

GRADE 7
Reading

Administered May 2017

RELEASED

READING

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

from **Smiles to Go**

by Jerry Spinelli

- 1 When I was five or six a high-school kid lived next door. His name was Jim.
- 2 Jim was always tinkering in his basement. I was welcome, encouraged even, to join him whenever I liked. I would sit on a high stool for hours and just watch him. I think he enjoyed having a dedicated audience of one.
- 3 He always had a jawbreaker in his mouth, and when he wasn't clacking it against his teeth he kept up a constant mutter about everything he did, as if he were a play-by-play announcer describing a game. "And now Jim is soldering the wire to the whatsits. . . ."
- 4 More than anything I looked forward to Jim saying, "Whoa!" That's what he said when something surprised or astounded him. It didn't happen often, maybe only one or two "Whoas!" a week on average. When I heard one I would jump down from my stool and nose right in and say, "What, Jim?" And he would explain it to me, and though I couldn't really understand, still I would feel something, a cool fizzing behind my ears, because I was feeding off his astonishment.
- 5 Then one day I had the real thing, an amazement of my own. That day was a little strange to begin with, because when I came down to the basement, Jim wasn't tinkering—he was reading. Watching a person read isn't the most fascinating thing in the world, even if he has a jawbreaker clacking around in his mouth, and after a minute of that I was ready to leave when Jim barked out a "Whoa!" I jumped down and said my usual, "What, Jim?" but he only waved me off with his hand and kept on reading. Every minute or so another "Whoa!" came out, each one louder than the last. Then came three in a row: "Whoa! Whoa! WWWHOA!"
- 6 "Jim! *What!*" I screeched and snatched the book away.
- 7 He looked at me as if he didn't know me. Young as I was, I understood that he was still back in the book, immersed in his amazement.
- 8 Finally he said it, one word: "Protons."
- 9 "What are protons?" I said.
- 10 He took the book from my hands. His eyes returned to the present. He began talking, explaining. He talked about atoms first, the tiny building blocks of everything, smaller than molecules, smaller than specks. "So small," he said, "millions can fit in a flea's eye." That got my attention.

11 Then he zeroed in on protons. Atoms may be mostly space, he said, but a proton is nothing but a proton. Small as an atom is, a proton is millions of times smaller. "You could squint till your eyeballs pop out and you'll never see one," he said, daring me to try.

12 "And you know what the coolest thing about protons is?" he said.

13 "What?" I said.

14 He clacked his jawbreaker for a while, building the suspense. "You can't do anything to them," he said. "You can't break them. You can't burn them. You can't blow them up. Atoms you can smash, but you can't smash a proton."

15 "Not even with a *steamroller*?" I said.

16 "Not even with a thousand steamrollers."

17 And then he hammered home his point. He took out the jawbreaker and put it on the floor. He took a hammer and smashed it to smithereens. He didn't stop there. He kept smashing until there was nothing but white powder. When he stopped, he grinned at me. "Go ahead, stomp on it." I brought the heel of my shoe down on the tiny pile of powder. "Oh, come on," he said. "Stomp good." I did. I jumped up and down until there was nothing on the floor but a pale mist of dust. He got down on his hands and knees and blew it away.

18 I cheered. "We did it!"

19 He stood. "What did we do?" he said.

20 "We smashed the jawbreaker. We made it disappear."

21 "We sure did," he said. "But what about the protons that made up the jawbreaker? Where are they?"

22 I looked around. "Gone?"

23 He shook his head with a sly smile. "Nope," he said. "The jawbreaker is gone, but not its protons. They're still"—he waved his hand about the basement—"here. They'll always be here. They're unsmashable. Once a proton, always a proton. Protons are forever."

24 The next words just popped from my mouth, no real thought behind them: "Jawbreakers are lucky."

25 He poked me. "Hey, so are you. You're made of protons, too."

26 I stared at him. "I *am*?"

27 "Sure," he said. "Zillions of them. The protons in you are the same as the protons in that jawbreaker. And in that stool. And in a banana. And a sock monkey. And a glass of water. And a star. Everything"—he threw out his arms—"everything is made of protons!"

28 I was getting woozy with information overload. Me and sock monkeys made of the same stuff? It was too much to digest. So I retreated to the one conclusion I had managed to extract from all this. "So . . . Jim . . . like, I'm unsmashable?"

29 He mussed my hair. "Yeah," he said, "I guess you could sort of put it that way." He laughed and waved the hammer in my face. "But don't go trying this on your toe."

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1 What is the narrator’s primary motivation for continuing to visit Jim?

