the worst of the Nile. Their journey revealed to them that the Nile is a unifying thread of civilization in northeastern Africa. All told, the Nile and its main tributaries flow through 11 African countries: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda—countries with diverse cultures, beliefs, and environments that are all connected by the mighty river. “One theme we hope this expedition highlights is that the Nile brings people of different faiths and cultures . . . together,” Brown says.



Scaturro and Brown in Alexandria, Egypt,
in 2004

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- 32.** Which detail from paragraph 2 supports the idea that the Nile River spans diverse areas?
- A.** The Nile River is the longest river in the world, measuring about 4,100 miles in length.
 - B.** The White Nile begins in Rwanda, and the Blue Nile begins in Ethiopia.
 - C.** The two main tributaries of the Nile River meet in Sudan to form one river.
 - D.** The Nile River flows through cities as well as remote deserts and mountain regions.
- 33.** Based on paragraph 5, the reader can infer that for Scaturro and Brown —
- A.** the satisfaction of traveling the Nile River outweighed the dangers it presented
 - B.** the Nile River provided a place to get away from modern life
 - C.** the journey along the Nile River was a challenging test of their survival skills
 - D.** the sights along the Nile River were better experienced on film than in person

34. The details in paragraph 6 support the idea that —

- A.** the Nile River and its main tributaries flow through many African countries
- B.** population growth along the Nile has caused the river to become polluted
- C.** the Nile River serves as a shared foundation for many diverse African cultures
- D.** the largest cities along the Nile River are located in Egypt

35. The map of the Nile River Valley is included in the selection to —

- A.** indicate why the Blue Nile is considered the primary source of the river
- B.** show the long and winding course of the river
- C.** emphasize that the river is important to all the countries it flows through
- D.** highlight the most popular locations along the river

36. The author organizes the information in the selection mainly by —

- A.** explaining why Scaturro and Brown wanted to explore the Nile River and then giving details about how they prepared for the journey
- B.** comparing the Nile River with other rivers around the world and then discussing Scaturro and Brown’s journey along the Blue Nile
- C.** stating that the Nile River is challenging to navigate and then sharing details about the difficulties Scaturro and Brown encountered on their journey
- D.** providing background information about the Nile River and then describing Scaturro and Brown’s expedition

37. The author’s main purpose for writing this selection is to —

- A.** explain how the Nile River brings together a variety of cultures
- B.** describe the first expedition to travel the full length of the Nile River
- C.** discuss the dangers that travelers have encountered along the Nile River
- D.** provide information about the history of the Nile River

38. What is the best summary of the selection?

- A. Explorers Pasquale Scaturro and Gordon Brown traveled the length of the Nile River by boat. On their trip they saw mountains, deserts, gorges, waterfalls, and large cities. Their journey began in Ethiopia and ended in Egypt at the Mediterranean Sea. Some of the areas they traveled through were unsafe because of the harsh rapids, extreme heat, and hostile wildlife.
- B. The Nile River flows through 11 African countries. The river is the world's longest and has been important to many civilizations for thousands of years. In 2004 explorers Pasquale Scaturro and Gordon Brown paddled the river and made a film about their trip. Sometimes their boats flipped in the water, and they were even attacked by a crocodile.
- C. In 2004, Pasquale Scaturro and Gordon Brown became the first people to travel the entire Nile River by boat. Their 3,250-mile journey on the longest river in the world took four months. Though awed by the river's beauty, they also endured menacing conditions. Their trip helped them understand the significance of the Nile River to many African cultures.
- D. A geophysicist and explorer named Pasquale Scaturro paddled the Nile River with filmmaker Gordon Brown in 2004. The river measures more than 4,100 miles and flows past a variety of landscapes as well as ancient cities and the Egyptian pyramids. An IMAX film was made about their journey.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

The Lesson in Design

- 1 It was Friday afternoon, and another week of school was finally over. Andy weaved his way through the crowded hall, trying to avoid colliding with students at their lockers getting books and backpacks. He walked out the nearest exit and headed for the student parking lot, where he would wait for his best friend Broden.
- 2 While Andy waited at Broden's car, he studied the fabrics and colors of the other students' clothes. Everyone wore the same basic outfit—jeans and some sort of shirt. Nothing out of the ordinary, nothing flashy or stylish. Being from a family of tailors, Andy had learned a lot about clothing over the years—how to make it and how to alter it. But Andy wanted to be more than just a tailor.
- 3 Broden dropped Andy off at his father's tailor shop. Andy watched his father—pins in his mouth, measuring tape draped around his neck—expertly hem and repair Mr. Simone's pants.
- 4 Mr. Simone paid his bill and then carefully, almost proudly, placed the newly perfected pants over his arm. Andy thought he detected a spring in Mr. Simone's step as he left the shop. Andy watched Mr. Simone as he laid the pants on the backseat of his car, smoothing them so that they wouldn't wrinkle. There was no denying that tailoring was a valuable service to some. But to Andy his family's business seemed like a whole lot of tedious busywork: hemming pants, shortening the length of sleeves, taking in or letting out a waistline, replacing buttons, hooks, or snaps.
- 5 Andy's father peered over his eyeglasses, studying Andy as Andy observed Mr. Simone. "Often, when people look better, they act better too. When people know they look good, they are more comfortable, less worried," Andy's father explained.
- 6 Andy knew that his father had a point. That was exactly the reason Andy longed to create something of his own. Something different. Something *exceptional*.
- 7 "Well that's it for today," said Andy's father, flipping the sign on the door to the CLOSED side and letting out a tired but satisfied sigh in response to a long workday. "There's something I want to give you, Andy," he said as he beckoned for Andy to follow him to the back room. On the corner of a large worktable sat a bulky antique sewing machine, a retro model that looked very different from the modern one Andy's father used. "I was your age when my father gave this to me, and now I'm giving it to you."
- 8 Andy eyed the old machine appreciatively. "Thank you, Dad. This is perfect!"

