

**GRADE 7**  
**Reading**

**Administered April 2013**

**RELEASED**

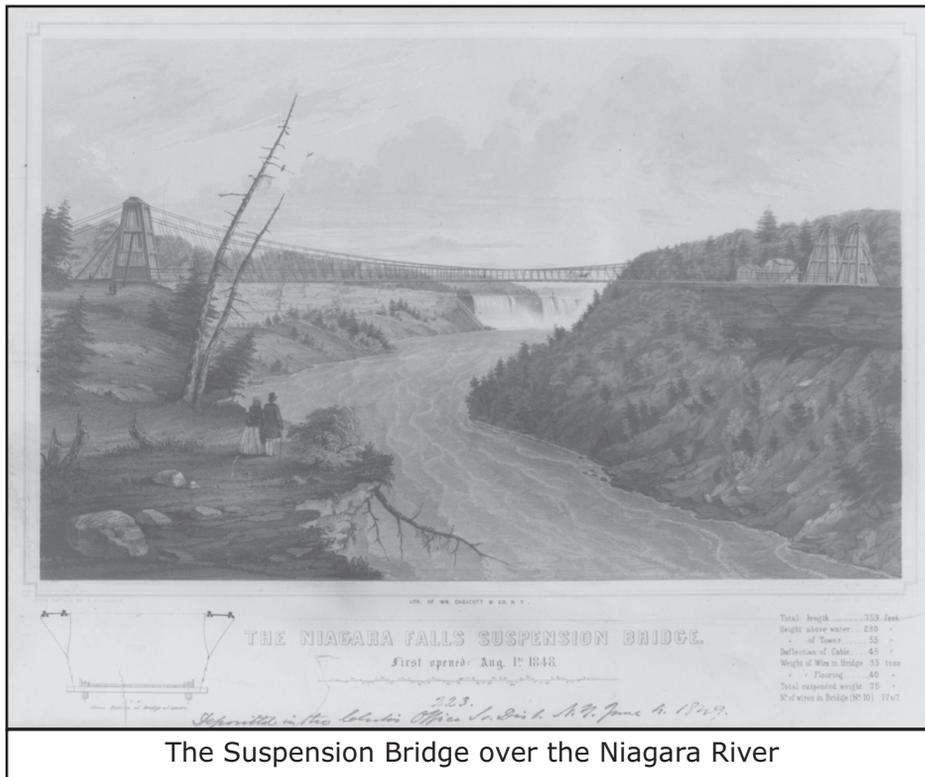


# READING

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

## Bridging Two Nations

- 1 On March 8, 1855, a 23-ton railroad engine crossed over the gorge on the new bridge near Niagara Falls. It was an exciting day because this was the first suspension railway bridge in the world. It was also an exciting day for Homan Walsh because the bridge might never have been built without his kite.



The Suspension Bridge over the Niagara River

Source: Library of Congress # LC-USZ62-13648

- 2 Bridges are usually built by engineers, but Walsh was not an engineer. He was a 15-year-old boy who liked to fly kites.
- 3 In 1847 an engineer from Pennsylvania named Charles Ellet, Jr., was awarded a contract to build a bridge across the Niagara River linking the United States with Canada by rail. However, Ellet quickly ran into a problem.
- 4 The bridge would have to be about 800 feet long, and it would have to be built about 225 feet above a part of the river that was called, for good reason, Whirlpool Rapids. Many experts said this couldn't be done.
- 5 The customary way to start building a bridge in those days was to pass a wire or string from one side of the body of water to the other, marking the spots where the bridge would begin and end. A small boat could normally be

used to carry the line, but not in this case. The water was too wild. Even big ferryboats had to cross farther up the river, in calmer waters.

- 6 There was a lot of debate about how to get that first line across. Some suggested that a rocket or cannonball with a line attached to it be fired across the gorge. Finally a local ironworker named Theodore Hulett decided to offer a prize of \$10 to anyone who could fly a kite from one side of the gorge to the other, landing it so that the string could become the first connection.
- 7 On a cold day in early 1848, a flock of kites was launched from the Canadian side of the gorge to take advantage of the winds that usually blew from west to east. Like many others, Walsh crossed the river from the American side on a ferry and walked two miles to the spot where the bridge was to begin.
- 8 When the wind was strong enough, Walsh launched his homemade kite. Little by little he let out the string until the kite was flying high over the other side. Now he had to wait for the wind to die down. After many hours his kite began to fall back to earth. Before it touched the ground, though, the string broke. So close to winning the contest, Walsh now found himself on one side of the gorge and his kite on the other.
- 9 Walsh did not want to give up. But because the river was too icy, he had to wait eight days in Canada before the ferry could take him back to the other side. After finding and repairing his kite, he returned to the Canadian side and tried again. This time he succeeded. Walsh's kite passed over the gorge and landed safely, and he was awarded the \$10 prize.
- 10 The next day a stronger line was tied to the kite string and pulled across the gorge. Then a thicker rope made the same trip. The line was now strong enough to start pulling metal cables across the gorge. Once these master cables were anchored on both sides, suspension cables could be hung from them to attach to a deck.
- 11 Several months later the bridge was ready for pedestrians and carriages. It swayed in the wind and was only 8 feet wide, but plenty of people were eager to pay the toll and make the crossing. A few years later this bridge was used as a platform to build a railway bridge directly above it.
- 12 In 2005, 10 teams of experienced kite fliers staged a reenactment of Walsh's effort. Only one of them was able to successfully fly a kite across the gorge. That shows how tremendous Walsh's achievement really was.

