



Summer Review Program

Summer 2024/5784

Student's Name

Entering 5th Grade

June 2024

Dear KES Parents,

Your child and their teachers have worked hard all year to make great strides in reading and writing. As you may know, good readers and writers read and write daily. Summer is a great time for students to read for pleasure, to nurture a love for reading and to maintain any gains made during the year. It is also a wonderful time for you to read to your children! Read a-louds are a wonderful opportunity to work on comprehension skills and vocabulary and to generate further interest in books.

This coming summer, we will be promoting different levels of prizes depending on the amount of work that is done over the summer. Students are being given 3 different options. For the completion of 1 option you will receive the 1st level prize. For the completion of 2 options you will receive the 2nd level prize and for completing all 3 options you will receive the 3rd level prize. Completed responses will be accepted in the school office in exchange for a prize in the first weeks of school, B'ezras Hashem.

Options:

- Complete the packet of 10 fiction and nonfiction passages and complete the questions
- Read 1 novel of choice and complete one of the reading responses found at the end of this packet
- Read a 2nd novel of your choice and complete one of the reading responses found at the end of this packet

The attached reading passages have been chosen for your child.

If your child chooses to read a book, we recommend choosing a book based on the "Five Finger Rule", which your child may remember from school. Have your children turn to any page in the book. For every word that they don't know, they should hold up a finger. Your child can use the following guidelines according to how many fingers they hold up:

0 or 1 – Most probably too easy for your child.

2 – A good choice that will give your child a reasonable challenge and allow them to learn new words.

3 – Your child might need some help, but still a good choice if they're up for a challenge.

4 – May be too difficult for your child to read on their own. If you are on hand to give them help or read along with them it can be suitable, but if they are reading on their own, choose a different book.

5 – Most probably a bit too advanced, best to try a different book unless your child really wants to read it.

Some ideas on how to choose a book :

- **kosherbooks.org** gives a list of approved books with comments

- Jewish books available through publishers such as **Menucha Publishers**, as well as **Artscroll, Feldheim, and Israel Book Shop**.
- Ask friends and family
- Go to the library
- Look on-line

Your support in promoting literacy skills is especially crucial during the elementary years. We look forward to a continuous partnership that will foster growth and a lifelong love of reading.

Have a wonderful summer and happy reading!

Rabbi Baumann
Principal

Rabbi Noam Grossman
Boys Division

Mrs. Miriam Deitsch
Girls Division

Mrs. Dara Lubin
Literary Coach/Curriculum Coordinator

Recycling & Conservation: Why Recycle?

by ReadWorks



Recycling is a process where something is reused rather than thrown away. Common items that are recycled include aluminum and steel cans, glass, and newspapers. Recycling can be time-consuming and dirty work. For example, recyclable objects have to be sorted from trash. Then the objects have to be cleaned. Afterwards, the objects are turned into materials that can be used by people and companies. Why should people bother to recycle even though it takes a lot of work?

Recycling helps protect the earth. Recycling means less garbage in landfills. These are places where garbage is taken and buried. Recycling also helps conserve the earth's resources. For example, factories use less energy by recycling steel cans than by making new ones. Recycling paper saves trees from being cut down. Trees are used to make paper.

Every time you are about to drop a plastic bottle in the garbage, stop and think. Is it worth harming the earth? Your actions now can help preserve the environment for generations to come. All you have to do is throw that bottle into a recycling bin.

Get in the habit. Be proud of recycling. Encourage others to recycle. You can make a difference!

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is recycling?

- A. a process where something is reused
- B. a process where something is thrown away
- C. a process where something is taken and buried
- D. a process where something harms the earth

2. How does the author organize the information in this passage?

- A. The author explains the problems with recycling and suggests different solutions.
- B. The author describes similarities and differences between recycling and throwing things away.
- C. The author lists information about recycling in order of importance, from most to least important.
- D. The author describes recycling and shares an argument about why it's important.

3. Read these sentences.

"... recyclable objects have to be sorted from trash. Then the objects have to be cleaned."

These sentences can be used to support which conclusion below?

- A. "... the objects are turned into materials that can be used by people and companies."
- B. "Recycling can be time-consuming and dirty work."
- C. "Recycling helps protect the earth."
- D. "Be proud of recycling."

4. What can be concluded from this passage?

- A. The author works for a recycling plant.
- B. The author does not believe in recycling.
- C. The author believes that all you have to do to save the environment is throw a bottle in a bin.
- D. The author believes that everyday people can help the earth.

5. What is the main idea of this passage?

- A. Recycling helps protect the earth and conserve its resources.
- B. Many people avoid recycling because it is too difficult.
- C. People must make decisions what to recycle.
- D. Only certain things can be recycled.

6. At the end of paragraph one, the author asks, "Why should people bother to recycle even though it takes a lot of work?" Why does the author include this question?

- A. to transition the reader to the next paragraph, which answers the question
- B. to question the reader's knowledge about recycling
- C. to summarize the major points in paragraph one
- D. to allow the reader to demonstrate understanding

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Recycling takes work, _____ it is good for the environment.

- A. instead
- B. before
- C. so
- D. but

8. What does the author suggest you do when you are about to throw a plastic bottle in the garbage?

9. What examples does the author provide to show that recycling helps conserve the earth's resources?

10. Read these sentences from the text.

"Get in the habit. Be proud of recycling. Encourage others to recycle."

How can these actions make a difference? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Take Me Out to the Ball Game

by ReadWorks

Corinne skipped through the parking lot. She couldn't hold back her excitement. Her family was going to the baseball stadium for the first time!

"Corinne, chill out," said her brother, Jake. Jake was only two years older than Corinne, but he thought that gave him the authority to boss her around. Corinne slowed to a walk and waited for her family to catch up.

"I can't help it," she said. "I've never been to a baseball game before."

Corinne had watched countless baseball games on television. Baseball was her favorite sport, and she had been a Chicago Cubs fan as long as she could remember. Corinne thought that the best moment of her life would be when the Cubs finally broke their curse and won the World Series. The team had been losing for decades, but she knew that sooner or later, they had to win.

But tonight her family wasn't going to see the Cubs. They were going to see the Cougars, a new minor league team that had come to their town. Jake wasn't excited about the game. He thought the minor leagues didn't count. "The minor league is for players who aren't good enough for the major league," Jake always said. But Corinne liked the idea that these players weren't famous yet. They were still training and learning, just like her. Maybe she'd see baseball's next big star. Maybe he'd even sign a baseball for her.