- A He wants Jim to ask him to help with the experiments.
 - B He enjoys watching Jim manage several tasks at once.
 - C He thinks spending time with Jim will make him smarter.
 - D He likes witnessing the moments when Jim is surprised.
-

2 Why is Jim’s demonstration with the jawbreaker important to the plot?

- F It shows the narrator that many scientific concepts are not complicated.
 - G It allows the narrator to experience a moment of understanding.
 - H It encourages the narrator to develop his own scientific theory about protons.
 - J It gives the narrator an opportunity to help Jim with one of his projects.
-

3 Read the dictionary entry below.

digest \dī-ˈjest\ v
1. to convert food into absorbable form
2. to think over in order to absorb 3. to arrange in a methodical order; classify
4. to reduce to a summary

Which definition most closely matches the way the word digest is used in paragraph 28?

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

4 Read this sentence from paragraph 4.

And he would explain it to me, and though I couldn't really understand, still I would feel something, a cool fizzing behind my ears, because I was feeding off his astonishment.

The sensory language in this sentence highlights the narrator's —

- F optimism
 - G confusion
 - H excitement
 - J discomfort
-

5 What does the simile in paragraph 3 suggest about Jim?

- A He wishes he knew someone who shared his passion.
- B He approaches his work with intense focus.
- C He is interested in both science and sports.
- D He usually makes up experiments as they occur to him.

- 6** The setting is important to the plot because it is where the narrator —
- F** realizes he is good at scientific investigation
 - G** can study with minimal interruptions
 - H** has interesting discussions with Jim
 - J** works with Jim to solve problems
-

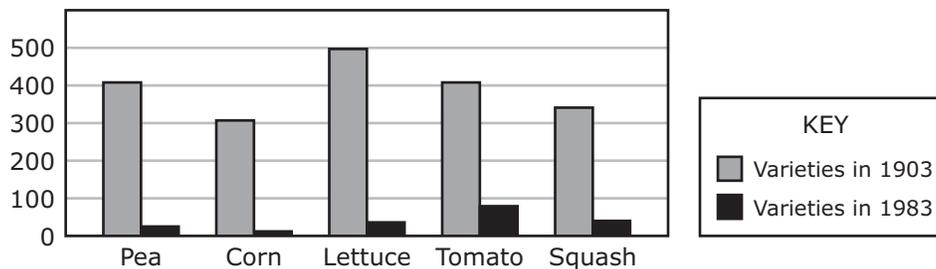
- 7** Which of these is an important idea expressed in the excerpt?
- A** People must start working toward their goals at a young age to achieve their dreams.
 - B** Honesty and openness allow deep friendships to develop.
 - C** True understanding can take place only through quiet reflection.
 - D** Some people influence the lives of others by introducing them to new ideas.

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

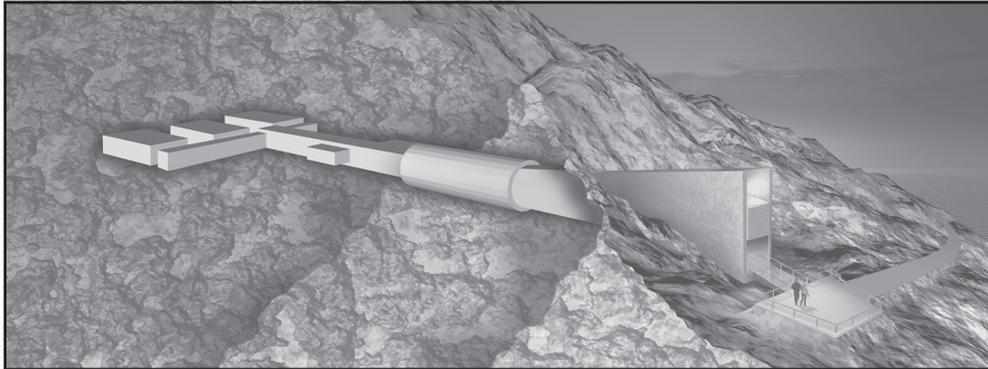
The World's Most Valuable Vault

- 1 Deep beneath the permafrost about 600 miles from the North Pole, a concrete chamber is keeping a treasure safe. The vault is hidden 390 feet inside a mountain in Norway's remote Svalbard Islands. This isolated location ensures that the treasure concealed in the vault will remain untouched by any human or natural disaster. The vault was built to withstand bomb blasts and earthquakes, but the treasure it shields is not what you might expect. This vault was not built to store precious gems or gold bars. It was designed to store something even more valuable and critical to our very survival—food. This vault is sometimes called the Fort Knox of food.
- 2 The idea of storing seeds has been discussed by global organizations since the 1980s. Dr. Cary Fowler, who was president of the Global Crop Diversity Trust at the time of the vault's creation, explained that construction plans for such a vault began to come together shortly after several natural disasters devastated global food crops. Fowler and his agency want to collect and safely store seeds to make sure they do not disappear in the future. He and other scientists are concerned that plant diversity is rapidly diminishing. "We are losing biodiversity every day," Fowler explains. "It is kind of a drip, drip, drip—it's also inevitable. We need to do something about it." When a type of food is no longer grown because of a natural disaster, such as a flood, or because it becomes unpopular or too expensive to grow, it can disappear from stores and kitchens forever. The Global Crop Diversity Trust wants to prevent this by preserving as many varieties of seeds as possible. The assortment at the vault ensures that food supplies can be maintained or replenished if necessary.

