

GRADE 7
Reading

Administered April 2015

RELEASED

READING

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

Air Force One

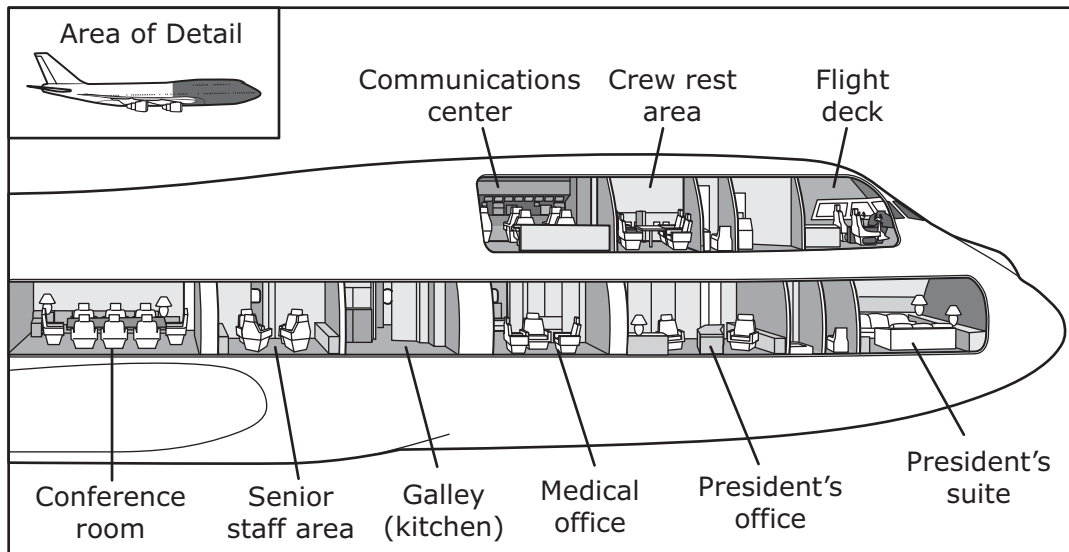
- 1 The most important aircraft in the United States Air Force is a plane labeled VC-25A, better known as Air Force One. This plane has a single and very significant function: to provide air transportation for the president of the United States.
- 2 Technically speaking, Air Force One isn't the name of a specific airplane. Rather, it is the radio call sign for any air force aircraft the president is aboard. But most people who hear the term think of the plane dedicated to carrying U.S. presidents across the country and throughout the world. The outside of the plane is decorated with an American flag and the presidential seal. The words "United States of America" are painted along its sides.



Air Force One at an Airport

- 3 The differences between a standard Boeing 747, which is widely used to carry regular citizens from one airport to another, and the Boeing 747-200B that the president currently uses, are substantial. The president's plane is loaded with state-of-the-art navigation and communications equipment. The 4,000 square feet of floor space is laid out differently from that of a typical plane. The president has a full suite at his disposal, complete with a dressing room, bathroom, and office. Another large room can accommodate conferences and dining. When the president travels on Air Force One, he is usually accompanied by a large entourage of advisers, guests, Secret Service members, air force crews, and members of the news media. Work and rest areas are available for the entire group. Two food-prep stations can serve up to 100 meals at one sitting. The design of the plane is ideal for the president and his staff.

Main Decks of Air Force One



- 4 The plane is largely self-sufficient wherever it goes. Air Force One has the ability to refuel in flight, so it can fly as long as it needs to. The plane is armored and can serve as a mobile command center in a national emergency. The lowest level of the plane is reserved for extra food and other supplies.

The Flying Presidents

- 5 Presidents have always had to travel, of course. We often see paintings of George Washington sitting on a horse. Trains were the vehicle of choice for long-distance travel in the nineteenth century, giving rise to the whistle-stop speeches that continue today as part of political campaigns. Theodore Roosevelt traveled by ship to Panama in 1906, becoming the first president to travel abroad while in office.
- 6 Official air transportation for presidents began in 1944 with a plane called *Sacred Cow*, which was used by Franklin D. Roosevelt. Harry S. Truman flew on *Independence*, while Dwight D. Eisenhower traveled on *Columbine II* and *Columbine III*. John F. Kennedy's official Boeing 707 was the first plane to be called Air Force One. Kennedy approved the blue and white colors on the plane to contrast with the military look of previous presidential airplanes. This was perhaps the most famous version of Air Force One, and it carried eight presidents over the years. Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in as president aboard the plane in 1963. Richard Nixon flew aboard the same plane on his historic visits abroad.

Revealing Character

- 7 Some Washington insiders have noted that time aboard Air Force One can reveal more about a president's personality than a typical day at the White House can. David Gergen served as an adviser to presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and Clinton. He was able to observe each of them at the White

House and aboard Air Force One. His view is that presidents seem more relaxed and act less formal aboard Air Force One than in the Oval Office. On the plane everyone is sitting closer together. According to Gergen, it's "a place where you can let your guard down," encouraging "more candid conversations."

- 8 Of Nixon's time on Air Force One, Gergen notes that the president sought privacy, not socializing. "Nixon wanted to keep a wall," he says. Ronald Reagan, though easy to get along with, was also somewhat of a loner. Reagan said that he could get more work done on the plane than at the White House. He particularly liked to use his time on board to write letters.
- 9 Bill Clinton was different, says Gergen. He enjoyed playing cards on the plane and was clearly energized by socializing with others. "Sometimes," Clinton recalled, "it was the first time in days I had been in a place where I could be away from the phones and away from mandatory meetings."
- 10 Air Force One is sometimes referred to as the "flying Oval Office." It may be more tranquil and relaxed than the White House, but a president's duty travels with him no matter where he goes—or how he gets there.



