

## 30 Abe's Favorite Story

If he hadn't turned to politics, Abe Lincoln might have done well as a comic. It has been said that he was always ready to join in a laugh at his own expense. There is a particular story that he always told with great glee.

In his early days as a lawyer, Lincoln was on the "circuit." This meant going from town to town to hear and judge legal cases. During one of these many trips, he was sitting in a train when a strange man came up to him. The stranger looked at the tall, gawky lawyer quite sternly and explained that he had something he believed belonged to Lincoln. Lincoln was a bit confused. He had never seen the man before. He didn't see how a total stranger could have something of his. Lincoln asked him how this could be. The stranger pulled out a gleaming penknife and began to explain. Many years before, he had been given the pocketknife. He had been told to keep it until he was able to find a man uglier than himself.

Lincoln's eyes always sparkled when he reached this part of the story. He was never considered a handsome man. The stranger had decided that Lincoln was ugly enough to deserve the knife. The story always brought smiles to the faces of the audience that heard it. The tale itself was funny. But even more delightful was the fact that a man as great as Lincoln could still laugh at himself.

Main Idea

1

Answer

Mark the *main idea*

☒ M

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

☐ B

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

☐ N

- a. Abe Lincoln used to tell a funny story that showed he could laugh at himself. ☐
- b. A good sense of humor can be a rare gift. ☐
- c. Lincoln's story makes fun of his ugliness. ☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

**Subject Matter** 2 This passage is about

- ☐ a. Abe Lincoln's legal practice.
- ☐ b. a funny story that Abe Lincoln used to tell.
- ☐ c. the value of a penknife.
- ☐ d. traveling on trains.

**Supporting Details** 3 As a tribute to his ugliness, Lincoln was given a

- ☐ a. handshake.
- ☐ b. good laugh.
- ☐ c. penknife.
- ☐ d. train ticket.

**Conclusion** 4 We can conclude that Lincoln's good sense of humor

- ☐ a. was frowned upon by most.
- ☐ b. made him a more popular person.
- ☐ c. was developed when he was a traveling lawyer.
- ☐ d. was the reason he was elected president.

**Clarifying Devices** 5 This passage

- ☐ a. gives many facts about Lincoln.
- ☐ b. gives a short history lesson.
- ☐ c. tells a story.
- ☐ d. is a fable.

**Vocabulary in Context** 6 In this passage the word expense means

- ☐ a. price.
- ☐ b. amount of money.
- ☐ c. charge.
- ☐ d. loss, or sacrifice.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 216.

Total  
Score

## 31 A Perfect Match

The first matches were made by a German experimenter. Like others of his time was trying to make gold. Instead, he came up with phosphorous. This chemical is so sensitive that it bursts into flame when exposed to the air. The first match was made in 1680. In those days, few people could afford even an ounce of phosphorous. Phosphorous was so expensive that lighting a match was like burning money. The first matches were toys for the rich. They were not matches as we know them. They were small glass bottles containing pieces of paper dipped in phosphorous. When exposed to the air, they caught fire.

It was not until 1827, in England, that the type of match we are familiar with today was made. It used phosphorous too, but in smaller amounts. It was lit by friction. Everyone could afford these matches. They replaced flint and steel, which for centuries had been the only tools for starting fires. But these matches proved to be a curse as well as a blessing. Phosphorous is a deadly poison. The people who made matches often died from a disease caused by the poison. Babies died from swallowing match heads. Some people used them to commit suicide.

At last, in 1911, William Fairburn devised a nontoxic type of phosphorous. He proved himself an unselfish man by giving the formula to all the matchmakers, rather than keeping it for his own profit.

Main Idea

1

Mark the *main idea*

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

Answer

**M**

**B**

**N**

Score

1

- Matches went through many stages of development before the modern match was invented.
- The phosphorous used in early matches was deadly poisonous.
- Matches are made from chemicals.

☐

☐

☐

**Subject Matter** 2 This passage deals with

- ☐ a. the dangers of phosphorous.
- ☐ b. the invention of gold.
- ☐ c. the invention of matches.
- ☐ d. flint and steel.