Varieties of Important Crops in 1903 and 1983



- 3 The Svalbard Seed Vault opened in 2008 with more than 11,000 seed samples from around the world. It has the capacity to store 4.5 million seed samples. The entry to the vault is a carefully guarded tunnel behind a steel door illuminated by fiber-optic light and sunlight reflected off mirrors. There is no full-time staff at the automated facility, and no single person has all the codes to gain entry to the chambers. The chambers in the vault have rows of shelves that hold the packaged seeds. The frigid arctic climate keeps the chamber at a constant temperature of -18°C , which ensures the life of the seeds, even in case of a power failure.



This illustration of the vault shows how it is built into the mountain.

courtesy of Global Crop Diversity Trust

- 4 This facility was built by the Norwegian government. Storage is free at the vault because preserving the seeds is important. Sealed in foil packages and stored in boxes, corn seeds from Mexico and pea seeds from Nigeria have been deposited for future use. On the vault's four-year anniversary, it received seeds for amaranth, an ancient grain treasured by Aztecs and Incas, and for a modern variety of wheat from North America that allows the plant to carry a larger amount of grain at the top without falling over. The vault is also home to seeds for lima beans that can grow at extreme altitudes, tomato seeds for a new kind of tomato with increased vitamin A, and hundreds of thousands of other rare varieties of common crops.
- 5 Fowler reports that when visitors tour the seed vault, they get emotional. He believes it is because when they are standing in the chamber with the greatest collection of biodiversity in the world, they sense that something important is happening and that the Svalbard Seed Vault is playing an important role in the preservation of humanity.



The seeds are labeled and stored on shelves.

© Photo by Mari Tefre/Svalbard Global Seed Vault

Third party trademark Global Crop Diversity Trust™ was used in these testing materials.

- 8 Read the information about the origin of the word replenish.

from Latin *plenus*, meaning “full”

This information helps the reader understand that replenished in paragraph 2 means —

- F built up again
 - G highly valued
 - H properly managed
 - J correctly used
-
- 9 The main reason for building the vault in an isolated, underground location was to —
- A ensure that it would be difficult for people to retrieve seeds they put in the vault
 - B decrease the amount of power necessary to keep the seeds at a cold temperature
 - C minimize the number of people that would be necessary to monitor the vault
 - D prevent outside events from damaging the contents of the vault

10 Read these sentences from the selection.

*"We are losing biodiversity every day," Fowler explains.
"It is kind of a drip, drip, drip—it's also inevitable."*

The comparison in Fowler's statement helps the reader understand that —

- F** few people realize the consequences of losing seed varieties
 - G** seed varieties are lost slowly, but the loss accumulates over time
 - H** many seed varieties have been lost as a result of natural disasters
 - J** scientists think seed varieties could be saved through improved agricultural practices
-

11 Based on the selection, the reader can conclude that the seed vault —

- A** stores rare seeds more securely than common seeds
- B** can be toured by visitors at any time
- C** is maintained by several different countries
- D** provides a unique and vital resource

12 Read the dictionary entry below.

critical \ˈkri-ti-kəl\ *adj*
1. relating to a stage of illness 2. tending to evaluate unfavorably 3. needed to serve a purpose 4. using careful judgment

Which definition best fits how critical is used in paragraph 1?

- F Definition 1
 - G Definition 2
 - H Definition 3
 - J Definition 4
-

13 Paragraph 4 is mostly about —

- A how countries decide which seeds to send to the Svalbard Seed Vault
 - B why Norway decided to sponsor the construction of the Svalbard Seed Vault
 - C the process for shipping new seeds to the Svalbard Seed Vault
 - D the diversity of the contents stored in the Svalbard Seed Vault
-

14 The problem–solution organization of paragraph 2 helps the author emphasize the —

- F difficulties other seed vaults have encountered in the past
- G severity of the decrease in seed varieties
- H reasons some seeds disappear more quickly than others
- J best way to prepare for a natural disaster