President Barack Obama Aboard Air Force One

Official White House photo by Pete Souza

- 1** The author wrote this selection most likely to —
- A** recount the history of presidential transportation in the United States
 - B** describe Air Force One and its role in transporting U.S. presidents
 - C** compare various U.S. presidents' attitudes toward Air Force One
 - D** explain why frequent travel is required of U.S. presidents

-
- 2** The primary purpose of the Air Force One diagram is to —
- F** describe how Air Force One is designed to maintain security for everyone aboard
 - G** present the kinds of tasks the president completes aboard Air Force One
 - H** illustrate how the communications equipment functions aboard Air Force One
 - J** show that Air Force One is designed to meet the needs of the president and his staff

3 Read the dictionary entry for the word disposal.

disposal \di-'spō-zəl\ *n*
1. the authority to make use of 2. a giving away or ridding of 3. a settling of matters
4. arrangement in a particular order

Which meaning of disposal is used in paragraph 3?

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

4 Paragraph 7 focuses primarily on —

- F the general atmosphere aboard Air Force One
- G the kinds of meetings held aboard Air Force One
- H the presidential advisers who have traveled on Air Force One
- J the staff members who accompany the president on Air Force One

- 5 Which sentence from the selection states an opinion?
- A *Technically speaking, Air Force One isn't the name of a specific airplane.*
 - B *Richard Nixon flew aboard the same plane on his historic visits abroad.*
 - C *Ronald Reagan, though easy to get along with, was also somewhat of a loner.*
 - D *The president's plane is loaded with state-of-the-art navigation and communications equipment.*

-
- 6 Read these sentences from the selection.

The outside of the plane is decorated with an American flag and the presidential seal. The words "United States of America" are painted along its sides. (paragraph 2)

Air Force One is sometimes referred to as the "flying Oval Office." (paragraph 10)

What idea does the author communicate with these sentences?

- F Many people know that Air Force One is used to transport the president.
- G The exterior design of Air Force One includes several complex features.
- H Parts of Air Force One are modeled after rooms at the White House.
- J Air Force One has become a symbol of the U.S. presidency.

- 7** Which of these ideas is reinforced throughout the selection?
- A** The president’s duties have not changed over the years.
 - B** Presidential advisers have the opportunity to work closely with the president.
 - C** The president’s duties do not cease when he travels.
 - D** It takes the president more time to get work done while traveling than at home.

-
- 8** The author organizes the selection by —
- F** comparing different forms of presidential transportation and then providing reasons why traveling on Air Force One is more convenient
 - G** explaining the advanced technology used on Air Force One and then giving examples of how the president uses that technology
 - H** stating historical facts about Air Force One and then discussing how it can serve as a mobile command center
 - J** describing how Air Force One is different from a standard plane and then providing information about the plane’s role in history

- 9 In paragraph 3, the author compares Air Force One with a standard Boeing 747 in order to —
- A emphasize that Air Force One is a unique plane
 - B explain the need for a larger presidential plane
 - C list all the features of Air Force One
 - D describe the roles of specialized crew members

-
- 10 Which sentence supports the idea that presidents feel comfortable aboard Air Force One?
- F *Air Force One has the ability to refuel in flight, so it can fly as long as it needs to.*
 - G *His view is that presidents seem more relaxed and act less formal aboard Air Force One than in the Oval Office.*
 - H *This was perhaps the most famous version of Air Force One, and it carried eight presidents over the years.*
 - J *Presidents have always had to travel, of course.*

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

A Hard Rain

Characters

ERICA
REGGIE
DAD

Scene 1

- 1 [Curtain opens to a cabin with bare furnishings. Erica is tapping on her cell phone. The room is dark and gloomy. Rain can be heard hitting the roof.]
- 2 **ERICA:** No reception at all!
- 3 **REGGIE:** [From offstage.] They have a chess set.
- 4 **ERICA:** I can't text. Can't call. And no Internet! I could be nominated for a Nobel Prize and have no way of knowing it.
- 5 **REGGIE:** [Enters carrying a box.] Look, a puzzle. [Hands Erica the box.]
- 6 **ERICA:** It's 2,000 pieces. We could build a boat and sail away before finishing that.
- 7 **REGGIE:** [Looking out the window.] I think the rain is stopping.
- 8 **ERICA:** Don't start that.
- 9 **REGGIE:** No, really. There's a little patch of blue sky.
- 10 **ERICA:** [Shaking her head.] I can't believe Dad dragged us up here.
- 11 **REGGIE:** How can you say that? When we were younger, you loved going on trips like this.
- 12 **ERICA:** We're not little kids anymore. Besides, Dad could've at least checked the weather first.
- 13 **REGGIE:** Remember when we hiked up that mountain? Dad deviated from the trail, and we ended up going in circles for three hours before we realized it.
- 14 **ERICA:** If I remember correctly, *you* were navigating, not Dad. But where is he now? He's been gone for two hours.
- 15 **REGGIE:** You know him. He's probably chatting with someone at the general store.
- 16 **ERICA:** If that's the case, you *will* finish the puzzle before he gets back.

17 **REGGIE:** At least I'll have accomplished something other than sitting around and whining.

18 [*Thunder roars, and the sound of rainfall increases. The lights dim.*]

Scene 2

19 [*Lights up. It is one hour later. Rain is still pouring. Erica plays solitaire on the floor. Reggie is sitting on a couch, plucking an out-of-tune guitar while watching the door.*]

20 **ERICA:** [*Annoyed.*] Can you stop trying to play that thing?

21 **REGGIE:** Come on, I need to do something to pass the—

22 [*Erica's cell phone rings. Reggie watches her intently.*]

23 **ERICA:** [*Looks at the phone screen.*] This isn't Dad's number. [*Answers the phone.*] Hello? [*Listens.*] Dad, is that you? [*Listens.*] What? I can't hear any—hello? [*A click is heard.*]

24 **REGGIE:** [*Eagerly.*] Try calling back.