# CONSIDER THIS

**How is building a suspension bridge ... ... similar to weaving a spider web?**

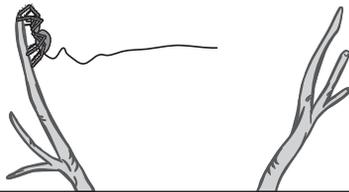


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**1**



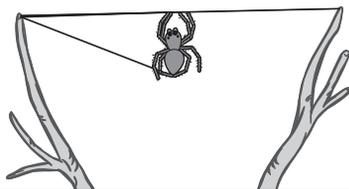
Just as construction of the bridge over the Niagara River began with a single string carried by a kite, a spider begins its web with a single thread blown by the wind from one surface to another.

**2**



Bridge engineers must attach a line between two points. A spider waits for its thread to attach to another surface.

**3**



After a line is attached between two points, engineers strengthen it little by little until it can support a bridge. Similarly, a spider adds more threads to make its first line strong enough to hold the rest of the web.

1 What does the word reenactment mean in paragraph 12?

- A A protest in response to an action
  - B A repetition of an event
  - C A celebration of a famous person
  - D A competition involving many participants
- 

2 According to the information in "Consider This," how is a spider weaving a web similar to Homan Walsh flying the kite?

- F Both depend on the wind for success.
  - G Both rely on others to complete their task.
  - H Both create something that is useful to others.
  - J Both experience failure in the beginning stages of their work.
- 

3 The image below paragraph 1 is included in the selection most likely to —

- A highlight the distance that the kite had to fly in order to cross the river
- B show where the ferry transported Walsh
- C explain how Walsh developed his plan for flying his kite across the river
- D show why engineers chose this location for a bridge

4 The author organizes this selection by —

- F identifying the reasons for building the bridge and showing how people benefited from it
  - G comparing building the bridge to flying a kite
  - H stating a problem related to building the bridge and explaining how it was solved
  - J listing all the people involved in building the bridge and describing their contributions
- 

5 Paragraph 10 is mainly about —

- A how the kite string was used to start the construction of the bridge
  - B why metal cables are used in suspension bridges
  - C when a stronger line was used to fly the kite across the gorge
  - D why cables needed to be anchored before attaching them to the deck
- 

6 According to the information in “Consider This,” when does a spider construct most of its web?

- F When the first thread is blown by the wind
- G Before attaching a thread to a surface
- H After reinforcing the first thread
- J When the wind stops blowing the threads

**7** Which of these conclusions about Homan Walsh is supported by paragraph 9?

- A** He was a perfectionist.
  - B** He was confident he would win the contest.
  - C** He did not accept failure.
  - D** He was motivated by the prize money offered to the winner.
- 

**8** Which idea do both the selection and “Consider This” emphasize?

- F** Individual steps are not as important as results.
  - G** A system of processes is required in construction.
  - H** Practice is essential for developing design skills.
  - J** Engineers must be patient in order to be successful.
- 

**9** In “Consider This,” how do the two photographs differ from the three drawings?

- A** The photographs demonstrate the multiple steps involved in completing two projects, while the drawings detail one step of a project.
- B** The photographs indicate who designed two projects, while the drawings do not.
- C** The photographs highlight the materials used in constructing two projects, while the drawings do not.
- D** The photographs show the two finished projects, while the drawings focus on a construction process.