"Mom," Corinne said, "Can we wait outside the dugout after the game? I want to get some autographs."

"Sure, we can," said Corinne's mother. "But let's enjoy the game first."

They pulled out their tickets and walked into the stadium. The stadium security guard checked Corinne's mother's purse and waved them through. "Mmmm," Corinne breathed in deeply. The air smelled like a delicious mix of popcorn and soda. Corinne looked at the tickets and saw that they were sitting on the upper level, just past third base. They walked up the concrete stairs and found their seats as the first inning was beginning.

Corinne couldn't decide whether to watch the field itself or the enormous screen behind the outfield. Her eyes darted back and forth between the two. The Cougars were pitching first.

She cheered at the top of her lungs for every strike and booed when anyone on the other team, the Cyclones, got a hit. Even Jake looked like he was having fun, cheering just as loudly as Corinne.

The game was close. The Cougars would score, and then the Cyclones would score. Back and forth, the two teams battled. The Cyclones had a better pitcher, but the Cougars were quicker. Corinne especially liked the shortstop. He was short, like her, and he was really agile. No matter where the ball was, he was there first. He seemed to have a magic ability to predict its path.

"Mom," said Corinne, tugging on her mother's sleeve. "What's the shortstop's name?"

Her mother looked through the program, searching. "Cory Alvarez," she said. "Cory!" thought Corinne. "Just like me."

By the end of the ninth inning, the teams were still tied, and the Cougars were up to bat. "This is it," Corinne said to Jake. "If the Cougars can manage to score just one run, then we'll win!"

"Don't be such a baby," said Jake. "It doesn't really matter. It's just the minor leagues."

Corinne noticed, though, that Jake was leaning forward in his seat and watching the batter with interest. Jake could pretend to be as cool as a cucumber, but inside he was just as excited as Corinne.

The batter turned, and Corinne saw that it was her favorite player, Cory Alvarez. "Come on Cory," she thought, "You can do it!"

Cory walked up to the home plate and tapped the bat on the ground twice. Then he lifted the bat and waited. The pitcher wound up and then threw a ball so fast, Corinne didn't even see it. She heard the crack when the bat hit the ball, though, and saw the ball flying through the air toward third base. The ball sailed past the base, then over the stands and straight toward Corinne's family. Corinne climbed up on her seat and put her hands out. She felt a sting and tumbled backwards as the baseball slammed into her palms. She tumbled out of the chair, and her parents kneeled over her. "Corinne! Corinne! Are you okay?"

Corinne held up the baseball and smiled. "I'm much more than okay," she said.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1. Which team is Corinne hoping will win this baseball game?

2. Where does this story take place?

3. Corinne is completely enjoying herself at the baseball game. What evidence from the story supports this conclusion?

4. Why is Corinne so very excited about this baseball game?

5. What is the main idea of this story?

6. Read the sentences and answer the question.

"Corinne noticed, though, that Jake was leaning forward in his seat and watching the batter with interest. Jake could pretend to be cool as a cucumber, but inside he was just as excited as Corinne."

What does the phrase "cool as a cucumber" mean in this text?

7. What word or phrase best completes the sentence?

Corinne especially likes Cory Alvarez _____ he seems to have the ability to predict where the ball will go and get there first.

8. What happens to the baseball that Cory Alvarez hits?

9. At the end of the story, Corinne says, "I'm much more than okay." What does Corinne mean by this? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

10. Why might Corinne be feeling "much more than okay" at the end of the story? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Soccer in the Park

by ReadWorks

Maria opened her eyes, yawned, and smiled. It was a bright, sunny morning in June. Maria loved the sunshine, and she loved June. Maria lived in Rome, the capital of Italy. In June, Rome was warm and the roses were in bloom. Maria had just finished the fifth grade. Next year, she would start at a new school and make new friends. But right now she had the entire summer to relax.

She could smell coffee coming from the kitchen. That meant that Maria's parents were awake already. Maria hopped out of bed and ran down the hallway. "What are we going to do today?" she asked her father.

Maria's father smiled as he poured her orange juice. "Eat your breakfast, and then we can talk about what we're going to do today. I thought we might go to the park."

Maria sat down, shaking with excitement. She hoped they were going to Villa Borghese, the huge park near their house. Villa Borghese had lakes where you could row boats and lots of green hills that were perfect for having picnics on. But the best part of Villa Borghese wasn't the boats or the picnics. It was the sports. In the summer, the park was full of kids playing sports. Usually Maria was too shy to join in with the other children. But she loved to watch.

Maria and her father played sports together. She liked tennis and riding horses, but her favorite sport was soccer. Maria was the youngest child, with three older brothers. Her first steps were taken on a soccer field, and she had been watching soccer games as long as she could remember. She knew when players should pass and when they should shoot.

"Can we watch soccer today?" Maria asked her father.

He smiled and patted the top of her head. "Get your cleats," he said. "Today we're not going to watch. Today we're going to play."

Maria and her father drove to the park and walked up to the soccer field. Two teams were playing. Most of the players were Maria's age, but some were much bigger. Maria reached for her father's hand. "I don't know, Papa," she said. "Some of these kids look big."

"You can do it," said her father. "I know you can."

Maria strapped on her cleats and her gloves. She walked onto the field and found the team's

captain. "Do you guys need a goalie?" Maria asked him hesitantly. The captain looked at Maria and nodded slowly. "Our goalie isn't here today," he said. "You can try if you want to."

Maria walked into the goal and stood between the two posts. The team was now relying on her to defend. Maria had to keep the soccer ball from going into the goal no matter what. She watched as the players kicked the ball down the field. They ran so fast and kicked the ball so hard. It was coming closer and closer to Maria. She watched as the other team passed the ball, back and forth, back and forth. The round sphere was a blur.

"Maria!" she heard her father yell. "You can do it!"

Maria took a deep breath. She started to believe that she could do this. She bent her knees and crouched low to the ground as one of the soccer players approached. Maria saw his right leg reach back to kick. Before she had time to think, she dove to the right. As she hit the ground, Maria felt her hands slam into the ball. She saw the ball bounce away. She had kept it from the goal! Maria heard her father cheer but she kept looking at the field. The ball could come back at any moment.

Maria's team was running with the ball down the field. Her team's captain dribbled the ball and shot it perfectly into the corner of the other team's goal. The other goalie wasn't as quick as Maria, and the ball sailed past his hands. Throughout the rest of the game, the other team still wasn't able to score.