15 What is the best summary of the selection?

- A** On the fourth anniversary of the Svalbard Seed Vault, rare seeds from North America and ancient grains were added to the vault. The vault contains many seeds with special genetic traits that may be useful in the future. Visitors are often awed by the biodiversity secured in the seed vault.
 - B** The seeds in the Svalbard Seed Vault are stored in rows of sealed boxes in a highly secure vault. The vault is made of steel, located inside a mountain, and requires the use of many codes to enter. The cold environment preserves the seeds even if power to the facility is lost.
 - C** The Svalbard Seed Vault is located in an isolated region of Norway. The vault was created to protect varieties of seeds from being lost and to preserve them for later use. Many rare seeds have already been sent to the vault and have contributed to the effort to maintain biodiversity.
 - D** The Svalbard Seed Vault is considered the greatest store of crop diversity to date. Efforts to build the seed vault began when scientists noticed that crop variety had decreased significantly in recent years. The vault contains many rare and ancient seeds.
-

16 Which statement is supported by the illustration of the vault that appears after paragraph 3?

- F** The seeds are housed in a highly secure location.
- G** Many donors help finance the maintenance of the vault.
- H** Many people understand the importance of the vault.
- J** Seeds are safer in separate chambers than in one open area.

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

Reinforcing the Past

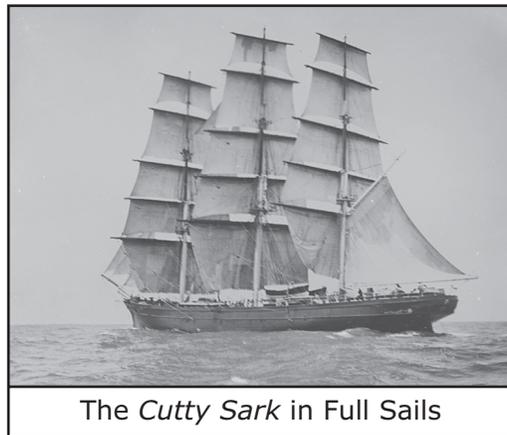
- 1 The city of Pisa is located in the beautiful region of Tuscany in central Italy. Pisa is famous for its grand white-marble structures. The most famous of these structures is the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Construction of the tower started in 1173 and was finally completed in about 1370. It is an elegant eight-story bell tower. The tower is topped by a bell chamber and has an internal circular staircase of nearly 300 steps. Its arches and columns give the tower a dignified air.
- 2 By the time construction on the tower had reached the third and fourth floors, it was clear that the tower was going to be a magnificent structure—except for one problem. It had started to tilt. Architects tried to correct the problem as they built the remaining floors of the tower, but the structure continued to lean. The architects even situated the bell chamber toward the north, away from the tower’s southward tilt, in an attempt to balance the tower. But the tower continued to lean.
- 3 Over the centuries preservation efforts have focused less on correcting the iconic lean and more on figuring out a way to keep the tower from leaning any farther. In 1934 an attempt to stabilize the tower included injecting concrete into the stone foundation, but some of the concrete seeped under the foundation, causing the tower to lean even more. Other ideas for maintaining the tower have been quite outlandish. One commission even suggested attaching helium balloons to the tower to hold it up, but the suggestion was never actually attempted.
- 4 Still the tower kept leaning. In 1990 experts determined that the tower was dangerously close to toppling over, and public entry into the tower was prohibited. An international commission of historians and experts then began an effort to save the tower. They determined that the soil under the south side of the tower was softer than the soil under the north side, and the weight of the marble tower was accelerating the shift. Steel cables and counterweights were installed to slow the movement of the tower. While the cables and weights worked to stabilize the tower, excess soil was removed from underneath the north end to level the ground the tower rests on. These efforts to protect and maintain the tower are not obvious to the untrained eye; the tower still leans about 13 feet.



- 5 The international commission and the proud citizens of Pisa are hopeful about the latest efforts to halt the lean. Experts believe that the tower should now be stable for another 300 years. If the tower leans significantly more, however, architectural experts and historians will surely once again come to the aid of the magnificent Leaning Tower of Pisa.

The *Cutty Sark*

- 1 The *Cutty Sark* is more than just an old sailboat; it is a historical artifact. Launched in Scotland in 1869, the *Cutty Sark* was one of the most advanced clippers of its time. A clipper is a fast sailing ship, and the *Cutty Sark's* sleek hull made it ideal to serve in the tea trade between China and England. This three-masted, 212-foot vessel contributed to London's growth as a trade center.
- 2 Perhaps one of the most impressive aspects of the *Cutty Sark* was the clipper's speed. The clipper set new speed records in the 1880s. Some records claim that the clipper sailed from London to Sydney, Australia, in 77 days and made the return trip in just 73 days, a remarkable pace at the time. However, as faster steam vessels began to rise in popularity, the *Cutty Sark* soon became obsolete. The clipper was later used for training officers who served in the Royal Navy in World War II.