25 **ERICA:** [*Presses redial, listens.*] The call won't connect.

26 **REGGIE:** I'm sure that was Dad calling to tell us that he's O.K.

27 **ERICA:** But what if he was calling because he needs help? I couldn't hear anything except static. We need to get to a phone that works.

28 **REGGIE:** There's no landline here, and we can't leave the cabin until the storm subsides.

29 [*Erica runs offstage and then returns with sneakers and a jacket.*]

30 **ERICA:** [*Ties the laces of her sneakers.*] Come on, Reggie. We have to try to get to a phone. [*She puts the jacket on and zips it.*]

31 **REGGIE:** Erica, seriously, you can't go out there.

32 [*Erica walks across the stage to the door. She opens the door just as a loud crash of thunder is heard over the rain. She pauses, staring at the rain. After a few seconds she turns to Reggie.*]

33 **ERICA:** Are you coming with me?

34 **REGGIE:** Do you really think this is a good idea? The closest cabin is almost a mile away.

35 **ERICA:** [*Sighs.*] And with you as my navigator, we might never find our cabin again. [*She closes the door and begins unzipping her jacket as she leaves the room.*]

36 [*Reggie looks out the window with a worried expression on his face. He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath. Another thunderclap is heard. The lights dim.*]

Scene 3

- 37 *[Lights up. Rain falls softly now. Erica and Reggie sit staring at each other.]*
- 38 **REGGIE:** *[Breaks the silence.]* How long has Dad been gone?
- 39 **ERICA:** Four hours.
- 40 **REGGIE:** *[Gets up and looks out the window.]* That creek is really high.
- 41 **ERICA:** Sit down, Reggie.
- 42 **REGGIE:** *[Pacing.]* Maybe we should try to find a neighbor with a landline now that the storm has cleared. Or maybe you should try your phone again. Does it have reception? Now that the rain is gone, it might—
- 43 **ERICA:** *[Interrupting.]* Why don't we work on that puzzle? That should help you compose yourself. Sound good?
- 44 **REGGIE:** *[Frantically.]* No, Erica. That storm was really bad, and we still don't know where Dad is.
- 45 **ERICA:** Try to relax. I'm sure Dad is fine. There's nothing we can do right now anyway.
- 46 *[The lights of a vehicle shine through the window. Reggie rushes across the stage to look out the window.]*
- 47 **REGGIE:** It's Dad!
- 48 *[Reggie and Erica run to the door.]*
- 49 **ERICA:** He's here!
- 50 *[Dad enters.]*
- 51 **REGGIE:** Dad, we were worried about you!
- 52 **DAD:** I'm sorry. I'm fine. I just had no way to reach you.
- 53 **REGGIE:** What happened?
- 54 **DAD:** When the hard rain hit, I had to go back to town and wait. I tried calling Erica's cell phone from a landline in town, but I couldn't get through.
- 55 **REGGIE:** I'm just glad you're safe.
- 56 **ERICA:** *[To Reggie.]* See, there was no reason for you to freak out.
- 57 **REGGIE:** *[Rolls eyes.]* You were the one who worried the whole time Dad was gone.
- 58 **DAD:** *[Smiles.]* Now that the rain has stopped, it'll be perfect swimming weather soon!
- 59 *[Curtain closes.]*

- 11** The playwright uses the sounds of rain and thunder throughout the play mainly to —
- A** inform the audience about the progress of the storm
 - B** give the characters a topic to discuss while they are waiting
 - C** help the audience understand the characters' changing relationship
 - D** hint at how the characters will resolve their conflict
-

- 12** The stage directions and dialogue in paragraph 35 indicate that Erica —
- F** thinks Dad will try to call her cell phone again
 - G** realizes she is not being supportive of Reggie
 - H** knows that Reggie will help her if she asks
 - J** decides she should remain inside the cabin
-

- 13** What does deviated mean in paragraph 13?
- A** Originated
 - B** Returned
 - C** Strayed
 - D** Recovered

14 Erica’s responses in Scene 1 are important because they show —

- F** how she handles criticism from others
 - G** that she has a friendly relationship with Reggie
 - H** how she reacts to difficult circumstances
 - J** that she feels responsible for taking care of Reggie
-

15 Why does the playwright include the stage directions at the beginning of Scene 1?

- A** To show how the setting has caused a conflict for the characters
 - B** To describe what time of day the characters arrived at the cabin
 - C** To provide background information about the relationship between the characters
 - D** To foreshadow the characters’ actions later in the play
-

16 The Latin word *sidere*, meaning “to sink,” helps the reader understand that subsides in paragraph 28 means to —

- F** improve
- G** lessen
- H** react
- J** return

- 17** The playwright uses the stage directions at the beginning and end of Scene 2 to highlight that Reggie —
- A** feels relieved that Erica chose to stay at the cabin
 - B** thinks the storm is unlikely to end soon
 - C** is worried that Erica will try to leave the cabin again
 - D** is more concerned about Dad than he is telling Erica
-

- 18** Reggie’s dialogue in paragraphs 5 through 11 suggests that he —
- F** is tired of bickering with Erica
 - G** feels confident that Dad listened to the weather report
 - H** is hopeful that he and Erica can enjoy their time at the cabin
 - J** believes that indoor activities lead to boredom
-

- 19** Erica’s dialogue in Scene 1 mainly relates the idea that she —
- A** misunderstands the purpose of modern technology
 - B** feels frustrated about having to spend time at the cabin
 - C** anticipates that the rain will ruin the entire trip to the cabin
 - D** remembers the details of family trips better than her brother does