Maria jumped up and down. They had won! Her new teammates came over to congratulate her. "Good job," said the captain. "What's your name, goalie?"

"Maria," she said.

"Well, Maria," he said, "do you want to play with us again next week?"

Maria nodded. She had never felt so happy.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1. What is Maria's favorite sport?

2. The climax of a story is the most exciting or intense part of the story. What is the climax of "Soccer in the Park"?

3. Soccer is a big part of Maria's life. What sentence from the story best supports this statement?

4. Read these sentences from the story.

"Most of the players were Maria's age, but some were much bigger. Maria reached for her father's hand. 'I don't know, Papa,' she said. 'Some of these kids look big.'"

How does Maria feel at this point in the story?

5. What is the main idea of this story?

6. Read the sentences and answer the question.

"Two teams were playing. Most of the players were Maria's age, but some were much bigger. Maria reached for her father's hand. 'I don't know, Papa,' she said. 'Some of these kids look big.'

"'You can do it,' said her father. 'I know you can.'

"Maria strapped on her cleats and her gloves. She walked onto the field and found the team's captain. 'Do you guys need a goalie?' Maria asked him hesitantly."

What does the word "hesitantly" mean as used in this text?

7. What word or phrase best completes the sentence?

_____ Maria was too shy to play soccer with the other children, she still loved to watch.

8. When Maria and her father arrive at the soccer field, she sees two teams playing soccer. Why does she hesitate to join them?

9. Why does Maria feel happy after the soccer game?

10. Explain how playing in the soccer game affected Maria by using evidence from the story.

Butterflies in Culture

This text is provided courtesy of OLogy, the American Museum of Natural History's website for kids.



The annual Yellow Butterfly Festival celebrates and protects butterflies and their habitats. Organized by local people and conservation groups, the festival features performances, costumes, butterfly-watching hikes, and ceremonies to honor butterflies.

To understand why butterflies are such popular symbols, look at the Chinese characters for "butterfly." The first character 蝴 (hú) has a similar sound as the character 福 (fú) for "good fortune." This is why butterflies are symbols of good luck. The second character 蝶 (dié) has the same sound as the character 耋 for "the elders." So butterflies are often seen in artwork celebrating a long life.



In the Rukai tribe, wearing a butterfly headdress is a great honor granted by the chief. These men run so swiftly, they have won the title "lyalivarane." It means "butterfly"!

Butterflies carry meaning for Taiwan's indigenous groups, too. For the Rukai people, the butterfly is a symbol of swiftness when used on headdresses. It is a symbol of diligence when used on clothes. The Paiwan people use tribal beads of the Swallowtail to decorate a person who is fast and nimble. And the Tao tribe believe that Magellan's Iridescent Birdwing represents evil spirits.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1. What is one thing that butterflies are symbols of?

2. Butterflies can mean many different things to people in Taiwan.

Support this conclusion with at least two pieces of evidence from the text.

3. What is the main idea of this text?

Jam Session

by Frances Killea



"Aren't you a little old to be playing make-believe?"

I, myself, had given up on play-acting when I was nine. It was kid's stuff, and I didn't feel very much like a kid anymore. My mother, however, seemed to have absorbed everything about childhood that I'd left behind. Now she was dancing around the living room with the handle of a dust mop in her hand, held at an angle like a rock star's microphone, singing.

When I said that, though, she stopped.

"Hey, Monica, you like movies, right? Some people make a living out of playing make-believe."

She wasn't wrong. I did like movies, and actors did make a living dressing up, and pretending they were someone else. The fact that Mom was right annoyed me. I didn't say anything, but picked up a stack of magazines that was on the kitchen floor, and put it on the table.

"Thanks, honey. I don't think this dust mop could handle those." Mom hummed a few lines of the music she had on.

I liked rock best, and she liked musicals. But today was *West Side Story*, which I loved. I'd caught my mother in the middle of a very animated version of the song "Maria."

"Also, Monica, we're going blueberry picking after I finish the kitchen," Mom said, without looking up from her pile of dust, which she was now sweeping into the dustpan.

"We're WHAT?" I had just finished putting all of the books on my bedroom floor back on my bookshelves. Plus, I'd made my bed, and changed my hamster's water and food bowls. I was tired. "What am I? Your

personal assistant?"

"Ha! You're a lucky eleven-year-old girl who gets to be responsible for her very own bedroom in a safe house, in a safe neighborhood, in a free country. And you have the summer off, and a mom who is really good at making blueberry jam, but needs another set of hands."

I was about to protest, but she interrupted. "And you have full use of those hands. You're not sick or weak -so be thankful for that. You are far, far from oppressed, my friend."

Mom dumped a pan of crumbs and dust into the trash. I stared at her. She was pretty awesome, most days. I really did love her. Still...dancing in the kitchen, pretending to be a star? *Blueberry picking?* She was known to sing out loud a lot. The berry-picking thing was new.

"Why don't we just go to the store?" I asked.

Mom threw a rag at me, and I automatically started wiping down the counters. "Because, number one, the berries there are shipped in from across the country, and they don't taste as fresh or as flavorful as the ones we can pick ourselves. And number two..." she paused to slam a drawer full of silverware shut, which just about broke my eardrums with clashing forks. "...it's fun."

So that was that. I grumbled my way through putting the clean dishes away, and then grumbled my way into the car, staying silent as we drove out east. It felt like forever. I had looked at the car clock when we left the house, and when we rolled up to the blueberry farm, it had only been half an hour. It's funny how quickly the scenery changed. We'd gone from our little town and neighborhood-not a city, by any stretch, but at least *populated*-to the country, where a house seemed surrounded by a mile of corn on every side.

My mother pointed to a small barn. The big sliding door was open, and inside was an old man standing hunched over a cash register. Mom went to speak to him as I rounded the back of the building to explore. I found a wooden table full of white buckets, a few empty wooden crates stacked near a coil of hose and a dog bowl filled with water. A bumblebee was struggling in the water, and I picked up a stick to help it out.

"Monica, grab a couple of buckets. Those are what we'll pick into." Mom came around the corner, and I reached for a pail from the stacks on the table.

"They're stuck," I huffed, wrestling with two that didn't want to come apart. "Help me!"

Mom grabbed the end of one, and I held the handle on the other; and we yanked. The buckets slid free, and I fell over from the force of the pull.

"Okay," I said, dusting myself off and frowning. We started walking past rows of blueberry bushes, a lot of them taller than Mom. "How do we do this?"