Courtesy of Allan C. Green/State Library of Victoria

The *Cutty Sark* in Full Sails

- 3 In 1951 the *Cutty Sark* Trust was formed. This organization recognized the *Cutty Sark's* historical importance and eventually raised enough money to restore the ship as a museum in London. For more than 40 years, the ship sat on concrete, serving as an attraction and visitor center. In 1998, however, experts determined that extensive conservation efforts were needed to prevent the ship from deteriorating.
- 4 The trust closed the ship to the public in 2006, and an architectural firm began a long conservation project. The project aimed to refurbish as much of the original material from the ship as possible. Unfortunately, during the renovation in 2007, the ship caught fire when a vacuum cleaner was left on. Luckily, 90 percent of the ship's hull and most of the ship's fabric and fittings were saved from the fire.
- 5 When the restoration project resumed, architects designed a unique method to display the ship. Because the hull was what made the clipper so special, curators wanted the public to be able to appreciate this feature. Therefore, the six-year restoration project included suspending the ship so that the hull hovers three meters off the ground, thus providing a clear view of the shape of the bottom of the clipper.

- 6 Although the *Cutty Sark* restoration project took longer to complete than expected, the Queen of England opened the exhibit to the public in 2012. Today the *Cutty Sark* attracts visitors from around the world and remains a significant part of London's history.



Visitors walk under the hull of the *Cutty Sark*.

© Oli Scarff/Getty Images

Use “Reinforcing the Past” (pp. 16–17) to answer questions 17–21. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 17** The author wrote this selection most likely to —
- A** describe the efforts to prevent the Leaning Tower of Pisa from collapsing
 - B** convince people that the Leaning Tower of Pisa is worth saving
 - C** explain why the earliest attempts to maintain the Leaning Tower of Pisa were unsuccessful
 - D** demonstrate why the Leaning Tower of Pisa is not safe to enter
-
- 18** Which detail from the selection explains why one attempt to fix the lean made the tower lean even more?
- F** Cables and weights were installed to stabilize the tower’s lean.
 - G** The tower continued to lean even after a bell chamber was placed on the tower’s north side.
 - H** A concrete leak made the tower’s foundation more unstable.
 - J** Soil was removed from beneath the north end of the tower to make the ground more even.

19 Which sentence from the selection is an assertion made by the author?

- A** *In 1990 experts determined that the tower was dangerously close to toppling over, and public entry into the tower was prohibited.*
 - B** *One commission even suggested attaching helium balloons to the tower to hold it up, but the suggestion was never actually attempted.*
 - C** *An international commission of historians and experts then began an effort to save the tower.*
 - D** *If the tower leans significantly more, however, architectural experts and historians will surely once again come to the aid of the magnificent Leaning Tower of Pisa.*
-

20 Which idea does the information in paragraph 2 support?

- F** The tower was difficult to build without modern technology.
 - G** The problem with the tower was evident early in its construction.
 - H** The addition of the bell tower caused the tower to lean more.
 - J** The construction of the tower was a slower process than expected.
-

21 The reader can conclude that the tower will most likely —

- A** need to be monitored and maintained for as long as it continues to stand
- B** be completely straightened using technology that will become available in the future
- C** become more magnificent as it continues to lean
- D** help experts solve structural problems with other buildings

Use “The Cutty Sark” (pp. 18–19) to answer questions 22–25. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 22** How does the author support the idea that the *Cutty Sark* was once considered a technologically advanced ship?
- F** By mentioning the sailing records the ship had set
 - G** By stating the dimensions of the ship
 - H** By explaining the ship’s role in the tea trade
 - J** By telling about the ship’s later uses
-
- 23** How does the author organize the selection?
- A** By contrasting the design of the *Cutty Sark* with that of other ships and then providing evidence supporting the idea that the design of the *Cutty Sark* was superior
 - B** By explaining why the *Cutty Sark* was an important ship and then describing efforts to preserve it
 - C** By providing examples of how the *Cutty Sark* had been a useful ship in the past and then discussing how opinions about the *Cutty Sark* have changed over time
 - D** By summarizing the main problem that the *Cutty Sark* encountered and then relating how the problem was solved

- 24** What is the author's main purpose for writing this selection?
- F** To demonstrate how the *Cutty Sark* helped a country's economy
 - G** To convince the reader that the *Cutty Sark* was the fastest vessel of its time
 - H** To explain that the *Cutty Sark* is an important part of London's history
 - J** To identify why a special exhibit had to be created to display the *Cutty Sark*
-

- 25** The photograph at the end of the selection is included to —
- A** illustrate why the *Cutty Sark* needed renovation
 - B** highlight the *Cutty Sark's* historical significance
 - C** indicate the number of people who can visit the *Cutty Sark* each day
 - D** show how a defining feature of the *Cutty Sark* is displayed

Use “Reinforcing the Past” and “The Cutty Sark” to answer questions 26–29. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 26 According to the selections, the Leaning Tower of Pisa is **different** from the *Cutty Sark* because —
- F the Leaning Tower of Pisa has been flawed since its construction, but the *Cutty Sark* functioned well for many years
 - G the Leaning Tower of Pisa has achieved fame in recent years, but the *Cutty Sark* was famous from the time it was built
 - H the work on the Leaning Tower of Pisa is finished, but the work on the *Cutty Sark* is ongoing
 - J the Leaning Tower of Pisa can no longer be used as a bell tower, but the *Cutty Sark* can still be used for some of its original purposes

-
- 27 Read this sentence from “Reinforcing the Past.”