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

## Car Talk

by Nicole M. Docteur

- 1 I've been the proud owner of a driving permit, a small plastic card verifying my right to drive with a consenting licensed driver, for the past year. I am also, unfortunately, a very poor driver. Thanks to my abilities, the rear end of our station wagon has seen pine trees, poles, and snow banks, all up-close and personal. It's embarrassing, actually. I am supposedly a bright, well-rounded student who should be able to sail through this one teenage rite of passage with no problem. Alas . . . I cannot.
- 2 The problem all started a year ago when that now-aging permit first found its way into my eager hands. Mom and I took our first trip around an empty parking lot. I was totally unaware that my mother was most definitely not the best teacher for me. It wasn't that she yelled, or told me that I was doing poorly. No, actually my mother told me I was doing quite well while digging her nails into the seat and trying to brake for me. As you can imagine, my mother's "helpful instructions" only managed to make me more nervous. A quick evening run to the drugstore, where I nearly plowed over a small, parked car, brought an end to any hopes of learning from Mom.
- 3 Since it was obvious that I could no longer practice with her, the job was placed in the hands of my father. The idea of learning from Dad was not one that thrilled me. I loved him dearly, but I just did not see Dad as someone I could be comfortable learning from. He almost never yelled, which was an advantage. And Dad also almost never talked. We shared a typical father-daughter relationship. He'd ask how school was, and I'd say it was fine. Unfortunately, that was the extent of most of our conversations. The prospect of spending hours alone with someone who might as well have been a stranger really scared me.
- 4 As we got into the car that first time, I was not surprised at what happened. Dad and I drove around, saying almost nothing, aside from a few instructions on how to turn. As my lessons wore on, however, things began to change. Dad would turn the radio up so I could fully experience, and thus appreciate, his favorite Stones music. And he actually began talking. It was a bit scarier than silence, at first. I was soon hearing about past failed dates, "basic bod" gym class, and other tales from his past, including some of his first encounters with Mom.
- 5 Dad's sudden chattiness was shocking until I thought about why he was telling me so much. In the car, I was a captive audience. In order to learn to drive, it was a requirement that I sit and listen to his every word. In all the years that I had wondered why my father never spoke that much, I had never stopped to consider the possibility that it was because I had never

bothered to listen. Homework, friends, and even TV had all called me away from him, and, consequently, I never thought my quiet father had anything to say.

- 6        Since I began driving with him, my dexterity on the road has greatly increased. More important, though, is that my knowledge of who my father is has also increased. Just living with him wasn't enough—it took driving with him for me to get to know someone who was a mystery.

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# Needed

*by Sandra Gilbert Brug*

"Brandy, time to go," says Mom.  
I hurry into coveralls, pull on my hat.  
The back door whacks behind me.  
It's a cold morning—stinging cold.

5 Dad loads our pickup with hay.  
We can't afford a hired man this winter;  
I'm only twelve, but I get to drive!  
I slip behind the steering wheel.

When we reach north pasture, Dad jumps out,  
10 climbs up on the load.  
Tires crunch in crusty snow.  
"Steer straight ahead," he calls.

Cows come running when they see our headlights  
hooves stirring up clouds of crystals.  
15 Steamy bodies crowd around us  
shoving, bawling, stealing mouthfuls of hay.

"Speed up," shouts Dad. "Watch that ditch on your right!"  
I press the gas, listen to the bale twine pop  
as Dad splits open hay bales  
20 pitching a trail of feed to hungry cows below.

When their bawling fades, I gear down  
drive as slow as it goes.  
The only sound is a low engine's growl.  
"Stop," yells Dad. He hops inside the cab  
25 bringing with him a sharp smell of hay.

"Needed" by Sandra Brug, copyright © 2002 by Sandra Gilbert Brug. Used by permission of the author.

**Use “Car Talk” (pp. 10–11) to answer questions 10–13.  
Then fill in the answers on your answer document.**

- 10** Read this sentence from paragraph 5.

*In the car, I was a captive audience.*

The author uses this sentence to explain how her driving lessons —

- F** made her feel helpless
- G** gave her father the chance to speak
- H** became deeply interesting to her
- J** allowed her father to display his skills

- 
- 11** Which of these is the best summary of the selection?

- A** The author had her driving permit for a whole year without learning how to drive well. Since her mother was unable to teach her, the task was given to her father. While driving with her father, the author learned about what type of music he liked and how he and her mother met.
- B** The author finally took the time to listen to her father’s stories about his life when he was young. Doing so made her realize that many things in her life were distracting her from having a close relationship with him.
- C** The author’s usually silent father tried to teach her how to drive. During the driving lessons he surprised her by talking freely. As the author learned more about her father, she realized that she needed to make an effort to develop a better relationship with him.
- D** The author wanted to learn to drive, and her father began to teach her. As the driving lessons continued, she got used to his personal stories and began to like them. The author’s driving skills eventually improved.

**12** Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

*Thanks to my abilities, the rear end of our station wagon has seen pine trees, poles, and snow banks, all up-close and personal.*

In this sentence the author —

- F** shares her fear of never getting a driver’s license
- G** explains why she is such a poor driver
- H** makes fun of her lack of skill
- J** describes the place where she lives

---

**13** What can the reader infer about the author’s father?

- A** He came to appreciate the opportunity to share his past with his daughter.
- B** He gave his daughter driving lessons because his wife insisted.
- C** He concentrated better than his daughter when they talked.
- D** He thought that talking to his daughter might help her drive better.