"Well, just like how you'd think," my mother replied. She ducked into the path between two rows of bushes, and I followed.

"Just go for the ones that are dark all around. Don't pick anything with white or pink on it. Those aren't

ready yet, and they're going to be sour." Mom handed me an unripe berry.

"Duh, I know that, I've had blueberries before," I said, and didn't take it.

"Huh," Mom looked at me. "Not as sour as you, though, I bet." She turned away. "Let's divide and conquer, shall we? I'll pick here, and you can find your own row to work on, and we'll meet somewhere in the middle."

"Fine." I stomped away.

The grass itched my ankles. I wanted to sit down, but the sun was hot, and the shade under the bushes helped a little. So I found my own row, and started picking a short way into the patch. Almost immediately, reaching into the branches for a particularly juicy-looking berry, a yellowjacket stung my finger.

"OUCH!" I yelled. "STUPID BEE!" I swallowed to keep from crying. I listened, but didn't hear my mother reply to me.

She must not have heard. Or maybe she's ignoring me, I thought. My face felt hot, and I could feel anger bubbling up from my stomach to my chest. I kicked the near-empty pail by my feet, and screamed in frustration.

All I could hear in response were birds. I sniffed and wiped my eyes. My finger hurt, and it looked puffy. I picked up my bucket, and ran back up to where I thought my mom had been working. She wasn't there anymore. When I ran down the row calling out and looking for her, I saw no one, and heard nothing. I flipped the bucket upside down and sat on it, resting my face in my hands for a moment while I let a few tears slide down my nose.

There was nothing else to do but pick, I thought.

So I stood up, and walked a few rows back, parking myself next to a particularly tall blueberry shrub, making sure it was relatively bee-free. With both hands, I started yanking every ripe blueberry from the branches, fueled by anger. Gradually, though, I slowed down, feeling calmer as the sun shifted, and a breeze cooled off my shoulders.

"These are weird," I said to myself, looking at a handful of berries.

They were dusty-looking, like they'd been frosted. However, the dust rubbed off when I wiped them against my shirt. I'd never picked blueberries before; I'd actually never picked any berries before, and being out there was annoyingly hot and full of bugs. But I was beginning to relax. I caught myself humming one of the songs from the soundtrack my mother had been listening to that morning, and made myself stop.

I moved to the next bush, and started on that one. Shortly after, I walked to another, and then another; picking a handful of fruit from each before looking for new territory. My bucket was only a third-of-the-way full, and my finger was hot and red, but I had to admit, I was having fun.

I didn't hear my mother when she walked up. I had filled my bucket another third of-the-way to the top, and I was singing and dancing in place under the branches.

"Who's making-believe now?" My mom laughed.

I was embarrassed. "Yeah...but I'm eleven. I'm allowed to do this."

"Newsflash, honey: people never get too old to pretend."

"I got stung," I said, and suddenly needed a hug. I almost tipped over my harvest, but jumped over it before kicking the pail.

Mom set hers down and hugged me back. "Let's head home, shall we?"

We paid for our berries by weight. Mom got me a can of Coke from a rickety, old machine in the barn, which I put on my finger before I popped the tab. We shared it in the car on the way home.

When we got back, Mom gave me some first-aid cream for my sting, and I curled up on the living room couch with a book. I don't remember which song exactly, because I was drifting in and out of a nap, but I heard my mom singing along to *West Side Story* again. Only this time, it made me smile, and when I woke up, there were five jars of jam on the counter, and the house smelled like vanilla, sugar, and fruit.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What activity do Monica and her mom go out to do in the country?

- A. Monica and her mom go out to sing songs from *West Side Story* in the country.
- B. Monica and her mom go out to clean houses in the country.
- C. Monica and her mom go out to catch bees in the country.
- D. Monica and her mom go out to pick blueberries in the country.

2. What is a turning point in the story?

- A. Monica's mom dances around the living room with the dust mop.
- B. Monica's mom slams shut a drawer full of silverware.
- C. Monica gets stung by a yellowjacket.
- D. Monica grumbles as she gets into the car.

3. While picking blueberries, Monica begins to relax. She catches herself humming a song. She dances in place under the branches.

What can be concluded from this evidence?

- A. Monica enjoys picking blueberries.
- B. Monica hates picking blueberries.
- C. Monica wants to go back home.
- D. Monica is hot and sweaty.

4. How does Monica's mood change between the beginning and end of the story?

- A. She goes from being in a bad mood to being in a good mood.
- B. She goes from being in a good mood to being in a bad mood.
- C. She goes from being a bad mood to being in a terrible mood.
- D. She goes from being in a good mood to being in a great mood.

5. What is a theme of this story?

- A. how boring blueberry picking can be
- B. how beautiful the song "Maria" is
- C. how awesome a mother can be

D. how easy cleaning a house is

6. Read the following sentence: "I **grumbled** my way through putting the clean dishes away, and then **grumbled** my way into the car, staying silent as we drove out east."

Why does the author use the word **grumbled** twice in this sentence?

A. to show how long the drive out east took

B. to show how excited the main character is about going for a drive

C. to show how many dishes there are in the main character's house

D. to show how grumpy the main character is feeling

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Monica plays make-believe when picking blueberries _____ she felt like she was too old for make-believe at home.

A. in conclusion

B. although

C. for instance

D. above all

8. What does Monica ask her mother when she sees her singing and dancing to a *West Side Story* song at the beginning of the story?

9. When she hears her mother singing along to *West Side Story* at the end of the story, what does Monica do?

10. Why does Monica's response to her mother singing along to *West Side Story* change between the beginning and end of the story? Support your answer with evidence from the passage.

The Meadowlands

by ReadWorks



The Meadowlands in New Jersey

When they described the swamp at the end of Schuyler Avenue, the adults in Sarah's life seemed confused. Whenever she asked about it, Sarah's dad would chuckle.

"You'd better stay away from the Meadowlands," her father said.

Sarah's sixth grade teacher, Mr. Morrison, said only parts of the Meadowlands are swamps. He explained to the class that the Meadowlands are precious wetlands, one of the last places near New York City where birds migrating from Florida could stop and rest.

"The Meadowlands once had a lot of garbage dumps, which polluted the water pretty badly," Mr. Morrison said. "But most of the dumps are closed now. And the habitat for wild birds is recovering."

From her yard in the winter, the Meadowlands was as her dad described: brown, dead-looking weeds with Doritos bags lying at the water's edge. By springtime, however, the reeds turned green and flowers grew along the shoreline.