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

Golden Opportunities

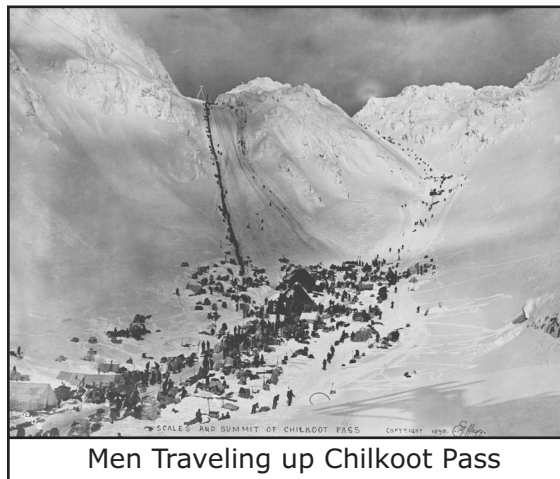
- 1 On August 17, 1896, three men discovered a thumb-sized gold nugget near the Klondike River in the Yukon Territory of Canada. This marked the beginning of the Klondike gold rush.
- 2 During the 1890s the United States was experiencing an economic depression. News of the gold find gave people hope. Fortune seekers from all over the United States departed for the goldfields.
- 3 While many people did become rich as a result of the gold rush, very few of them made their money by digging for gold. Demand for equipment and services created thousands of jobs as gold seekers prepared to travel by ship and overland to the Yukon. For people with a good head for business and a flair for adventure, the opportunities were limitless.

Moneymaking Venture 1: Comforts

- 4 One clever entrepreneur was Belinda Mulroney. Before traveling to Canada, Mulroney invested \$5,000 in clothing and hot-water bottles. When she reached Dawson—the closest town to the goldfields—she sold these items for seven times the amount she purchased them for. Within days she was \$30,000 richer. She used this money to open a restaurant. Before the gold rush was over, Mulroney had opened several restaurants and hotels in Dawson.
- 5 Fred Trump, the grandfather of real-estate tycoon Donald Trump, earned his fortune by operating a hotel along one of the routes to the goldfields.

Moneymaking Venture 2: Transportation

- 6 Other noteworthy businesses involved leading expeditions and transporting goods along the trails to the goldfields. Ships carrying prospectors docked in Skagway, Alaska. From there the prospectors crossed 600 miles of wilderness



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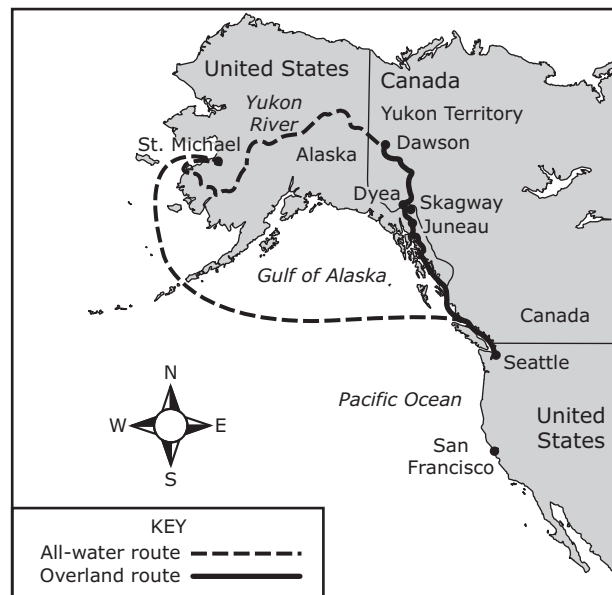
en route to the Yukon. Because prospectors were not allowed over the Canadian border without a year's worth of supplies, most were burdened with more than 1,000 pounds of provisions.

- 7 The trails to the Yukon were famously grueling. The Tlingit, people native to the area, offered their services as guides. They charged per mile and by weight when they helped carry supplies.
- 8 One of the most popular trails traversed Chilkoot Pass, an incredibly steep slope that was covered in ice during the cold months. It took an average of three months and 40 trips to haul the supplies of each person over Chilkoot Pass. One industrious group of men carved 1,500 steps into the icy slope. The men made their fortune collecting tolls from travelers.

Moneymaking Venture 3: Supplies

- 9 As many people discovered, it was not even necessary to travel to the Yukon in order to profit from the gold rush. One city that was drastically changed by the discovery of gold in the Yukon was Seattle, Washington. Because Seattle was one of the northernmost ports before entering Canada and Alaska, it became the launching point for most people traveling to the goldfields.

Routes to the Yukon Goldfields from Seattle



- 10 Thousands of businesspeople came to Seattle ready to offer goods and services to the prospectors. The Seattle Chamber of Commerce moved quickly to take advantage of this upswing in the economy. It publicized Seattle as the "Gateway to the Golden Fields," hoping to bring the prospectors' business to Seattle.
- 11 During 1898 some \$10 million in gold was found in the Yukon. In that same year businesses that provided goods and services to the prospectors brought in over \$60 million. Clearly, the fortunes made during the gold rush depended more on finding unique opportunities than on finding shiny gold nuggets. Either way, the gold rush helped pull the United States out of a staggering economic slump.

"A Gold Miner's Tale" is from Bobbi Katz's collection *We the People*. In this poem, Katz writes in the voice of Frank Wexler, a gold miner who lived during the era of the Klondike gold rush.

A Gold Miner's Tale

FRANK WEXLER—DAWSON CITY, YUKON TERRITORY, 1898

by Bobbi Katz

I was twenty-one years old.

Fired up by dreams of gold.

Rushing West in '49

to stake a claim to my own mine!

5 What did I find when I got there?

Thousands of "rushers" everywhere!

Water and sand. That's ALL it takes.