**Use "Needed" (p. 12) to answer questions 14–16.  
Then fill in the answers on your answer document.**

**14** What chore do the father and daughter perform in the poem?

- F** Baling hay
- G** Clearing snow
- H** Exercising cattle
- J** Feeding livestock

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**15** The imagery in stanzas 3 and 4 suggests that —

- A** Dad is not confident about Brandy's ability to drive
- B** Brandy is unable to see because of the dust
- C** Dad is in a hurry to finish the task
- D** Brandy is keenly aware of her surroundings

---

**16** The abrupt dialogue in the poem helps convey the idea that the characters are —

- F** enjoying the morning
- G** focused on their work
- H** cold and uncomfortable
- J** worried about their safety

**Use "Car Talk" and "Needed" to answer questions 17–21.  
Then fill in the answers on your answer document.**

- 17** Which of these best describes what the author of "Car Talk" and Brandy in "Needed" gain from the experience of driving?
- A** Both gain a deeper understanding of their own abilities.
  - B** Both gain a deeper understanding of family members.
  - C** The author of "Car Talk" becomes a skilled driver, while Brandy learns how to farm.
  - D** The author of "Car Talk" gets to know her father, while Brandy gets to help her family.
- 
- 18** How does the author of "Car Talk" differ from Brandy in "Needed"?
- F** The author of "Car Talk" wants to master a skill, while Brandy takes on a new responsibility.
  - G** The author of "Car Talk" thinks driving is scary, while Brandy thinks driving is fun.
  - H** The author of "Car Talk" is easily distracted, while Brandy pays attention when she drives.
  - J** The author of "Car Talk" does what she wants to do, while Brandy does what her father tells her to.

19 Read line 7 of the poem.

I'm only twelve, but I get to drive!

Which excerpt from "Car Talk" best matches the feeling expressed by the speaker in line 7 of the poem?

- A *we got into the car that first time*
  - B *Dad and I drove around, saying almost nothing*
  - C *that now-aging permit first found its way into my eager hands*
  - D *a small plastic card verifying my right to drive*
- 

20 How does "Car Talk" differ from "Needed"?

- F "Car Talk" describes events in the order that they happen.
  - G "Car Talk" shows how a father offers guidance.
  - H "Car Talk" focuses on something a girl experiences.
  - J "Car Talk" describes events that occur over a longer period.
- 

21 How are the fathers in "Car Talk" and "Needed" presented differently?

- A The father in "Car Talk" communicates by sharing stories, while the father in "Needed" communicates by giving instructions.
- B The father in "Car Talk" is eager to spend time with his daughter, while the father in "Needed" is hesitant about having his daughter help him.
- C The father in "Car Talk" demonstrates the importance of following directions, while the father in "Needed" demonstrates a carefree approach to driving.
- D The father in "Car Talk" is uncertain of his ability to provide instructions, while the father in "Needed" is confident when giving instructions.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

## Pavel's Journey

- 1 Pavel stood in the dim light of steerage, the lowest section of the boat. It was a foul place, filled with the stench of his fellow passengers, who hadn't been able to bathe since boarding the ship two weeks ago. His only escape came from the words of a letter, long memorized now, from his uncle. The letter contained no information about the difficulty of the journey—only praise for the destination. Pavel wasn't sure whether to curse his uncle for this omission or thank him for the descriptions that transported him from this dank vessel.
- 2 Uncle John, who had changed his name from Johannes after starting his new life in America, had written about the expansive skies, clean air, and endless available farmland in Texas. "We have named our town Praha, in honor of our own capital," the letter said. "A strong young man such as you could grow rich working a nice piece of land. You would never have such an opportunity in Bohemia."



Dinnertime in Steerage

Norway Heritage Collection

- 3 Pavel envied the passengers in the decks above him. The price of their tickets meant that they could sleep in a bunk bed and eat at a table. But Pavel had chosen to do without these comforts and save what little money he had in order to buy land in his new country.
- 4 Among the unpleasant odors that filled his nostrils, Pavel could just detect the smell of soup, now being served. From his uncle's letter he recited silently to himself. "We had the most pleasant feast last evening. We ate smoked sausage and pickled cabbage. I played polkas on my accordion so

that we could dance after a hard week’s work. One young woman, Ilona, never tires of dancing. I told her about my nephew Pavel. She is eager to dance with you.”

5 As Pavel imagined the delicious sausage, his stomach began to rumble. Of course, the soup served here contained no sausage. Still, it would offer a bit of nourishment. But when he saw the throng of people between himself and the soup pot, he despaired of reaching it before the pot was empty. A young girl beside him seemed to have come to the same conclusion. Miklos, a giant of a man with a big belly, stood before the soup pot as if guarding it.

6 Trying to maintain his balance as the boat suddenly lurched, Pavel moved toward the soup pot. Pavel’s progress was thwarted by Miklos, who blocked his way.