So which one is it, Sarah wondered. Is the Meadowlands a big, ugly, dangerous swamp? Or is it a beautiful oasis of birds and flowers? Despite her dad's warnings to stay away, Sarah wanted to see for herself. She went under the porch and dragged out her dad's old fiberglass

canoe. She threw the paddle and an old pink life jacket into the boat and dragged it across the yard, down Schuyler Avenue to the edge of the swamp.

Whatever it was, she saw now, the Meadowlands was big. Sarah always thought of it as the swamp at the end of her street. Now she realized that the wetlands actually stretched to the north and south, and she couldn't see either end. Directly across the water, the skyscrapers of Manhattan seemed to line the opposite shore, even though they were actually twelve miles away.

Sarah could feel the fear in her throat. But she didn't want to drag the canoe back up the hill. She zipped the life vest up to her neck, pushed the boat into the water and jumped in.

Past the reeds, she found herself paddling in a shallow pond surrounded by muddy islands. She saw ducks, swallows, yellow flowers, purple flowers, white egrets. A blue heron, disturbed by the splashes of Sarah's paddle, jumped into the air, uncurled its long wings and flapped away.

"This is all so beautiful!" Sarah thought.

The canoe slowed down, as if caught by invisible hands. Sarah looked down and saw the boat was scraping along the muddy bottom. Clouds of brown mud rose to the surface with every paddle stroke, and inside each cloud little bubbles of gas burst when they hit the surface. It smelled like a combination of old paint and rotting food. Sarah nearly threw up.

Soon she was stuck. She tried paddling backward to free the canoe from the mud, but each stroke released an overwhelming gas smell. She started to cry.

Just then something heavy and dark crashed through the weeds in front of the canoe.

A hand pulled the reeds apart, and out poked the head of Sarah's dad.

"Sarah! What are you doing out here?" he called.

Sarah tried to explain, but all she could do was cry.

"Well, it's a good thing you dragged the canoe-you left a trail in the gravel a mile wide," her dad said. "Here, take this rope."

He threw a yellow plastic rope, and after a few tries, Sarah grabbed it. Her dad pulled, and the boat skidded over the mud to shore.

Sarah worried that her father would be furious. But when he offered his hand to help her out of the boat, he laughed.

"I did the same foolish thing when I was your age," he said. "Did I ever show you the otter den?"

Sarah wiped tears from her cheek and shook her head no.

"Well, c'mon. I'll show you," her dad said. "The swamps can be pretty disgusting, but there's some beautiful stuff in here. You just have to know where to look."

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. The adults in Sarah's life seem confused about what?
 - A. New York City
 - B. garbage dumps
 - C. birds and wildlife
 - D. the Meadowlands

2. Sarah takes her dad's canoe to explore the Meadowlands. What motivates Sarah's actions?
 - A. She wants to know if the Meadowlands are an ugly swamp or a beautiful oasis.
 - B. She wants to prove that her dad is wrong about the danger of the Meadowlands.
 - C. She wants to study the Meadowlands to complete a class project.
 - D. She wants to show her dad that she is brave and adventurous by exploring on her own.

3. There are different, contrasting opinions about the Meadowlands. What evidence from the story best supports this statement?
 - A. Sarah doesn't know what the Meadowlands are really like, so she decides to go and see for herself.
 - B. The Meadowlands used to be polluted by garbage dumps, but now the Meadowlands are recovering.
 - C. Some say the Meadowlands are a dangerous swamp; others say they are a precious habitat for birds.
 - D. Sarah's father warns her not to go to the Meadowlands, but Sarah ignores his warnings and visits them anyway.

4. Based on the story, what can you conclude about the Meadowlands?
 - A. The Meadowlands are dangerous and should be left alone.
 - B. The Meadowlands can be both beautiful and disgusting.
 - C. The Meadowlands are always a beautiful and flowering oasis.
 - D. The Meadowlands are still too polluted for animals to live there.

5. What is this story mostly about?

- A. Sarah goes to the Meadowlands, and her father gets mad at her.
- B. Sarah discovers that the Meadowlands are dangerous and ugly.
- C. Sarah asks her teacher about the history of the Meadowlands.
- D. Sarah goes to the Meadowlands to learn more about them.

6. Read the following sentences: "Well, the Meadowlands once had a lot of garbage dumps that polluted the water pretty badly. But most of the dumps are closed now. And the habitat for wild birds is **recovering**."

As used in this sentence, what does the word "**recovering**" most nearly mean?

- A. getting better
- B. getting smaller
- C. getting older
- D. getting sick

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Sarah wants to see what the Meadowlands are like, _____ she takes her dad's canoe and paddles into the swamp.

- A. soon
- B. namely
- C. so
- D. but

8. According to Mr. Morrison, why are the Meadowlands precious?

9. Why does Sarah start to cry in the Meadowlands?

10. In the story, there are two different views of the Meadowlands: 1) the Meadowlands are a dangerous and ugly swamp, and 2) the Meadowlands are a beautiful and precious oasis. Which of these views (if any) accurately describes the Meadowlands? Support your answer using information from the story.

Bear and Berry Wisdom

by Sondra Segundo



Diginatur on Wikimedia

a táan, or black bear

My *náanaa k'ayáa* (great-grandmother) would always say, "Sing loud, *dagwáang* (dear one), so the bears know it's our turn."

We always listened to our elders, because they have a lot of wisdom.

"When the *táan* (black bear) hear us singing our songs, they will leave us alone," great-grandmother told us. "They respect us and we respect them. When it is their turn to pick berries, we leave them alone, too."

My family is from the Haida tribe. Every summer, my grandmother, mom, auntie, siblings, cousins and I visited our great-grandmother in our very remote Haida village of Hydaburg in southeastern Alaska. I loved to visit my village. My favorite part was playing with my friends

and cousins at the river. Oh, and hearing my elders laugh!

In our village, everyone lives humbly and takes care of each other, sharing whatever they catch from the ocean: salmon, shrimp, crabs, herring roe on kelp, seal, sea otter. Elders always receive their shares first. That's just the way it has always been. And the children serve the elders. Somehow, this practice helps bring balance among the generations.

I remember one summer day during berry-picking month when I was about 10 years old. The weather was warm and sunny, which helped the berries ripen. We all could smell the sweetness in the air as we grabbed our berry baskets, put on our rubber boots, and headed out to the wild berry patches around our village.