Swish your pan. Pick out the flakes!

A meal?

10 A horse?

A place to stay?

Who'd believe what we had to pay!

Bought a shovel. Bought a pan.

Soon I'd be a rich young man.

15 Water and sand. That's ALL it takes.

Swish your pan. Pick out the flakes!

Pan after pan, I'd swish and wish

for a glint of pay dirt in my dish.

Asleep at night, what did I see?

20 Nuggets the daylight hid from me.

It takes more than a flash in the pan

to make a rusher a rich young man.

The gold I found? Just enough to get by.

I gave up when my claim went dry.

25 Water and sand. That's ALL it takes.
Swish your pan. Pick out the flakes!
Got a job in a hydraulic mine.
Hated the work, but the pay was fine.
So when I heard about Pikes Peak,
30 I
was
in
the Rockies
within a week!
35 Water and sand. That's ALL it takes.
Swish your pan. Pick out the flakes!
I should have known better.
With a grubstake so small,
I left Colorado with nothing at all.
40 No job. No gold. Just a shovel and a pan.
But I walked away a wiser man.

"Gold in the Klondike!"

Wouldn't you think
I'd be up there in a wink?
45 But with my new plan to pan gold flakes,
I didn't make the same mistakes.
Before I joined the great stampede,
I thought: What will stampedeers need?
Now I'm a Dawson millionaire!
50 I sell them ALL long underwear.

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**Use “Golden Opportunities” (pp. 18–20) to answer questions 20–24.
Then fill in the answers on your answer document.**

- 20** The reader can conclude that Belinda Mulroney’s first restaurant —
- F** was the only restaurant in town
 - G** also sold clothes and mining supplies
 - H** was a successful business investment
 - J** offered miners good food at low prices
-
- 21** Which phrase from paragraph 6 helps the reader understand the meaning of the word grueling in paragraph 7?
- A** *Other noteworthy businesses involved*
 - B** *prospectors were not allowed*
 - C** *burdened with more than 1,000 pounds of provisions*
 - D** *transporting goods along the trails*
-
- 22** The author wrote this selection most likely to —
- F** explain different ways people profited from the gold rush
 - G** describe the prospectors’ journey to the goldfields in detail
 - H** highlight how the search for gold gave people hope for the future
 - J** relate the history of how the gold rush began

- 23** Which sentence supports the idea that goods were in demand during the Klondike gold rush?
- A** *They charged per mile and by weight when they helped carry supplies.*
 - B** *When she reached Dawson—the closest town to the goldfields—she sold these items for seven times the amount she purchased them for.*
 - C** *The men made their fortune collecting tolls from travelers.*
 - D** *It publicized Seattle as the "Gateway to the Golden Fields," hoping to bring the prospectors' business to Seattle.*

-
- 24** The map is included in the selection most likely to —
- F** explain why gold was found in the Yukon Territory of Canada
 - G** illustrate why Seattle became an important port during the Yukon gold rush
 - H** emphasize how dangerous the trails to the Yukon were
 - J** demonstrate how much gold was found by prospectors

**Use "A Gold Miner's Tale" (pp. 21–22) to answer questions 25–29.
Then fill in the answers on your answer document.**

25 Read this line from the poem.

But I walked away a wiser man.

This line suggests that at the end of the poem the speaker —

- A** knows how valuable a small amount of gold can be
- B** realizes the most effective technique for panning for gold
- C** understands why so many people looked for gold during the gold rush
- D** gains a new perspective about the outcome of panning for gold

26 The repetition of the lines "Water and sand. That's ALL it takes./Swish your pan. Pick out the flakes!" is used to emphasize the —

- F** importance of gold mining to the economy
- G** physical hardships and obstacles faced by miners
- H** additional tools needed by miners in the goldfields
- J** false promise that gold mining is an easy way to get rich

27 Read line 37 from the poem.

I should have known better.

From this line, the reader can infer that the speaker feels regret about —

- A** giving up his search for gold
 - B** leaving his job to prospect for gold
 - C** having the wrong equipment for panning for gold
 - D** taking too long to locate an area to search for gold
-

28 This poem is mostly about a young man who —

- F** follows people going west in search of gold and tries different locations without success
 - G** looks for a better alternative to a job that he does not enjoy doing and becomes a gold prospector
 - H** goes west in hopes of finding gold and after several unsuccessful attempts finally realizes a better way to earn money
 - J** tries the same method for finding gold and is unsuccessful because of his unwillingness to change
-

29 The poet's use of short sentences helps create the poem's —

- A** vivid imagery
- B** rhythm
- C** tone
- D** conflict

Use “Golden Opportunities” and “A Gold Miner’s Tale” to answer questions 30–34. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 30** How are the selection and the poem different?
- F** The selection encourages mining, while the poem discourages mining.
 - G** The selection focuses on several events, while the poem focuses on one event.
 - H** The selection relates facts, while the poem relates a personal experience.
 - J** The selection focuses on failures, while the poem focuses on successes.
-
- 31** An idea explored in both the selection and the poem is that gold mining —
- A** attracted miners for only a short time
 - B** did not appeal to many people in the United States
 - C** was important to the U.S. economy
 - D** did not lead to riches for most miners
-
- 32** Who profited from the Yukon gold rush in the same way as the speaker in the poem?
- F** The Tlingit
 - G** Belinda Mulroney
 - H** Fred Trump
 - J** Members of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce

33 Read these lines from the poem.

Before I joined the great stampede,
I thought: What will stampedeers need?
Now I'm a Dawson millionaire!
I sell them ALL long underwear.

Which sentence from the selection best matches an idea presented in these lines?