**Supporting Details** 3 Phosphorous was a good chemical to use for matches because it was very

- ☐ a. poisonous.
- ☐ b. expensive.
- ☐ c. flammable.
- ☐ d. fire resistant.

**Conclusion** 4 Fairburn's decision to share his formula probably caused him to lose

- ☐ a. bets.
- ☐ b. friends.
- ☐ c. money.
- ☐ d. respect.

**Clarifying Devices** 5 The author compares lighting one of the earliest matches to burning money in order to describe

- ☐ a. how unlikely it was that an inexpensive match could be made.
- ☐ b. how foolishly people spent their money.
- ☐ c. how expensive phosphorous was.
- ☐ d. how flammable phosphorous was.

**Vocabulary in Context** 6 Nontoxic means

- ☐ a. unsafe.
- ☐ b. not poisonous.
- ☐ c. inexpensive.
- ☐ d. less flammable.

Add your scores for questions 1-6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 216.

Total Score

## 32 The Great Invasion

In 1944 an event occurred that changed the course of history. It was the invasion of France by the Allied forces. This invasion was the beginning of the end of World War II.

By 1944 most of Western Europe was controlled by German armies. To free the people, the Allies carefully planned their attack. British, Canadian, and American troops would set out from England and sail across the English Channel. They would land on the mainland of Europe and take back the land the Germans had grabbed.

The Germans knew the invasion was coming. They did not know where or when. The Allies tried to fool their enemy, and they succeeded. The Germans thought the invasion would come through northern France or through Belgium. The Allies decided to land further south, along France's Normandy coast. The Germans had fortified this region with guns, land mines, and barbed wire fences. But their main troops weren't there.

Invasion Day was June 6, 1944. Some 175,000 men were carried one hundred miles across the water. With them came tanks, trucks, and fighter planes providing bombing support. The goal in the first few days was to gain control of five beaches. From there troops could move inland.

Some of the worst fighting was at Omaha Beach. Just beyond the beach, Allied soldiers had to climb steep cliffs to make sure German gunnery was not there. At Omaha, over two thousand men died or were injured.

But the invasion was successful. The Allies established a beachhead by the end of the first day. Within a year, the Germans would be defeated.

### Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> N	5
a. Sometimes an invasion can change history.	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. The Germans did not know where the invasion would take place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. The Allied invasion of France was an important turning point in World War II.	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

**Subject Matter** 2 This passage mainly deals with

- ☐ a. how the invasion was planned and carried out.
- ☐ b. how the Germans got revenge.
- ☐ c. the problems at Omaha Beach.
- ☐ d. how one Allied soldier felt during the invasion.

**Supporting Details** 3 The Germans expected that the attack would come through

- ☐ a. southern France.
- ☐ b. Belgium.
- ☐ c. England.
- ☐ d. Italy.

**Conclusion** 4 It was necessary to gain control of the beaches

- ☐ a. so that more men and supplies could be landed.
- ☐ b. because many German troops were there.
- ☐ c. as a point of pride.
- ☐ d. because the troops that were landing didn't speak French.

**Clarifying Devices** 5 When the passage says that the invaders had "established a beachhead," it means that they had

- ☐ a. set up a bathing area.
- ☐ b. gotten control of land along the beach.
- ☐ c. set up pit toilets.
- ☐ d. begun building a place to hold prisoners of war.

**Vocabulary in Context**

6 Fortified means

- ☐ a. patrolled.
- ☐ b. entered.
- ☐ c. overrun.
- ☐ d. strengthened against attack.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 216.

Total  
Score

### 33 The Ship with Four Legs

There is just one four-legged animal that can walk two hundred miles without stopping once to rest. It would take a person two days and two nights to walk this far, and only one man has ever done it without stopping. What amazing animal has such endurance? The camel! The camel is well known for something else, too. It can cross an entire desert without a single drink of water. Its body is built in a special way to help it store water and food.

A person has just one stomach, but a camel has quite a few. Within each stomach are layers and layers of cells. These cells are like tiny water balloons, storing liquids until the camel needs them. When the camel drinks, the cells grow larger and larger. For a whole week, they can keep the animal's thirst away by sending water to all parts of its body.