On the way there, we crossed the bridge over the river where the *chíin* (salmon) were still spawning. There were so many salmon, it looked as if you could cross the whole river just walking on their red backs!

We saw a *sGáan* (killer whale) family swimming by. One breached, as if to say "hello!" We all yelled "AAY YO!" The killer whales swim and hunt in between the many islands that protect our village from the strong winds of *náng síigaay* (the ocean). We heard the *tsáak* (eagle) and *yáahl* (raven) singing their songs and having bird-talk conversations.

Our *náanaa k'ayáa* would teach us how to dance and sing like the animals in and around our village. We spread our arms out like the wings of the eagle. We hopped about curiously, looking around, like the raven. We put one hand on our foreheads like a dorsal fin and make the "woosh" sound, like the orca's. Or we crouched down like the bear and growled, putting our hands up to show our claws.

For each dance we did, our great-grandmother taught us special Haida songs. She knew many languages: in addition to her native tongue, Haida, she spoke Chinook, Tlingit, Tsimshian, Russian, and English. *Náanaa k'ayáa* was proud to teach our language to her nine children and many generations of grandchildren.

Finally, we arrived at the berry patch. There were so many types of berries to choose from: salmonberries, huckleberries, smile berries, blueberries, thimble berries, gooseberries. As we picked (and ate!) the berries, we sang many songs so the bears could hear us. When our berry baskets were overflowing, we went back to the house of *náanaa k'ayáa* to make lots of jam to share and to last throughout the cold months. And we froze some berries for later, which *náanaa k'ayáa* served with *súugaa* (sugar) and cream. Yum!



Gordon Leggett on Wikimedia

a salmonberry

Gathering food, preparing food, sharing food-these were some of the many ways my *náanaa k'ayáa* expressed her love for us. She taught us how to take care of ourselves and each other. She taught us many stories and songs.

She taught us how to respect creation.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Who is *náanaa k'ayáa*?

- A. the narrator's great-grandmother
- B. the narrator's sister
- C. the narrator's friend
- D. the narrator's child

2. What is the narrator describing in this story?

- A. The narrator is reflecting on times that she has visited her *náanaa k'ayáa* in southeastern Alaska.
- B. The narrator is telling a Haida story that her *náanaa k'ayáa* taught her one summer in southeastern Alaska.
- C. The narrator is looking forward to her visit next summer to a Haida village in Alaska, where she will meet many of her cousins.
- D. The narrator is telling a story that her mother told her about growing up in a Haida community in southeastern Alaska.

3. Read the following sentences from this story.

"When the *táan* (black bear) hear us singing our songs, they will leave us alone,' great-grandmother told us. 'They respect us and we respect them. When it is their turn to pick berries, we leave them alone, too...'

Our *náanaa k'ayáa* would teach us how to dance and sing like the animals in and around our village. We spread our arms out like the wings of the eagle. We hopped about curiously, looking around, like the raven. We put one hand on our foreheads like a dorsal fin and make the "woosh" sound, like the orca's. Or we crouched down like the bear and growled, putting our hands up to show our claws."

What can you conclude about the relationship between people in this Haida village and the animals who live in their environment?

- A. People in the Haida village don't think very much about the animals near them.
- B. People in the Haida village are mean to the animals that live around them.
- C. People in the Haida village respect and celebrate the animals that live around them.
- D. People in the Haida village are afraid of the animals that live near them.

4. What is one value that the narrator learns from her *náanaa k'ayáa* and the Haida community?

- A. She learns not to eat animals.
- B. She learns that you should always keep food for yourself.
- C. She learns to respect and listen to her elders.
- D. She learns to protect her family from scary animals.

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. The narrator's *náanaa k'ayáa*, or great-grandmother, speaks many languages, including Haida, Chinook, Tlingit, English, Russian, and Tsimshian.
- B. By spending time with her *náanaa k'ayáa* in Alaska, the narrator learns about traditions of the Haida tribe and makes special memories with her family.
- C. Black bears can be very dangerous, but if you make enough noise, they should leave you alone most of the time.
- D. There are many types of berries in southeastern Alaska in the summer, including salmonberries and smile berries, but the narrator's favorite are gooseberries.

6. Read the following sentences from the text.

"In our village, everyone lives humbly and takes care of each other, sharing whatever they catch from the ocean: salmon, shrimp, crabs, herring roe on kelp, seal, sea otter. Elders always receive their shares first. That's just the way it has always been. And the children serve the elders. Somehow, this practice helps bring **balance** among the generations."

What does the word **balance** most closely mean as it's used here?

- A. when two groups of people disagree about something
- B. the feeling of calm that happens as you're falling asleep
- C. when things feel chaotic and scary between two groups
- D. when things are equal and peaceful between different groups

7. Choose the word that best completes the following sentence.

The narrator learns many things about Haida culture from her *náanaa k'ayáa*, _____ the Haida language.

- A. including
- B. except for
- C. although
- D. in conclusion

8. How does the Haida community in this story share food?

9. How do Haida people in this story treat their elders?

10. What are some ways that children can learn about the values and traditions of their family's cultures? Use examples from the story to support your answer.

Pythons Invade the Florida Everglades

by ReadWorks



When Tommy Owen, a tour guide in the Everglades National Park, saw the animal, he immediately went after it. Owen was giving a tour of Florida's famous national park wetlands. He and a group of tourists were floating in a boat through the shallow water that makes up the Everglades. One of the women in the boat he was steering saw a snake in the water. She got Tommy's attention and pointed the snake out to him. When Tommy saw the snake, he acted fast. He reached into the water and grabbed the animal by the head. He got a good grip and didn't let go. Tourists in the boat were worried when the snake wrapped itself around Tommy's arm. After several minutes, he got control of the animal and removed it from the water. The snake was a ten-foot-long Burmese python. It was a snake not native to Florida and, quite simply, it didn't belong there.

* * *

The Florida Everglades teems with life. Situated at the southern end of the state, between Lake Okeechobee and the Gulf Coast, the Everglades is the largest wilderness east of the Mississippi River. Migratory and wading birds tiptoe through marshy grasslands. Orchids and ferns dot the hardwood forests. Alligators lounge in the shallows and on muddy riverbanks. Mangrove leaves rustle in the wind as the brackish water laps at their roots.

All of this life is made possible by the presence of water. The Everglades is a natural region of

subtropical wetlands. Water flows from the Kissimmee River into the wide, shallow Lake Okeechobee. From there the lake drains south, into the Everglades marsh and the Florida flats. The Everglades is sometimes called the "River of Grass" after a book of the same name by author Marjory Stoneman Douglas. The phrase illustrates the fact that the Everglades is basically a very wide and shallow river.