- A** *During 1898 some \$10 million in gold was found in the Yukon.*
- B** *Thousands of businesspeople came to Seattle ready to offer goods and services to the prospectors.*
- C** *This marked the beginning of the Klondike gold rush.*
- D** *The Seattle Chamber of Commerce moved quickly to take advantage of this upswing in the economy.*

34 Read line 14 from the poem.

Soon I'd be a rich young man.

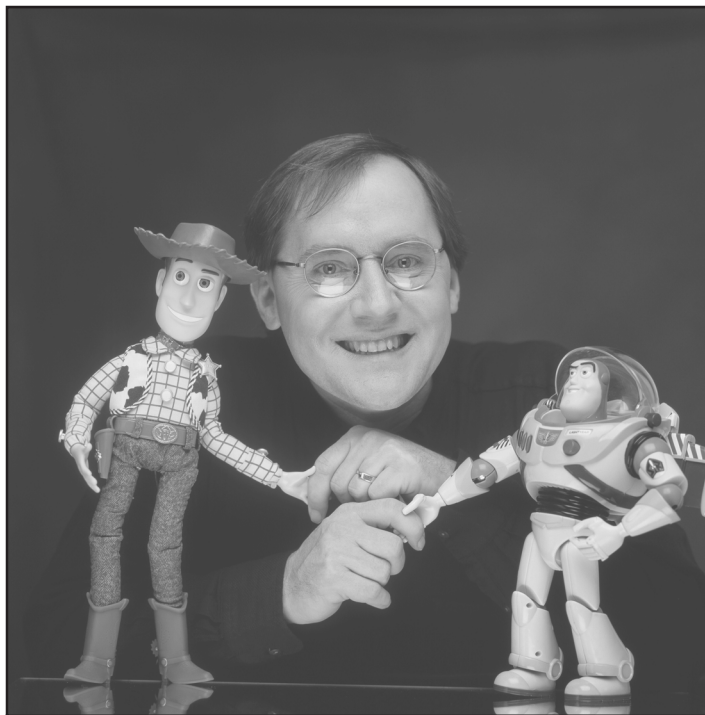
Which sentence from the selection best matches the feeling expressed by the speaker in line 14 of the poem?

- F** *The Tlingit, people native to the area, offered their services as guides.*
- G** *One city that was drastically changed by the discovery of gold in the Yukon was Seattle, Washington.*
- H** *News of the gold find gave people hope.*
- J** *Before the gold rush was over, Mulroney had opened several restaurants and hotels in Dawson.*

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

The Story of Pixar

- 1 "To infinity and beyond!" shouts Buzz Lightyear, holding his fist triumphantly high as he zooms through the air. Today this line is familiar to many people. Millions of viewers around the world have enjoyed the animated film *Toy Story* since its release in 1995.
- 2 Nothing like the realistic digital animation used in *Toy Story* had ever been seen in a movie before. Moviegoers were enamored of the film and not just for its groundbreaking technology. People of all ages could relate to its heartwarming, timeless story. Since *Toy Story*, audiences have flocked to other movies from the same filmmakers that combine sophisticated animation techniques with compelling storylines.
- 3 Pixar, the company that made *Toy Story*, had not planned to make movies at all. Instead, the owners of Pixar had just wanted to sell a special computer that they had developed. How did a small computer company become the leading animation studio in the world?



John Lasseter poses with Woody and Buzz Lightyear from the movie *Toy Story*. Lasseter is one of the movie's creators.

© Eric Robert/Sygma/CORBIS

- 4 The story begins with George Lucas, the mastermind behind *Star Wars* and other popular films. In 1979, Lucas hired computer expert Ed Catmull to work for Lucasfilm, his film production company. Catmull was the first person to use computer graphics in a film. In 1983, John Lasseter, an animation filmmaker, joined Lucasfilm.
- 5 While at Lucasfilm, Catmull and his team designed a graphics-animation computer. This computer, called Pixar, could make realistic three-dimensional images better and faster than any computer before it. The extremely complex computer, priced at about \$125,000, was capable of benefiting the space and medical industries.
- 6 In 1984, Lucas decided to sell the computer graphics division of his company. Several companies were interested in purchasing the division. However, it was Steve Jobs, the cofounder of Apple Computer Inc., who finally bought it in 1986. Jobs paid the bargain price of \$10 million for the division and named it Pixar after the computer its people had designed. Jobs, who was very good at selling computers, wanted to sell the Pixar computer to hospitals.
- 7 Catmull, Lasseter, and the Pixar team went to work for Jobs. They wanted to make animated films, but Jobs wanted them to focus on technical graphics, such as improved satellite images and three-dimensional x-rays. However, since running Pixar was very expensive, Jobs agreed to the production of animated films in an effort to make Pixar profitable. The team began to make short animated films to show what the Pixar computer could do. In 1987, Pixar's short film *Luxo Jr.* was nominated for an Academy Award.
- 8 The Pixar team then created a new kind of software called RenderMan to use on the Pixar computer. RenderMan made it possible to create pictures that looked almost like real photographs. Using RenderMan, the Pixar team created the short film *Tin Toy* in 1988. Pixar won its first Academy Award for this film.
- 9 After that Pixar began making computer-animated commercials for popular products. By 1990, Pixar had stopped trying to sell its computer and technical graphics and was focusing solely on animation. The company was struggling financially the entire time. Up to that point, it still hadn't made a profit.
- 10 Everything changed in 1995 when Pixar released *Toy Story*, its first full-length animated movie. The film was a huge hit, and Pixar finally showed a profit. *Toy Story* received several award nominations.
- 11 In 1997, Pixar released its next full-length movie, *A Bug's Life*. This film was about an ant who leads a group of misfit bugs to save an ant colony from greedy grasshoppers. It was as successful as *Toy Story*.
- 12 Pixar released many other movies over the next several years, including *Toy Story 2*; *Monsters, Inc.*; *Finding Nemo*; *The Incredibles*; and *Cars*. The

success of these films led to Pixar being purchased by Disney in 2006. Since that time the Pixar team has created several more award-winning films, including *Ratatouille*, *WALL-E*, *Up*, and *Toy Story 3*.