In 1934 an attempt to stabilize the tower included injecting concrete into the stone foundation, but some of the concrete seeped under the foundation, causing the tower to lean even more.

Which sentence from “The Cutty Sark” relates a **similar** idea?

- A *A clipper is a fast sailing ship, and the Cutty Sark’s sleek hull made it ideal to serve in the tea trade between China and England.*
- B *The trust closed the ship to the public in 2006, and an architectural firm began a long conservation project.*
- C *Unfortunately, during the renovation in 2007, the ship caught fire when a vacuum cleaner was left on.*
- D *The clipper was later used for training officers who served in the Royal Navy in World War II.*

28 One **difference** between the efforts to preserve the Leaning Tower of Pisa and those of the *Cutty Sark* is that the efforts related to the *Cutty Sark* included —

- F** fixing the structure in a way that allowed it to perform its original function
 - G** finding a way to increase the number of people visiting the structure
 - H** changing the way the structure was displayed
 - J** repairing specific parts of the structure
-

29 The authors of **both** selections share the history of their subjects in chronological order to emphasize that —

- A** structures can quickly fall into a state of disrepair if they are not properly maintained
- B** there is an ongoing debate about the best ways to restore historical structures
- C** the restoration of the structures takes less time when the projects are adequately funded
- D** the significance of the structures has been recognized for a long time

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

Poplars

by Edward Bliss Reed

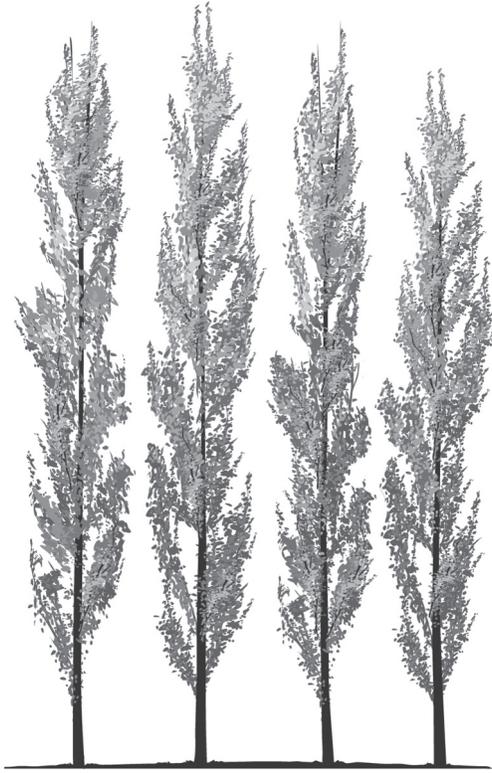
The poplar is a lonely tree.
It has no branches spreading wide
Where birds may sing or squirrels hide.
It throws no shadows on the grass
5 Tempting the wayfarers who pass
To stop and sit there quietly.

The poplar sees each neighbor tree
Loved by the birds. The oriole
Swings from the elm its home; the bole
10 Of that rough oak, above, around,
Hears the woodpecker's rapid sound
As on he works industriously.

The poplar is a slender tree.
It has no boughs where children try
15 To climb far off into the sky.
To hold a swing it's far too weak,
Too small it is for hide-and-seeK.
Friendless, forsaken it must be.

The poplar is a restless tree.
20 At every breeze its branches bend
And signal to the child, "Come, friend."
Its leaves forever whispering
To thrush and robin, "Stay and sing."
They pass. It quivers plaintively.

25 Poplars are lonely. They must grow
Close to each other in a row.



Public Domain

30 In the first stanza, the poet suggests that one reason the poplar is not useful is that it —

- F** loses its leaves in the fall
 - G** does not provide much protection for others
 - H** does not grow very tall
 - J** grows in areas where few other things live
-

31 The poet uses personification in the fourth stanza to describe the poplar's attempt to —

- A** attract visitors
 - B** remain active
 - C** provide directions to others
 - D** resist being moved by the wind
-

32 Line 1 is important to the poem because it helps —

- F** introduce a familiar setting
- G** describe the speaker
- H** create imagery
- J** establish the mood

33 In stanza 2, the poplar is described mainly as —

- A** cautious
 - B** envious
 - C** curious
 - D** arrogant
-

34 Why is the last stanza important to the poem?

- F** It suggests that the poplar may become a desirable tree.
 - G** It shows how a poplar copes with its situation.
 - H** It implies that the poplar wants to be a unique tree.
 - J** It provides an explanation for the size of a poplar.
-