7 “Pardon me,” Pavel said, hoping Miklos would stand aside so he could get some soup.

8 Miklos looked down at Pavel with scornful amusement. “Pardon you?” he bellowed. And as if he were disposing of a sack of potatoes, Miklos hoisted Pavel by his trousers and deposited him on the other side of the ship.

9 Pavel was enraged. But he knew that a confrontation with Miklos would be pointless—like a sparrow attacking a vulture. Then Pavel had an idea. He began singing “Beautiful America,” a song known by most of the passengers. Soon other voices joined his. Some even began to dance in the confined space. Pavel then joined hands with the young girl and danced with her toward the soup pot.

10 As Pavel ladled soup into his bowl, he thought of the closing lines of Uncle John’s letter. “Although you have a long way to go, keep a smile on your face and a song in your heart. A beautiful life can be yours.”

**22** In paragraph 1, which words does the author use to create a gloomy mood?

- F** *dim, stench*
  - G** *lowest, vessel*
  - H** *boat, section*
  - J** *letter, curse*
- 

**23** Why is the letter important to this story?

- A** It shows that Pavel's countrymen have renamed their town.
  - B** It suggests that Pavel has family members who love him.
  - C** It tells how Pavel's uncle managed to acquire new land.
  - D** It explains Pavel's motivation for enduring the journey.
- 

**24** Pavel's interaction with Miklos contributes to the plot by —

- F** causing Pavel to use a different strategy to get some soup
- G** showing how much smaller Pavel is compared with Miklos
- H** highlighting why Miklos is rude to Pavel
- J** indicating where Miklos is standing when Pavel begins to sing a song

**25** Which of these best describes Pavel's internal conflict in the story?

- A** He is unhappy about the cost of his ticket.
  - B** A man places him on the other side of the ship.
  - C** A man stands between him and the soup pot.
  - D** He is not prepared for the misery of the voyage to America.
- 

**26** The point of view from which the story is told gives the reader insight into —

- F** Uncle John's optimistic attitude
  - G** the reasons for the travelers' journey
  - H** Pavel's feelings about his experience
  - J** how beautiful the passengers' destination is
- 

**27** How does the setting influence the plot of the story?

- A** The conditions on the boat contribute to the conflict Pavel experiences.
- B** The letter from Pavel's uncle introduces an important character.
- C** The man standing in front of the soup pot provides comic relief.
- D** Pavel's fellow passengers encourage him to remain hopeful about purchasing land.

**28** In paragraph 1, the word omission means something that is —

- F** offered
  - G** left out
  - H** changed
  - J** written down
- 

**29** Which of these is the best summary of the story?

- A** Pavel is immigrating to America to join his uncle. Many other people are also making the long journey to America. On the lowest deck of the boat, it is very crowded. Pavel thinks of a song to sing, and eventually others begin to sing and dance, too.
  - B** The trip to America is a long and difficult one, and the space below the decks is crowded and smelly. The only food is soup that the travelers must share. Pavel thinks about the people on the upper decks who can eat while sitting at a table. He finally gets soup for himself.
  - C** Pavel is traveling with many other immigrants on a boat to America. To avoid thinking about the smelly, crowded conditions, Pavel reflects on a letter from his uncle, who has settled in Texas. Pavel shows that he is focused on his goals when he thinks of a way to avoid a bully.
  - D** Some immigrants traveling to America are crowded together in the lowest deck of a boat. Pavel thinks about a letter from his uncle that tells about the life that Pavel will find when he reaches Texas. The letter describes the beautiful sky, the clean air, and the promise of endless farmland. Pavel looks forward to being there.
- 

**30** A theme expressed in the story centers on —

- F** treating everyone fairly
- G** helping those who are in need
- H** making the best of a bad situation
- J** hiding anger from others

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

## The International Sweethearts of Rhythm

- 1 Swing was one of the most popular kinds of music in the United States during the 1930s and 1940s. A form of jazz, swing music was played by bands in ballrooms and musical theaters. Swing musicians usually played instruments such as the clarinet, the saxophone, the trombone, and the trumpet. They frequently played the bass, the guitar, and the piano as well.
- 2 Hundreds of swing bands toured the country. Fans often waited in line for hours to hear their favorite groups.
- 3 One popular swing band that performed to sold-out crowds was the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. Two things set the Sweethearts apart from other bands. First, all the musicians in the 17-member band were women. Second, the group was racially integrated.
- 4 The Sweethearts were organized in 1937 when Laurence Clifton Jones, the director of the Piney Woods Country Life School in Mississippi, arranged for a group of students to play music together. Jones thought the young women could help raise money for the school. They were soon playing their music all over the state in school gyms and small dance halls.
- 5 The women chose to include "International" in the band's name because they came from many different cultural backgrounds. The band included African American, Chinese American, Mexican American, American Indian, and Puerto Rican members. All the band members aspired to become accomplished musicians.