The Florida Everglades once covered 11,000 square miles across the southern end of the state. Wetlands are an important ecosystem. For centuries, however, humans thought of wetlands as unhygienic swamps. Draining the Everglades was suggested in the late 19th century. As soon as Florida became a state in 1845, its legislature asked permission from Congress to drain the Everglades. Canals were dug to remove or redirect the water. Land that dried out was reclaimed for agriculture or building purposes. This reclamation allowed for significant development in south Florida. Sugar farmers moved into the area and prospered. The city of Miami took root.

Approximately 50% of the Everglades was reclaimed for agricultural or urban use. Much of the northern area was polluted with phosphorus. This phosphorus was agricultural runoff from the farms near the Everglades.

Concerned Floridians began advocating for saving the area in the 1930s. Their efforts paid off in 1947 when Congress created the Everglades National Park. Starting in the late 1970s, environmental concerns at both the national and international levels refocused attention on the Everglades. The area was designated as one of the world's most important wetland areas.

Since then efforts have been underway to safeguard the park and return the Everglades to health. Water levels are monitored, as are nutrient levels in both water and soil samples.

Much of the conservation project was designed to reverse-engineer the canal system that was built in the 19th and mid-20th centuries. By the mid-2010s, ecological indicators showed some improvements. For example, the crayfish population was up. Wading and migratory birds improved their nesting habits.

Despite conservation efforts, the Everglades ecosystem began facing another threat in the early 2000s.

* * *

Burmese pythons were breeding in the Everglades, and they reached numbers that designated them as an invasive species. They were classified as an invasive species when

their population swelled to a large size.

Pythons are eating machines. They can eat animals of different sizes, from mice to deer. They especially enjoy dining on small mammals and birds. Studies have shown that since the appearance of Burmese pythons in the Everglades, the numbers of small mammals in the area dropped significantly. This population loss was not observed in areas where the Burmese python had not established itself.

The Burmese python is native to tropical and subtropical zones in Southeast Asia. In their native habitat, Burmese pythons are nocturnal carnivores. When they live close to human habitations, Burmese pythons eat rats, mice, and rabbits that are attracted to human dwellings and farms. They can also eat small farm animals like chickens. When they live away from human habitations, Burmese pythons eat birds and small wild mammals. The Burmese python is a solitary animal. It kills by constricting its body around its prey. Python eggs and hatchlings are a food source for other animals. In the wild, Burmese pythons grow to be on average 12 feet long. (Habitat loss and the exotic pet trade in Asia are depleting the Burmese python's numbers in the Asian wild.)

The first Burmese python was found in the Florida Everglades in 1979. It's presumed the animal was originally kept as a pet and then released by its owner. It was removed, but that wasn't the last of Burmese pythons in south Florida. It's thought that numerous Burmese pythons escaped pet stores and cages damaged in Hurricane Andrew in 1992. Since then, the numbers of Burmese pythons grew at a fast rate. The escaped Burmese pythons weren't the only cause of the most recent population increase of Burmese pythons.

In the United States the Burmese python was a popular exotic pet. Docile and beautifully patterned in brown and gold diamond shapes, these snakes could be purchased at pet stores or reptile shows. Owners kept them in cages or tanks and fed them rats or mice. Most people bought Burmese pythons when they were small. Burmese pythons grow very quickly. For many pet owners, the pet Burmese pythons became too big to manage. So they released them into the wild.

When the Burmese python was designated as an invasive species, many agencies and individuals began trying to put a stop to the python invasion. The National Park Service started a program to study these animals in the Florida Everglades. Park Service scientists implanted tracking devices into seventeen large pythons that were later re-released into the wild. They provided scientists with information regarding python behavior.

In January 2013 to February 2013, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

ran a contest called the 2013 Python Challenge. The Commission issued permits to hunt the snakes within state wildlife-managed areas of the Everglades. Sixty-eight Burmese pythons were captured.

Later in 2013, Jason Leon was driving in a rural area near Florida City when he spotted a Burmese python's head protruding from the brush. The man was a biologist, and he was familiar with pythons. He approached the snake and pulled it out of the bush. The animal was bigger than he expected. After a struggle with the animal, Leon killed it. The Burmese python was 128 pounds and longer than 18 feet. Leon contacted the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, which agreed to pick up and examine the snake. The snake was found to be the largest ever in the state of Florida.

The state later issued a statement:

Jason Leon's nighttime sighting and capture of a Burmese python of more than 18 feet in length is a notable accomplishment that set a Florida record. The Florida Wildlife Commission is grateful to him both for safely removing such a large Burmese python, and for reporting its capture.

Despite these efforts, the population of Burmese pythons continued to grow. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission held another contest in 2016 called the 2016 Python Challenge.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. In which place did the Burmese python become an invasive species?
 - A. southwest Asia
 - B. southeast Asia
 - C. the Mojave Desert
 - D. the Florida Everglades

2. Fifty percent of the Everglades was reclaimed for agricultural or urban use. Which of the following is an effect of this agricultural or urban use?
 - A. The Burmese pythons spread throughout the Everglades.
 - B. The crayfish population increased.
 - C. Much of the northern area of the Everglades was polluted with phosphorous.
 - D. Significant developments in surrounding states took place.

3. The decreasing numbers of small mammals in the Everglades was most likely due to the presence of Burmese pythons in the area. Which of the following evidence from the text best supports this conclusion?
 - A. Python eggs and hatchlings are a food source for other animals.
 - B. The Burmese pythons reached numbers that designate them as invasive species in the Everglades.
 - C. The population loss of small mammals was not observed in areas where the python had not established itself.
 - D. The first Burmese python found in Florida was probably kept as a pet and then released by its owner.

4. Based on the information in the passage, what kind of effect did Burmese pythons have on the Everglades?
 - A. They had a mainly positive effect.
 - B. They had both a negative and positive effect.
 - C. They had no effect on the Everglades.
 - D. They had a mainly negative effect.

5. What is this passage mostly about?

- A. how Jason Leon was able to capture and kill a Burmese python
- B. the reclamation of the Florida Everglades for agricultural and urban use
- C. the Florida Everglades and the Burmese pythons that live in them
- D. efforts to decrease the number of Burmese pythons in the Florida Everglades

6. Read the following sentences from the text.

"Since then efforts have been underway to safeguard the park and return the Everglades to health. Water levels are monitored, as are nutrient levels in both water and soil samples.