- 13 Ed Catmull, John Lasseter, and the rest of the Pixar team showed great creativity as they found a new way to make animated films. Today animation filmmakers look to Pixar films as the standard they must try to reach. Pixar films continue to entertain audiences throughout the world with their interesting stories, likable characters, and advanced animation.

35 The author uses a quotation from the movie *Toy Story* in the first paragraph to —

- A** explain to the reader what the movie is about
- B** establish the purpose of the selection for the reader
- C** describe one of the movie’s main characters for the reader
- D** gain the reader’s attention with a familiar saying

36 How is the selection organized?

- F** It describes the causes of the obstacles Pixar experienced and how these challenges affected the company.
- G** It states general information about Pixar’s movies and then gives specific information about the software used to create the movies.
- H** It relates the development of Pixar from its early stages to the present.
- J** It compares the technology Pixar uses to the technology used by other film companies.

- 37** Which experience contributed most to the Pixar team’s success in the film industry?
- A** Working for George Lucas at Lucasfilm
 - B** Designing computer software that created lifelike images
 - C** Improving how x-ray images are presented
 - D** Working for Steve Jobs to create technical graphics for various industries

-
- 38** Which sentence from the selection explains why Pixar became involved in the film industry?
- F** *This computer, called Pixar, could make realistic three-dimensional images better and faster than any computer before it.*
 - G** *RenderMan made it possible to create pictures that looked almost like real photographs.*
 - H** *Jobs, who was very good at selling computers, wanted to sell the Pixar computer to hospitals.*
 - J** *However, since running Pixar was very expensive, Jobs agreed to the production of animated films in an effort to make Pixar profitable.*

- 39** How does the author support the claim that Pixar set the standard for animated films?
- A** By explaining how the Pixar computer could be beneficial to society
 - B** By outlining the reasons Disney was interested in acquiring Pixar
 - C** By mentioning the people who were involved in the development of the Pixar computer
 - D** By describing the achievements that demonstrate Pixar’s status in the movie industry

-
- 40** The photograph is included in the selection most likely to show —
- F** how Pixar creates the characters for its animated movies
 - G** a digitally animated scene from one of Pixar’s award-winning movies
 - H** two of the characters that have made *Toy Story* so popular since its release
 - J** how *Toy Story* uses advanced technology to tell a story about friendship

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

from
Airball: My Life in Briefs

by L. D. Harkrader

- 1 I should've suspected something.
- 2 The other guys whooped and dribbled around me, slapping balls out of each other's hands and charging in for layups at both ends of the court. Layups that mostly bounced wide of the basket.
- 3 For somebody like me, growing up in a basketball-loving family in a basketball-crazed town, you'd think I'd be screeching around the gym, too. You'd think I'd be rebounding every shot and sinking three-pointers from the lobby.
- 4 You'd think.
- 5 I just stood there on the free-throw line, in the shadow of that big orange sign above the scoreboard, clutching a basketball tight to my chest. Outside, a wild October wind whipped through town, rattling the windows high above the bleachers in the gym. The very air felt like change. Like anything could happen.
- 6 You know the kid who kicks the ball out of bounds when he dribbles? The kid whose jump shots look like bounce passes? The kid who spends most of the game skidding across the floor on his face? That's me. Last summer my own grandmother beat me in a game of H-O-R-S-E.
- 7 I studied that orange sign and tried to imagine what it felt like to be six-foot-nine with a gym full of fans cheering and chanting my name. *Kirby. Kir-by. KIR-BY!*
- 8 "Hey, Kirby, if you're just going to stand there, give us the ball."
- 9 Russell Wiles and Eddie Poggemeyer thundered past.
- 10 "And get out of the way."
- 11 I pried the basketball from my chest and thumped it on the floor. I eyed the basket and thumped again. I lined up the ball, flexed my knees, and shot, flicking my wrist like Brett McGrew.
- 12 The ball hit the rim and bounced straight back. About knocked me over.

- 13 My cousin Bragger chased it into the bleachers.
- 14 "Your aim's good," he said, "but you need a little more arc." He curled one hand up over his head, then down, demonstrating arc. "You get that, Kirby, you'll be a starter."
- 15 "Right."
- 16 "Seriously."
- 17 "They have this rule, Bragger. To be a starter, you actually have to be on the team. And I'm not going out for basketball, remember?"
- 18 "That's what you keep saying." He twirled the ball in his hands. "Who holds the NBA record for most points in a single game?"
- 19 "You already know."
- 20 "I forgot."
- 21 I rolled my eyes. "Wilt Chamberlain. One hundred points against the Knicks. March 2, 1962."
- 22 "How many rebounds did Brett McGrew pull down in the NCAA championship game his senior year?"
- 23 "Twenty-four," I said. "Why?"
- 24 He shrugged. "You love basketball, Kirby."
- 25 "I can't *play* basketball, Bragger. And I don't need an after-school athletics program to prove it."
- 26 He shrugged again. "Can't be a hero if you're afraid of looking stupid."
- 27 "No problem then, because I don't want to be a hero."
- 28 "Sure you do, Kirby. Everybody does. Down deep inside, everybody wants to be a hero."
- 29 "Not me."
- 30 Bragger twirled the ball again. "Guess it's up to me to lead the team to victory."
- 31 He dribbled in place, charged the basket, and shot. Airball. Bragger didn't care. He ran after it, snagged it as it rolled into the wrestling mats, and lobbed it up over the backboard to me.