Did you ever wonder why the camel has a hump? The hump is a storage place for fat. Because it has this storage area, the camel does not need to eat very often. When the animal needs energy, the layers of fat serve as fuel to keep it going on the long, hot days in the burning sun.

The camel has one other gift that makes it well suited to arid regions. This gift is its amazing nose. A camel can smell a water hole from miles away!

When a camel moves, it sways from side to side like a ship on a wavy ocean. Because of this swaying motion, the camel has been called the "Ship of the Desert."

Main Idea

1

Mark the *main idea*

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

Answer

Score

☒ M

15

☐ B

5

☐ N

5

a. Desert animals have great endurance.

☐

b. Camels can store liquids in their bodies for long periods.

☐

c. The camel is built to survive in the desert.

☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

**Subject Matter** 2 This passage is mainly about

- ☐ a. long-distance walking.
- ☐ b. mysterious ships.
- ☐ c. the camel.
- ☐ d. desert animals.

**Supporting Details** 3 The camel's hump is a storage place for

- ☐ a. muscles.
- ☐ b. extra water.
- ☐ c. body sugars.
- ☐ d. fat.

**Conclusion** 4 We can conclude from this passage that camels

- ☐ a. feel at home in the desert.
- ☐ b. like to carry heavy loads.
- ☐ c. look like ships from a distance.
- ☐ d. love to drink water.

**Clarifying Devices** 5 The author compares cells with water balloons in order to

- ☐ a. make you think of summer.
- ☐ b. help you visualize the cells.
- ☐ c. show how rubber is elastic.
- ☐ d. show how many shapes cells can have.

**Vocabulary in Context** 6 The word arid is closest in meaning to

- ☐ a. sunny.
- ☐ b. flat.
- ☐ c. dry.
- ☐ d. sandy.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 216.

Total  
Score

## 34 The Octopus Plant

Unless you have visited the southern United States, you probably have never heard of kudzu. Kudzu, as any farmer in the South will sadly tell you, is a super-powered weed. It is a strong climbing vine. Once it gets started, kudzu is almost impossible to stop. It climbs to the tops of the tallest trees. It can cover large buildings. Whole barns and farmhouses have been known to disappear from view. It has even been said to engulf small, slow-moving children, but that is probably an exaggeration. Still, wherever it grows, its thick, twisting vines are extremely hard to remove.

Kudzu was once thought to be a helpful plant. Originally found in Asia, it was brought to America to help fight erosion. It was planted where its tough roots, which grow up to five feet long, could help hold back the soil. But the plant soon spread to places where it wasn't wanted. Farmers now have to fight to keep it from eating up all the nutrients in the soil and killing other plants. In a way, it works as a sign of unemployment in the South; where there is no one to work the fields, kudzu soon takes over.

The northern United States faces no threat from kudzu. Harsh winters kill off its vines. The plant loves the warmth of the South. But the South surely doesn't love it. If someone could invent some use for kudzu and take it off southern farmers' lands, his or her fortune would be assured.

### Main Idea

1	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> N	5

- Kudzu is a plant that was used to help fight soil erosion.
- Kudzu is a fast-growing vine that has become a pest in the southern United States.
- Southern farmers face many difficulties in raising crops.

☐
☐
☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

**Subject Matter** 2 This passage is mostly concerned with

☐ a. kudzu.

☐ b. farming.

☐ c. the South.

☐ d. soil erosion.

**Supporting Details** 3 When fields are neglected in the South,

☐ a. erosion becomes a problem.

☐ b. farmers attack the kudzu.

☐ c. employment is bound to improve.

☐ d. kudzu soon grows over them.

**Conclusion** 4 We can conclude from the passage that kudzu

☐ a. is more helpful than harmful.

☐ b. is more harmful than helpful.

☐ c. is spreading to the North.

☐ d. holds promise as a seasonal food.

**Clarifying Devices** 5 The author makes a case against kudzu by

☐ a. citing opinions.

☐ b. predicting its future.

☐ c. describing its effects.

☐ d. criticizing its defenders.

**Vocabulary in Context** 6 The word engulf means

☐ a. take root.

☐ b. confuse.

☐ c. completely cover.

☐ d. carry off.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 216.

Total  
Score