

Reading Comprehension

Context Clues

Read the passage, and then answer the questions below it. Mark the letter of your answer on a bubble sheet if your teacher provides one; otherwise, circle the letter of the correct answer.

Beyond the thirty-three familiar shadows, forty thousand men, exhausted by
 1
 nervous expectation, unable to sleep for romantic dreams of battles yet
 unfought, lay crazily askew in their uniforms. A mile yet farther on, another army
 was strewn helter-skelter, turning slow, basting themselves with the thought of
 2 3
 what they would do when the time came: a leap, a yell, a blind plunge their
 4
 strategy, raw youth their protection and benediction. . . .

5
 There wasn't a man-boy on this ground tonight who did not have a shield he
cast, riveted or carved himself on his way to his first attack, compounded of
 6
 remote but nonetheless firm and fiery family devotion, . . .

—"The Drummer Boy of Shiloh" by Ray Bradbury

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|--|---|
| <p>1 In this passage, the word <u>shadows</u> means—
 A darkness
 B phantoms
 C creatures
 D soldiers</p> <p>2 In this passage, the word <u>strewn</u> means—
 A lined up
 B placed
 C scattered
 D sitting</p> <p>3 In this passage, the word <u>basting</u> means—
 A roasting
 B immersing
 C stitching
 D scolding</p> | <p>4 In this passage, the word <u>blind</u> means—
 A unexpected
 B rash
 C visually impaired
 D shy</p> <p>5 In this passage, the word <u>raw</u> means—
 A inexperienced
 B uncooked
 C industrious
 D undressed</p> <p>6 In this passage, the word <u>cast</u> means—
 A threw
 B shaped
 C arm brace
 D protected</p> |
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Reading Comprehension

Context Clues: Prefixes/Suffixes

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On Saturday I remarked to my husband, "Do you think kindergarten is too unsettling for Laurie? All this toughness, and bad grammar, and this Charles boy
1
sounds like such a bad influence."

... I wanted passionately to meet Charles's mother. On Tuesday Laurie
2
remarked suddenly, "Our teacher had a friend come to see her in school today."

"Charles's mother?" my husband and I asked simultaneously.
3

"Naaah," Laurie said scornfully. . . .
4

During the third and fourth weeks it looked like a reformation in Charles; Laurie
5
reported grimly at lunch on Thursday of the third week, "Charles was so good today the teacher gave him an apple."

—"Charles" by Shirley Jackson

- 1 In this passage, the word unsettling means—
A confusing
B disturbing
C frightening
D soothing
- 2 In this passage, the word passionately means—
A enthusiastically
B mildly
C carefully
D quickly
- 3 In this passage, the word simultaneously means—
A hopefully
B together
C individually
D worriedly

- 4 In this passage, the word scornfully means—
A boastfully
B confidently
C disappointedly
D mockingly
- 5 In this passage, the word reformation means—
A improvement
B reaction
C worsening
D attitude

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... Her crisp meat pies and cool lemonade, when joined to her miraculous¹ ability to be in two places at the same time, assured² her business success. From being a mobile³ lunch counter, she set up a stand between the two points of fiscal interest and supplied the workers' needs for a few years. Then she had the Store built in the heart⁴ of the Negro area. Over the years it became the lay⁵ center of activities in town. On Saturdays, barbers sat their customers in the shade on the porch of the Store, and troubadours on their ceaseless⁶ crawlings through the South leaned across its benches and sang their sad songs of The Brazos while they played juice harps and cigar-box guitars.

—*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou

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|--|---|
| <p>1 In this passage, the word <u>miraculous</u> means—
 A annoying
 B unreliable
 C impossible
 D marvelous</p> <p>2 In this passage, the word <u>assured</u> means—
 A guaranteed
 B ruined
 C provided
 D weakened</p> <p>3 In this passage, the word <u>mobile</u> means—
 A unpopular
 B inconvenient
 C movable
 D stationary</p> | <p>4 In this passage, the word <u>heart</u> means—
 A beat
 B center
 C muscle
 D outskirts</p> <p>5 In this passage, the word <u>lay</u> means—
 A nonreligious
 B formal
 C political
 D musical</p> <p>6 In this passage, the word <u>ceaseless</u> means—
 A silent
 B nightly
 C joyful
 D unending</p> |
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He'd have given me <u>rolling</u> lands, 1	He'd have given me laces rare,
Houses of marble, and <u>billowing</u> 2	Dresses that glimmered with frosty
farms,	<u>sheen</u> , 5
Pearls, to <u>trickle</u> between my hands, 3	Shining ribbons to wrap my hair,
Smoldering rubies, to circle my	Horses to draw me, as fine as a
arms.	queen.
You—you'd only a lilting song.	You—you'd only to whistle low,
Only a melody, happy and high,	Gaily I followed wherever you led.
You were <u>sudden</u> and swift and 4	I took you, and I let him go.—
strong.—	Somebody ought to examine my
Never a thought for another had I.	head!
	—"The Choice" by Dorothy Parker