The International Sweethearts of Rhythm

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- 6 In 1939 the Sweethearts began to travel outside Mississippi and tour other parts of the southern United States. During this time many people were intolerant toward those of different races. Some disliked the idea of women of different backgrounds performing together. On occasion the band members faced discrimination, but their popularity grew despite the challenges.
- 7 By 1941 the Sweethearts had become so successful that they decided to tour full-time as a professional band. At this point a few new musicians joined the group. The band traveled, rehearsed, slept, and ate in a large bus. It was an exciting, adventurous life. But they remained focused on their main ambition: to play great swing music.
- 8 The popularity of the Sweethearts increased; they were successful wherever they performed. In the early 1940s, they played mainly in large cities. Audiences filled places such as the Apollo Theater and the Savoy Ballroom in New York and the Howard Theater in Washington, D.C. On opening night at the Palace Theater in Memphis, Tennessee, more than 4,000 people waited in line.
- 9 A significant event during this time created special opportunities for all-female bands like the Sweethearts. In December 1941 the United States entered World War II. Because of the military draft, there were fewer male musicians. This created more opportunities for the Sweethearts to display their talents on a national stage.
- 10 All through the war years, the Sweethearts performed around the country. They made two coast-to-coast tours, recorded songs, and appeared in short films. Their music was played over shortwave radio to troops stationed overseas. One of their greatest honors was an invitation to perform for American soldiers in Europe. In 1945 the Sweethearts went on a six-month tour in France and Germany, playing for African American soldiers. The army newspaper *Stars and Stripes* published stories praising the group's performances.
- 11 The success of the Sweethearts refuted the idea that women couldn't play music with the same skill and passion as men. In fact, they became one of the longest-lasting all-women bands of the 1940s. By 1949, however, the swing era had come to an end, and the Sweethearts disbanded.
- 12 The group was nearly forgotten until the 1970s, when a jazz musician and historian named Marian McPartland contacted many of the original band members. In 1980 she arranged for them to meet at the Kansas City Women's Jazz Festival. An album of the Sweethearts' music was recorded in 1984. Two years later a documentary film devoted to their remarkable achievements was released. Today jazz fans can find recordings of the Sweethearts' amazing music on the Internet.

- 31** The main difference between the Sweethearts and most other bands of the 1940s was that the Sweethearts —
- A** were allowed to travel and perform in Europe
  - B** were a racially integrated group of women
  - C** played swing music outside the South
  - D** tended to perform in large cities

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**32** In paragraph 11, the word refuted means —

- F** ignored
- G** performed
- H** disproved
- J** questioned

- 33** Which sentence from the selection helps explain why the Sweethearts became successful?
- A** *Swing musicians usually played instruments such as the clarinet, the saxophone, the trombone, and the trumpet.*
  - B** *At this point a few new musicians joined the group.*
  - C** *The women chose to include "International" in the band's name because they came from many different cultural backgrounds.*
  - D** *But they remained focused on their main ambition: to play great swing music.*
- 

- 34** The author organizes the selection by —
- F** comparing the Sweethearts with other swing bands of the time
  - G** describing the Sweethearts' experience of traveling throughout the country
  - H** detailing the major accomplishments of the Sweethearts
  - J** relating the history of the Sweethearts in chronological order
- 

- 35** The author wrote this selection most likely to —
- A** explain how swing music is played
  - B** encourage young women to learn how to play musical instruments
  - C** celebrate a group of musicians who influenced American popular music
  - D** prove that the 1940s were a turning point for female musicians

- 36** Paragraph 3 reveals that the author intends to —
- F** offer reasons why the Sweethearts performed well
  - G** explain what made the Sweethearts unique
  - H** express an opinion about the type of music the Sweethearts performed
  - J** describe how members of the Sweethearts were selected
- 

- 37** Becoming a full-time traveling band helped the Sweethearts by —
- A** increasing their popularity
  - B** enabling them to recruit new members
  - C** allowing them to earn money for school
  - D** providing them with opportunities to listen to all-male bands
- 

- 38** Which sentence expresses the main idea of the selection?
- F** The International Sweethearts of Rhythm traveled and performed in the United States during World War II.
  - G** The International Sweethearts of Rhythm commonly performed to sold-out crowds in ballrooms and theaters.
  - H** The International Sweethearts of Rhythm were an all-female touring swing band popular during the 1940s.
  - J** The International Sweethearts of Rhythm chose to play swing music because it was what most people wanted to hear.

**39** Based on the selection, why did the Sweethearts stop playing together?

- A** The musicians became tired of traveling to different cities.
- B** Swing music eventually became less popular in the United States.
- C** Americans were uninterested in music during World War II.
- D** Musical groups composed of only women were no longer a novelty.

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**40** Which of these is the best summary of the selection?