35 By describing qualities that the poplar lacks, the poet emphasizes —

- A** why the poplar is unappealing to others
- B** how the poplar is affected by its environment
- C** why the poplar grows near different types of trees
- D** how the poplar finds relief from its problem

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

Just a Trim

Characters

LONNIE: 13-year-old girl

ASIA: 13-year-old girl

JEREMIAH: Asia's brother, 11 years old

- 1 *[The curtain rises. Asia and Lonnie are sitting on a couch in Asia's living room reading magazines.]*
- 2 **LONNIE:** Would this haircut look good on me? *[She turns the magazine around so that the page is facing Asia.]*
- 3 **ASIA:** *[Squeals.]* Yes! I love the asymmetrical cut for the summer.
- 4 **LONNIE:** It's so cool. Raquel Johnson totally rocked this look at the music awards show last week. Have you heard her new song?
- 5 **ASIA:** Of course! *[Singing.]* "Sometimes you have to find a perfect—"
- 6 *[Jeremiah enters quickly.]*
- 7 **JEREMIAH:** *[Faking panic.]* Is everything okay? It sounded like someone was hurt!
- 8 **ASIA:** Very funny. Go away.
- 9 **JEREMIAH:** Trust me. I do not want to be here. I'm just getting my baseball cap. *[He walks to the other side of the room, retrieves his cap, and exits.]*
- 10 **LONNIE:** This style has to be cut flawlessly.
- 11 **ASIA:** It can't be that hard to copy. There's some layering around your face, but it looks easy enough.
- 12 **LONNIE:** I'll call the salon around the corner.
- 13 **ASIA:** You should let me do it. Right now.
- 14 **LONNIE:** Do you even know how to cut hair?
- 15 **ASIA:** Yes. My family never goes to the salon. My dad cuts our hair. I've watched him do it a thousand times. The scissors and apron are upstairs.
- 16 **LONNIE:** *[Raising her eyebrows.]* So you've never actually cut anyone's hair before?
- 17 **ASIA:** Don't worry. Anyway, why should you pay a salon when I'll do it for free?

- 18 **LONNIE:** [*Pauses.*] Fine. But start by just trimming my hair. Then we'll see.
- 19 **ASIA:** I'll get the scissors.
- 20 [*Asia runs offstage. Lonnie sits in a chair, tapping her foot and flipping through a magazine. Asia enters and puts an apron on Lonnie.*]
- 21 **ASIA:** This shouldn't take long.
- 22 [*Lonnie closes her eyes tightly. Asia holds a thick bunch of Lonnie's hair and puts it between the blades of the scissors. She closes her eyes and cuts. When she opens her eyes, she lets out a deep breath.*]
- 23 **LONNIE:** [*Opening one eye.*] Is everything okay?
- 24 **ASIA:** Of course!
- 25 [*Asia smiles widely as she continues cutting. She sings and snips with gusto. Lonnie sits quietly. After a few minutes, Asia stops singing and stares at Lonnie's hair. Jeremiah enters.*]
- 26 **JEREMIAH:** Asia, have you seen my baseball ba—What are you doing?
- 27 **ASIA:** I'm giving Lonnie a makeover.
- 28 **JEREMIAH:** Into what?
- 29 [*Lonnie sits up straight and stares at Jeremiah.*]
- 30 **ASIA:** Go away, Jeremiah. [*To Lonnie.*] Don't worry. Everything's fine.
- 31 **JEREMIAH:** Sure, if you want to look like a wild dog. [*He exits.*]
- 32 **LONNIE:** Can I have a mirror?
- 33 **ASIA:** Not yet. [*She stops cutting and holds the magazine next to Lonnie's face. She looks at the magazine and then at Lonnie. She speaks slowly.*] How would you feel about parting your hair on the left instead of the right?
- 34 **LONNIE:** [*Anxiously.*] What? Why? In the magazine the girl's hair was parted in the middle.
- 35 **ASIA:** Relax! [*She continues cutting Lonnie's hair.*] I'm just adding some . . . flair.
- 36 **LONNIE:** Give me a mirror!
- 37 **ASIA:** You have to wait until I'm done. [*She continues cutting.*]
- 38 **LONNIE:** Asia! Stop. I want to see my hair.
- 39 **ASIA:** No problem. I just finished. It's exactly what I was going for.
- 40 [*Lonnie stands and walks over to the mirror hanging on the wall. She shrieks.*]