1 In this passage, the word rolling means—

- A turning over
- B rising up and down
- C moving in circles
- D coiling up

2 In this passage, the word billowing means—

- A blowing in the wind
- B swirling in flames
- C surging in water
- D filling with air

3 In this passage, the word trickle means—

- A to move one by one
- B to drip with liquid
- C to fade slowly
- D to fall in drops

4 In this passage, the word sudden means—

- A infuriating
- B superb
- C impulsive
- D tedious

5 In this passage, the word sheen means—

- A glittering
- B lackluster
- C brightness
- D heat

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... I could not tell whether he was impatient¹ or bored with my questions and was merely² answering them because it served his interest³. Because we couldn't talk at the same time, there was little chance for the conversation to move spontaneously. On the other hand, his answers meant more, in a certain way, being written, than answers I would have received⁴ on the phone. . . .

... How about immortality⁵—being remembered for a thousand years after you're dead—does that excite you? How strong is your desire to improve⁶ people's lives (by providing them with better tools for thinking and communicating)? Some people are trying to heal a wound or to recover a loss. Is that the case with you? . . .

—"E-mail from Bill Gates" by John Seabrook

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|---|---|
| <p>1 In this passage, the word <u>impatient</u> means—
 A fretful
 B excited
 C compelled
 D content</p> <p>2 In this passage, the word <u>merely</u> means—
 A simply
 B regretfully
 C harshly
 D eagerly</p> <p>3 In this passage, the word <u>interest</u> means—
 A welfare
 B hobbies
 C percentage
 D attention</p> | <p>4 In this passage, the word <u>received</u> means—
 A accepted
 B taken in
 C imposed
 D admitted</p> <p>5 In this passage, the word <u>immortality</u> means—
 A endlessness
 B enduring fame
 C godliness
 D eternal love</p> <p>6 In this passage, the word <u>improve</u> means—
 A better
 B superior
 C create
 D increase the value of</p> |
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She had just finished her evening meal, and was about to recline and watch
 1
 the fire for awhile, when she heard . . . a long, low cry of distress

"Ah!" thought the girl, "someone, more belated than myself, is lost; doubtless
 2 3
 one of the rabbit-hunters." . . .

The cry was repeated near at hand, and presently the maiden . . . heard the
 4 5
 clatter of an enormous rattle. In dismay and terror she threw her hands into the

air, and, crouching down, rushed into the cave and retreated to its farthest limits,
 6
 where she sat shuddering with fear, for she knew that one of the Cannibal

Demons of those days, perhaps the renowned Atahsaia of the east, had . . .

—"The Girl Who Hunted Rabbits" Zuni Legend

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|--|---|
| <p>1 In this passage, the word <u>recline</u> means—
 A climb up
 B go to sleep
 C lean back
 D sit up</p> <p>2 In this passage, the word <u>belated</u> means—
 A confused
 B upset
 C tardy
 D punctual</p> <p>3 In this passage, the word <u>doubtless</u> means—
 A unfortunately
 B unpredictably
 C unquestionably
 D unexpectantly</p> | <p>4 In this passage, the word <u>repeated</u> means—
 A uttered again
 B recited
 C echoed
 D heard again</p> <p>5 In this passage, the word <u>presently</u> means—
 A shortly
 B expectantly
 C graciously
 D eventually</p> <p>6 In this passage, the word <u>crouching</u> means—
 A sitting
 B lying
 C stretching
 D stooping</p> |
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... "So, boss," he whispered. They accepted him placidly and he fetch¹ed some hay for each cow and then got the milking pail and the big milk cans. ...

He smiled and milked steadily, two strong² streams rushing into the pail, frothing³ and fragrant. The cows were still surprised but acquiescent. For once they were behaving well, as though they knew it was Christmas. ...

"Son, I thank you. Nobody ever did a nicer thing—"

"Oh, Dad, I want you to know—I do want to be good!" The words broke⁴ from him of their own will. He did not know what to say. His heart was bursting⁵ with love.