- 32 I let it bounce right past. Because that's when I heard the growl. Deep, low, and gurgling, like a water heater about to blow. I knew that growl. It was Coach Armstrong. Coach "Iron Man" Mike Armstrong. Our new gym teacher. Favorite saying: "Practice till you puke." Favorite aroma: sweat. Favorite hobby: watching me run extra laps because I couldn't climb a rope, steal a base, or sink a free throw.
- 33 That's all I'd learned about him since he took over the seventh grade P.E. program at the beginning of the school year. But that's all I needed to know.
- 34 Coach clenched and unclenched his fists, then blew his whistle. Right in my ear.
- 35 He started passing papers out. The other guys crowded in around him. I stood off to one side. No sense getting in anybody's way.
- 36 Coach handed a permission slip to Eddie Poggemeyer. "First page is for your parents."
- 37 Sure, I'd come watch. Like Bragger said, I love basketball. From the bleachers.
- 38 "Second page"—Coach slapped permission slips into the outstretched hands of Russell Wiles and Duncan Webber—"is the physical form."
- 39 I might even keep unofficial stats on the players. I couldn't pass, shoot, or dribble, but I could figure percentages in a coma. Being a basketball fan and a citizen of the Basketball Capital of Kansas, I owed it to my fellow seventh graders to support the team.
- 40 "You want to play basketball, get both pages signed."
- 41 But I didn't need to put on a uniform and invite the entire town down to the gym to watch me look pathetic. No way.

From AIRBALL: MY LIFE IN BRIEFS © 2005 by L. D. Harkrader. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt Books for Young Readers Press. All Rights Reserved.

41 Which sentence best states the main message of this story?

- A** *"Guess it's up to me to lead the team to victory."*
- B** *"Can't be a hero if you're afraid of looking stupid."*
- C** *"To be a starter, you actually have to be on the team."*
- D** *"You want to play basketball, get both pages signed."*

42 Which event from the story shows that Bragger's attitude about playing basketball is different from Kirby's?

- F** Bragger picking up the ball after Kirby misses a basket
- G** Bragger claiming not to know several basic basketball facts
- H** Bragger acting as if he doesn't care that he misses a basket
- J** Bragger passing the basketball to Kirby after taking a shot

43 Read these sentences from the story.

For somebody like me, growing up in a basketball-loving family in a basketball-crazed town, you'd think I'd be screeching around the gym, too. (paragraph 3)

Being a basketball fan and a citizen of the Basketball Capital of Kansas, I owed it to my fellow seventh graders to support the team. (paragraph 39)

Based on these sentences, the reader can infer that Kirby thinks he —

- A has natural talent that he has been unable to demonstrate
- B is obligated to participate in activities related to basketball
- C should make a strong effort to improve his shooting technique
- D is a disappointment to his family because of his lack of athletic skill

44 Read this information about the origin of the word pathetic.

from Greek *paschein*, meaning "to suffer"

This information helps the reader understand that the word pathetic in paragraph 41 means —

- F pitiful
- G reluctant
- H practical
- J aggressive

- 45** The description of Coach Armstrong emphasizes Kirby's —
- A** disappointment that a new coach has been assigned to his class
 - B** frustration that the coach takes a long time to begin the tryouts
 - C** assurance in his decision not to try out for the team
 - D** excitement about having a chance to perform for a new coach

-
- 46** The author's use of questions in paragraph 6 helps the reader understand —
- F** that Kirby worries about not being able to participate in basketball
 - G** that Kirby thinks he should practice with people his own age
 - H** how Kirby reacts when he does not play basketball well
 - J** that Kirby has a negative attitude about his ability to play basketball

47 What is the best summary of the story?

- A Even though Kirby doubts his ability to play basketball, his cousin Bragger wants him to try out for the team. Kirby says he will not try out for the team, even though he loves basketball. As Coach Armstrong hands out permission slips, Kirby tries to convince himself that he will not try out for the team.
- B While Kirby shoots baskets in the gym, he thinks about what it would be like to be a star basketball player. When some other boys ask him to stop standing around, he attempts a shot. Even though the ball misses the basket, Kirby's cousin Bragger tells Kirby he is not as bad as he thinks.
- C After Kirby misses a basketball shot, his cousin Bragger offers him some advice about technique. Kirby does not want to take Bragger seriously and insists that he will not try out for the team, despite his love of the game. Bragger decides that he will have to make sure the team wins and attempts a shot at the basket.
- D Kirby is shooting baskets in the gym before basketball tryouts. His cousin Bragger wants him to try out for the team because Kirby loves basketball, but Kirby insists he is not good enough as a player. As Coach Armstrong hands out permission slips, Kirby considers contributing to the team in a way that does not include playing.

48 Read these sentences from paragraph 32.

Because that's when I heard the growl. Deep, low, and gurgling, like a water heater about to blow. I knew that growl.

The figurative language in these sentences emphasizes that Kirby thinks Coach Armstrong is —

- F spiteful
- G intimidating
- H arrogant
- J mysterious

- 49** How does the setting contribute to Kirby’s conflict in the story?
- A** It makes him feel insecure about his basketball skills.
 - B** It allows him to share information about his favorite basketball players.
 - C** It forces him to have an uncomfortable conversation with the coach.
 - D** It gives him an opportunity to learn from skilled basketball players.

-
- 50** Read this excerpt from the story.

I studied that orange sign and tried to imagine what it felt like to be six-foot-nine with a gym full of fans cheering and chanting my name. Kirby. Kir-by. KIR-BY!

Kirby’s thoughts in this excerpt reveal that he —

- F** is reliving a moment from a previous basketball game he played
- G** needs encouragement from others to be successful
- H** wishes he had the talent to be recognized for his playing
- J** understands the effort that is required to play professional basketball

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



**STAAR
GRADE 7
Reading
April 2015**