- 41 **LONNIE:** Oh, no! I can't let anyone see me like this!
- 42 **ASIA:** Why not? It's cut short on one side and long on the other. It's just like in the magazine. Well, maybe a little different, but that's a good thing, right? You don't want to copy someone's look anyway, do you? You're a trendsetter!
- 43 **LONNIE:** There is nothing attractive about this. [*She holds up a mangled cluster of hair in front of her watering eyes.*]
- 44 **ASIA:** [*Frowning.*] You don't like it?
- 45 **LONNIE:** If you think it looks so great, then put on this apron and I'll give you this haircut.
- 46 **ASIA:** Well . . . umm . . . we have different facial structures. You look nice with shorter hair. My face is round. Long hair suits me better.
- 47 **LONNIE:** Just admit that you messed up. This haircut is terrible!
- 48 [*Asia stares at the ground and says nothing. There is a moment of quiet. Jeremiah enters.*]
- 49 **JEREMIAH:** Are you sure my bat isn't in— [*He stops and stares at Lonnie's hair. He walks to Lonnie and takes off his baseball cap.*] I think you're going to need this. [*He puts the hat on her head and exits.*]
- 50 **LONNIE:** What am I going to do? You ruined my hair!
- 51 **ASIA:** Look, I'm sorry. [*Pauses.*] I'll call the salon and set up an appointment for both of us. I'll get the same haircut as you. We'll be all anyone can talk about.
- 52 **LONNIE:** In a good way, I hope. And the next time you get one of your wild ideas, you get to go first.
- 53 **ASIA:** [*Smiling.*] That's fair. I'm sure that way I'll give it a little more thought.
- 54 [*Asia and Lonnie begin sweeping up the hair clippings. Curtain closes.*]

- 36** Why does the playwright include the stage directions in paragraph 22?
- F** To imply that Asia is taking the task of cutting Lonnie’s hair seriously
 - G** To indicate that both Lonnie and Asia are nervous about the haircut
 - H** To reveal that Asia has more experience cutting hair than she said she did
 - J** To show that Asia is pleased she has a chance to cut someone’s hair
-

- 37** Why does Lonnie agree to let Asia cut her hair?
- A** Lonnie decides that a free haircut from Asia is better than paying for a salon haircut.
 - B** Lonnie trusts that Asia’s father has taught Asia how to cut hair properly.
 - C** Lonnie knows Asia has access to the right tools for cutting hair.
 - D** Lonnie believes that her hair will look just like the style she wants if Asia cuts it.
-

- 38** What does the word gusto mean in paragraph 25?
- F** Concern
 - G** Precision
 - H** Curiosity
 - J** Enthusiasm

39 What is the best summary of the play?

- A** Asia and Lonnie look through magazines and notice a hairstyle worn by a singer they like. Lonnie wants her hair cut in that style, and Asia tells Lonnie she has watched her father cut hair. Lonnie agrees to let Asia cut her hair. While Asia is cutting hair, her brother comes in and out of the room looking for his baseball bat. Asia finishes Lonnie's haircut, but Lonnie says it is terrible.
- B** Lonnie sees a hairstyle she likes in a magazine and agrees to let Asia cut her hair. Lonnie worries when Asia won't give her a mirror and Jeremiah comments on her appearance. Asia tries to improve the haircut, but Lonnie is upset when she finally gets to see it. Asia tries to make Lonnie feel better, and the girls agree to get matching haircuts together at a salon.
- C** Asia and Lonnie are looking through magazines when they decide they like a singer's hairstyle. Asia suggests that she can cut Lonnie's hair to look like the style in the magazine. Asia persuades Lonnie to let her do it by saying that she has seen her father cut hair many times. After Asia finishes, the girls plan to go to the salon together to get matching haircuts.
- D** Lonnie wants a haircut like the one she sees in a magazine. Asia offers to cut her hair for free, and Lonnie agrees to let her. Jeremiah, Asia's brother, makes comments about Lonnie's hair that worry her. When Lonnie finally sees her finished haircut, she blames Asia for ruining it. She tells Asia to put on the apron so that Lonnie can cut her hair with the same style.

40 Why does the playwright include the sensory language in paragraph 43?

- F** To show the reader that Lonnie is overreacting to the situation
- G** To allow the reader to better visualize the style of the haircut
- H** To help the reader understand how distraught Lonnie feels
- J** To tell the reader that Lonnie puts a lot of thought into her hairstyle

41 Asia's dialogue in paragraph 51 is important because it shows that she —

- A** appreciates having a chance to practice cutting hair
 - B** is envious of how good her friend's hair looks now
 - C** prefers having her hair cut by a professional
 - D** wants to be supportive of her friend
-

42 What can the reader infer about Asia and Lonnie based on how the play ends?

- F** Asia and Lonnie will get into trouble for the mess that they made.
- G** Asia and Lonnie will have their hair cut only by professionals in the future.
- H** Asia and Lonnie will continue to be friends despite what has happened.
- J** Asia will choose a hairstyle different from the one Lonnie chose.



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