- 9 Andy wanted to use the sewing machine right away, but first he needed to draw his clothing design. He needed a design that was stylish yet original. Fortunately he wasn't starting with a blank page. Andy had been sketching designs as long as he could remember. Sometimes he drew in Ms. Greene's art class; sometimes he drew during lunch. Mostly he drew during the free minutes of his day, when he could empty his mind and just trust his charcoal pencil.
- 10 A visit to the fabric store that weekend turned into an expedition as he hunted down the perfect textiles for his creation. "Your father doing something special?" asked the owner.
- 11 "It's for a school project," Andy replied. It wasn't exactly a lie. On his way back home, he looked at what people were wearing, the parade of pants, shirts, dresses, jeans, and ordinariness.
- 12 Andy began working that same night, losing himself in lines and folds, ripping out stitches and redoing them. It took over a week, but after multiple fittings and adjustments, his outfit was ready for its debut.
- 13 On Monday morning, Andy walked into school anticipating the glowing admiration of his fellow students. As he walked down the hall, heads turned. Teachers moved aside, guys pointed at him, and girls covered their mouths to hide their laughter.
- 14 Even Broden looked at him sympathetically. "Was this a dare or something?" he whispered to Andy at their lockers.
- 15 A morning full of whispers, jeers, and awkward questions left Andy slumped in his seat in art class like a spent parachute. Although he had donned his creation proudly that morning, he now wished he had a change of clothes.
- 16 "It hasn't been a great day, huh?" asked Ms. Greene, sitting beside him.
- 17 "I've had better," Andy replied glumly.
- 18 "You know, it's fine to want to do something different—you just have to be prepared for the consequences. Not everyone is going to see things the way you do—not right away, and maybe not ever."
- 19 "They don't know anything about fashion," Andy snipped.
- 20 "Well, people like different styles," Ms. Greene responded. "As for me . . . I like your incredible fabric choice. Think of this outfit as just the beginning; think of it as your first draft. The most famous designers didn't build their clothing empires on one outfit—especially their first."
- 21 Andy knew she was right, of course. But still, he hadn't thought his design would warrant such ridicule. He sighed as he rose from his chair, putting his sketch pad and pencils into his backpack. "A first draft, huh?" he thought. And then he remembered what his English teacher Mrs. Ford always said: your first draft is just the beginning.
- 22 Apparently that was good advice—and not just for writers.

39. The main role of Andy's art teacher in this story is to help —

- A. resolve a conflict the main character is experiencing
- B. create the setting in which the main conflict occurs
- C. develop the rising action of the plot to a turning point
- D. supply background information about the main character

40. What is the best summary of the story?

- A. Andy wants to use his knowledge of tailoring to design original clothing. His father gives him a sewing machine, so Andy creates an outfit. When Andy wears his new clothing to school, he does not get the response that he wants, but his art teacher helps him regain confidence.
- B. As Andy waits for Broden, he observes the other students' clothing. When Andy arrives at his family's shop, he realizes that being a tailor helps people feel better. After his father gives him a sewing machine, Andy begins working on a unique clothing design.
- C. After closing the family store for the night, Andy's father gives Andy a sewing machine that has been in the family for years. Andy is excited and immediately begins creating his own clothing designs. He works hard on his new design and wears his new outfit to school.
- D. Andy knows a lot about clothing because of the family business, but he wants to do something different. Andy's father understands his interests, so he gives Andy an old sewing machine. Andy uses this gift to complete a school project.

41. Which sentence from the story creates an image of how tailoring can help people?

- A. *Being from a family of tailors, Andy had learned a lot about clothing over the years—how to make it and how to alter it. (paragraph 2)*
- B. *Mr. Simone paid his bill and then carefully, almost proudly, placed the newly perfected pants over his arm. (paragraph 4)*
- C. *There was no denying that tailoring was a valuable service to some. (paragraph 4)*
- D. *That was exactly the reason Andy longed to create something of his own. (paragraph 6)*

42. In paragraph 15, the word donned means —

- A. mended
- B. thought about
- C. put on
- D. imagined

43. What lesson is referred to in the title of the story?

- A. Andy learning to work with clothing by watching his father
- B. Broden learning about fashion from Andy's clothing designs
- C. Broden learning how to feel as proud of himself as Andy does
- D. Andy learning the consequences of trying something different

44. Read this sentence from paragraph 9.

Mostly he drew during the free minutes of his day, when he could empty his mind and just trust his charcoal pencil.

Based on this sentence, the reader can conclude that Andy —

- A. puts very little thought into his designs
- B. draws when he is bored and has nothing else to do
- C. feels compelled to sketch his designs at every opportunity
- D. is unsure about how to use special drawing techniques