- F** The International Sweethearts of Rhythm were a touring swing band made up of young women from different ethnic backgrounds. Although the band faced discrimination in the segregated South, the Sweethearts achieved success in the 1930s and 1940s.
- G** In 1937 a group of young female musicians formed a band that would become known as the International Sweethearts of Rhythm. The musicians played instruments such as the clarinet, the saxophone, the trombone, the trumpet, the bass, the guitar, and the piano.
- H** Swing was an extremely popular kind of music played by many American bands during the 1930s and 1940s. One of the most interesting and talented swing groups of this period was the International Sweethearts of Rhythm, a 17-member band from Mississippi.
- J** The International Sweethearts of Rhythm were a successful band that included African American, Chinese American, Mexican American, American Indian, and Puerto Rican members. Just a few years after the group was founded, the Sweethearts were able to become a professional touring band.

- 41** A documentary film about the International Sweethearts of Rhythm was made most likely because the band —
- A** promoted other swing bands while performing around the world
  - B** made major contributions to the growth of swing music
  - C** played in many different music venues throughout the United States
  - D** performed a new style of music that was embraced by the public

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- 42** The band's name is significant because it highlights —
- F** the fact that the musicians came from diverse cultures
  - G** the support the musicians gave to soldiers in wartime
  - H** the type of music the band played
  - J** the fact that the band performed in countries around the world

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

# The Fly

*Adapted from a Vietnamese folktale*

## Characters

**BOY:** A 13-year-old

**MOTHER:** A peasant

**FATHER:** A peasant

**BANKER:** A wealthy older man

**MANDARIN:** A government official

**NARRATOR:** A person dressed in black holding a stick with a small plastic fly attached to the end of a wire

## SCENE 1

- 1 **NARRATOR:** [*In front of the curtain.*] Hello. I'd like you to meet the star of our show. [*Displays the small fly.*] Yes. He's the star. Let's take a trip to Southeast Asia to a small village in Vietnam, where our tale begins with a 13-year-old boy.
- 2 [*The Narrator steps aside as the curtain rises, revealing the Boy kicking a handmade soccer ball in front of his family's humble home. He kicks up dust as he tries to keep the ball in the air.*]
- 3 **NARRATOR:** [*Leaning in.*] He's playing soccer, one of Vietnam's favorite pastimes.
- 4 [*The Banker walks toward the Boy.*]
- 5 **NARRATOR:** [*Noticing the Banker.*] Oh, here comes trouble. I'm going to get out of his way. [*Exits.*]
- 6 **BANKER:** [*Dusting off his expensive suit while standing near the Boy.*] Are your parents home?
- 7 **BOY:** [*Looks up and then continues to kick the ball.*] No.
- 8 **BANKER:** [*Annoyed.*] Well, where are they?
- 9 [*The Boy ignores the Banker.*]
- 10 **BANKER:** [*Snatching the ball from the Boy.*] I asked you a question. Maybe you didn't hear me. [*Louder.*] Where are they?

- 11 **BOY:** My father has gone to cut living trees and plant dead ones, and my mother is at the market selling the wind to buy the moon.
- 12 **BANKER:** [*Appearing flustered.*] What? That's nonsense! Tell me where they are or I'll rip your soccer ball to shreds.
- 13 **BOY:** I told you. My father has gone to cut living trees and plant dead ones, and my mother is at the market selling the wind to buy the moon.
- 14 **BANKER:** Listen. [*Crossing his arms and raising an eyebrow.*] I came here to collect money your parents owe me. If you tell me where they are, I'll cease collection of their debts.
- 15 [*The Boy stares in disbelief.*]
- 16 **BANKER:** As heaven and earth are my witness, your parents will make no more payments.
- 17 **BOY:** Heaven and earth cannot talk, so how can they testify in court? I need a living thing to be a witness.
- 18 [*The Narrator enters, swinging the fly around and making a "bzzz" sound.*]
- 19 **BANKER:** [*Swats the fly away and smiles. The Narrator "lands" the fly on a nearby bamboo pole.*] Look! What luck! This fly can be our witness. Now you can tell me.
- 20 **BOY:** [*Thinking.*] A fly is a good enough witness for me. My father has gone to cut down bamboo to make a fence for a man near the river. And my mother . . . [*Pretending to waver.*] You promise, right?
- 21 **BANKER:** Yes, yes, I swear in front of this fly.
- 22 **BOY:** My mother has gone to the market to sell fans so that she can buy oil for our lamps. Isn't that what you would call selling the wind to buy the moon?
- 23 **BANKER:** [*Nodding.*] Ah, yes. Very good. Good-bye, clever boy. I will see you again soon.
- 24 [*The Banker smiles as he tosses the Boy's ball to him and exits. The Boy enters his home.*]

## SCENE 2

- 25 **NARRATOR:** [*Stands at center stage, turning the hands of a large clock he is holding.*] Our next scene takes place several days later. [*Turns the hands faster and faster and then stops.*] You get the idea.
- 26 [*The Banker walks toward the house.*]
- 27 **NARRATOR:** He's back, and he doesn't look friendly.
- 28 [*The Narrator exits as the Banker knocks on the door.*]
- 29 **MOTHER:** [*Answers the door.*] Oh, hello.