—"Christmas Day in the Morning" by Pearl S. Buck

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|---|--|
| <p>1 In this passage, the word <u>fetch</u> means—</p> <p>A got</p> <p>B harvested</p> <p>C bought</p> <p>D scattered</p> <p>2 In this passage, the word <u>strong</u> means—</p> <p>A muscular</p> <p>B constant</p> <p>C sufficient</p> <p>D straight</p> <p>3 In this passage, the word <u>frothing</u> means—</p> <p>A cool</p> <p>B foaming</p> <p>C spilling</p> <p>D dripping</p> | <p>4 In this passage, the word <u>broke</u> means—</p> <p>A shattered</p> <p>B cracked</p> <p>C escaped</p> <p>D diluted</p> <p>5 In this passage, the word <u>bursting</u> means—</p> <p>A overflowing</p> <p>B exploding</p> <p>C destroying</p> <p>D filled</p> |
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old man,	old man,
grandfather,	who knew earth
wise with time	by its awesome <u>aromas</u> 5
<u>running</u> rivulets on face, 1	and who felt
deep, rich, furrows,	the <u>heated</u> sweetness 6
each one a <u>legacy</u> , 2	of chile verde
deep, <u>rich</u> memories 3	by his supple touch,
of life . . .	gone into dust is your body
he would tell me	with its stoic look and resolution,
during nights spent	but your reality, old man,
so long ago	lives on. . . .
amidst <u>familial gatherings</u> . . . 4	—“Old Man” by Ricardo Sánchez

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 In this passage, the word <u>running</u> means—
 A watery
 B extending
 C wrinkling
 D trickling</p> <p>2 In this passage, the word <u>legacy</u> means—
 A scar
 B crisis
 C curiosity
 D reminder</p> <p>3 In this passage, the word <u>rich</u> means—
 A wealthy
 B flavorful
 C exaggerated
 D extensive</p> | <p>4 In this passage, the words <u>familial gatherings</u> mean—
 A family get-togethers
 B neighborhood parties
 C sporting events
 D business meetings</p> <p>5 In this passage, the word <u>aromas</u> means—
 A landscapes
 B scents
 C harvests
 D colors</p> <p>6 In this passage, the word <u>heated</u> means—
 A spicy
 B warmed
 C angry
 D sun-ripened</p> |
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We went up to the attic, into a long, low room under the eaves where I've
 1
squirreled away some boxes of old stuff; I dug into one box, and the first thing I
 2
 hauled out was the very thing he wanted. A thigh-length leather vest covered with
 fringe and studded with silver, it dates from around 1967, a fanciful time in college-
 3 4
 boy fashions. Like many boys, I grew up in nice clothes my mother bought, but was
 meanwhile admiring Roy Rogers . . . and other sharp dressers. . . .

. . . I loved the fact that it fitted him so well, though, and his pleasure at the heft
 5
 and extravagance of the thing, the poses he struck in front of the mirror. . . . That
 vest was waiting for a boy to come along—a boy who has a flair for the dramatic,
 6
 . . . I'm happy to be the audience.

—"Something From the Sixties" by Garrison Keillor

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 In this passage, the word <u>eaves</u> means—
 A front porch
 B roof overhang
 C basement stairs
 D night sky</p> <p>2 In this passage, the word <u>squirreled</u> means—
 A given
 B thrown
 C sent
 D tucked</p> <p>3 In this passage, the word <u>studded</u> means—
 A adorned
 B stained
 C enclosed
 D protected</p> | <p>4 In this passage, the word <u>fanciful</u> means—
 A showy
 B imaginary
 C legendary
 D forgettable</p> <p>5 In this passage, the word <u>heft</u> means—
 A weight
 B smell
 C value
 D purpose</p> <p>6 In this passage, the word <u>flair</u> means—
 A claim
 B request
 C gift
 D distrust</p> |
|---|---|

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Ring out the grief that saps the
mind,

For those that here we see no more;
1

Ring out the feud of rich and poor,

Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,

And ancient forms of party strife;
2

Ring in the nobler modes of life,

With sweeter manners, purer laws.

...

Ring out the false pride in place and

blood,
3

The civic slander and the spite;
4

Ring in the love of truth and right,

Right in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
5

Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
6

Ring out the thousand wars of old,

Ring in the thousand years of peace.

—"Ring Out, Wild Bells" by Alfred,
Lord Tennyson

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 In this passage, the words <u>see no more</u> mean—
 A have lost their vision
 B have disappeared
 C have passed away
 D have moved away</p> <p>2 In this passage, the word <u>party</u> means—
 A gathering
 B meeting
 C group
 D get-together</p> <p>3 In this passage, the word <u>blood</u> means—
 A friend
 B war
 C plasma
 D family</p> | <p>4 In this passage, the word <u>slander</u> means—
 A unrest
 B conflicts
 C falsehoods
 D commotion</p> <p>5 In this passage, the word <u>foul</u> means—
 A dishonor
 B horrible
 C muddy
 D rotten</p> <p>6 In this passage, the word <u>lust</u> means—
 A expense
 B jewelry
 C desire
 D shine</p> |
|--|---|