- 30 **BANKER:** I've come to collect.
- 31 **MOTHER:** Please. We just need a little more time.
- 32 **BANKER:** Your time's up!
- 33 **MOTHER:** Please, sir. Can't you find it in your heart to give us one more week?
- 34 **BANKER:** [*Laughs.*] My heart? We're talking about money you owe me!
- 35 **BOY:** [*Appearing in the doorway.*] No! You don't owe him. He promised me he would forget about the debt.
- 36 **BANKER:** I would never do such a thing!
- 37 **BOY:** It's true. He promised.
- 38 [*The curtain falls.*]

### SCENE 3

- 39 **NARRATOR:** [*Standing at center stage. The curtain rises, revealing the Boy, his Mother, his Father, and the Banker in a small government court. The Mandarin is seated before them.*] The boy's parents know that their son is honest, so they have gone to court to let a mandarin decide what to do. The boy has just finished explaining what happened between him and the banker. [*Steps aside.*]
- 40 **MANDARIN:** Well, we have only your word. How do we know you're telling the truth? You need a witness to confirm your story.
- 41 **BOY:** I do have a witness, Your Honor.
- 42 **MANDARIN:** Who?
- 43 **BOY:** A fly.
- 44 **MANDARIN:** A fly? This is not a place for fantasies, boy.
- 45 **BOY:** It's true. A fly landed on the tip of this man's nose.
- 46 **BANKER:** You lying rat! The fly wasn't on my nose! It was on the bamboo pole! [*Quickly covers his mouth.*]
- 47 [*Everyone stares at the Banker.*]
- 48 **MANDARIN:** [*Laughing.*] Well! I'm glad we sorted that out! You made a promise, sir, and you must keep it. These people don't owe you a thing!
- 49 [*The Boy, his Mother, and his Father celebrate as the curtain falls.*]
- 50 **NARRATOR:** [*Standing in front of the curtain.*] The moral of our tale? Always tell the truth, and never underestimate the power of a fly!
- 51 [*The Narrator "buzzes" and pretends to fly across the stage as he exits.*]

**43** What does the word flustered mean in paragraph 12?

- A** Irritated
- B** Greedy
- C** Suspicious
- D** Sly

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**44** In Scene 1, the dialogue between the boy and the banker reveals that the boy —

- F** does not understand why the banker is visiting
- G** enjoys talking with the banker
- H** refuses to respond to the banker's questions
- J** does not feel threatened by the banker

45 Read the following line from Scene 3 of the play.

**NARRATOR:** The boy's parents know that their son is honest, so they have gone to court to let a mandarin decide what to do.

What is ironic about the parents' belief that their son is honest?

- A The boy realizes that the witness is unable to talk about the agreement.
- B The boy does not want to reveal to the banker where his parents are.
- C The boy explains that the banker said he would not collect the money owed.
- D The boy lies in court in order to get the banker to tell the truth.

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46 The playwright uses the stage directions at the end of Scene 1 to hint that —

- F the banker cannot be trusted
- G the boy is tired of playing
- H the witness is not reliable
- J the boy's parents will be home soon

**47** In paragraph 20, the word waver means to —

- A** tease
- B** be unhappy
- C** hesitate
- D** be humble

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**48** Paragraph 30 is important to the play because it shows that the banker —

- F** often forgets about agreements he has made
- G** has no intention of forgiving the family's debt
- H** is still upset about the boy's responses to his questions
- J** has an important job in the village

- 49 Which of the following lines does the playwright include to show that the boy is clever?
- A **BOY:** My mother has gone to the market to sell fans so that she can buy oil for our lamps. Isn't that what you would call selling the wind to buy the moon?
  - B **BOY:** It's true. He promised.
  - C **BOY:** I do have a witness, Your Honor.
  - D **BOY:** [*Appearing in the doorway.*] No! You don't owe him. He promised me he would forget about the debt.

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- 50 Read these lines from paragraph 5.

**NARRATOR:** [*Noticing the Banker.*]  
Oh, here comes trouble. I'm going to  
get out of his way. [*Exits.*]

The playwright includes these lines to suggest that —

- F other characters have a negative view of the banker
- G the narrator is cowardly
- H the banker and the boy will disagree
- J the banker is in a rush

BE SURE YOU HAVE RECORDED ALL OF YOUR ANSWERS  
ON THE ANSWER DOCUMENT.









**STAAR  
GRADE 7  
Reading  
April 2013**