"Much of the conservation project was designed to reverse-engineer the canal system that was built in the 19th and mid-20th centuries. By the mid-2010s, ecological indicators showed some improvements."

Based on the text, what does "conservation" most nearly mean?

- A. preservation and protection
- B. destruction and damage
- C. elimination or deletion
- D. discovery and exploration

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

The Burmese python is native to tropical and subtropical zones in Southeast Asia, _____ it managed to establish itself in the Florida Everglades.

- A. since
- B. so
- C. but
- D. because

8. The reclamation of the Everglades for agricultural and urban use had harmful effects on the Everglades. List at least two of these harmful effects.

9. How did the python invasion of the Everglades affect the other animals that live in the Everglades?

10. Identify the two main threats to the Everglades mentioned in the passage, and describe the efforts to fight these two threats.

Amazing Trees Help Us Breathe

This text is provided courtesy of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.



iStock

a live oak tree in South Carolina known as “Angel Oak”

When you look at trees from the ground up, you can identify four parts: the roots, the trunk, the branches, and the leaves. All four parts are vital to the health of the tree. What might be harder to see is just how important trees are to the health of the earth and all of us people! Here are some of the many ways that trees help us all.

The roots of trees help prevent erosion, which makes streams and rivers healthier by keeping soil where it is supposed to be. If topsoil washes into streams and rivers during heavy rains, it can lower oxygen levels in the water and hurt fish. Soil and sediment can form layers in areas that cause other problems, like changing the water depth.

Trees also help us breathe! Tree trunks transport water and nutrients from the roots to the branches, which hold the leaves. Leaves are like tiny chemistry laboratories. They use water from the roots, the sun’s energy, and carbon dioxide — one of the gases in the air — in a process called photosynthesis, which creates sugars to feed the tree. While making their own food and absorbing carbon dioxide, trees discard oxygen, which is the gas in the air that animals (including people) breathe. One large tree can provide a day’s supply of oxygen for up to four people!

Trees also store carbon dioxide in their fibers, which are found in the roots, trunk, branches, stems, and leaves. Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere helps keep the earth warm through a

process called the greenhouse effect, which traps heat from the sun. Too much carbon dioxide makes the earth heat up too much, causing strong storms and sea-level rise. Since trees absorb carbon dioxide, they can help reduce the greenhouse effect. One mature tree absorbs about 48 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere each year.

Now that people understand how important trees are, groups are getting together to plant more trees and help forests in other ways. Arborists and forestry specialists study trees, tree diseases, and ways to keep trees healthy. They work with community groups to promote healthy forests.

Some people help support the health of natural forests by removing dead brush to prevent bad wildfires. They may remove smaller trees to open up space that helps other trees grow larger. There are even groups in cities that focus on planting trees to provide shade for recreation, food for wildlife and people, and carbon absorption to help cities cool down in summer months.

You can help the earth and people, too, by planting more amazing trees.

These conservation efforts are supported by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), which specializes in bringing together individuals, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and corporations to restore our nation's fish, wildlife, plants, and habitats for current and future generations.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What four parts of a tree can you identify by looking at a tree from the ground up?

- A. head, shoulders, legs, and feet
- B. back, side, front, and top
- C. roots, trunk, branches, and leaves
- D. fruit, flowers, vegetables, and bark

2. What effect do trees have on streams and rivers?

- A. They make streams and rivers healthier by keeping soil where it's supposed to be.
- B. They make streams and rivers dirtier when branches break off and fall in.
- C. They make streams and rivers shallower by blocking off the flow of water.
- D. They make streams and rivers less photogenic by blocking sun from the water.

3. Trees play an important role in making sure our atmosphere doesn't get too hot.

What evidence from the passage supports this idea?

- A. "Arborists and forestry specialists study trees, tree diseases, and ways to keep trees healthy. They work with community groups to promote healthy forests."
- B. "If topsoil washes into streams and rivers during heavy rains, it can lower oxygen levels in the water and hurt fish. Soil and sediment can form layers in areas that cause other problems, like changing the water depth."
- C. "Too much carbon dioxide makes the earth heat up too much, causing strong storms and sea-level rise. Since trees absorb carbon dioxide, they can help reduce the greenhouse effect."
- D. "The roots of trees help prevent erosion, which makes streams and rivers healthier by keeping soil where it is supposed to be."

4. The text says that conservationists are trying to keep forests healthy. Based on the information in the text, how would a healthy forest impact the earth's atmosphere?
- A. By creating more wood to burn, a healthy forest would make the atmosphere smokier.
 - B. By blocking sunlight, a healthy forest would make the atmosphere too cold.
 - C. By absorbing too much carbon dioxide, a healthy forest would make the atmosphere thin.
 - D. By absorbing more carbon dioxide, a healthy forest would help the atmosphere not get too hot.
5. What is the main idea of this text?
- A. Trees are very important for the earth's atmosphere and living things, and many people are working together to make sure that trees are healthy.
 - B. Trees discard oxygen, which is the gas in the air that helps people breathe, and one large tree can provide oxygen for four people for a whole day.
 - C. Photosynthesis is the process by which trees use water from their roots, the energy from the sun, and carbon dioxide to make sugars to feed the tree.
 - D. Trees process carbon dioxide in two ways: by using it to make sugars in photosynthesis, and by storing it in their fibers.

Sunrise, Sunset...or Not?

by ReadWorks



The sun is a wonderful thing for Earth. It is a star that heats the planet and makes life on Earth possible. In addition, its light shines onto the planet. It is Earth's ultimate source of energy.

Summer days may be longer than winter days, but for most people, the sun seems to do the same thing each day: it appears to come up in the east for the day, and it appears to go down in the west for the night. The sun looks like it rises in the east and sets in the west because of how the earth spins in space. It spins toward the east, or counterclockwise. This means that when most people look at the sky in the morning, the sun will first appear in the east.

The earth takes 24 hours to complete one turn. For most places on Earth, there is a daytime and nighttime every 24 hours. But in some places for many days at a time, the sun might stay up in the sky, or it might not even come up above the horizon.

In some parts of the world, the sun can be up in the sky for months. During part of the spring and summer in Earth's Northern Hemisphere, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted towards the sun so much that the sun in northern Alaska, which is located in the Arctic Circle, never goes below the horizon. The Arctic Circle is an area at the top of the earth. In Barrow, Alaska, the sun doesn't set for almost three months! This phenomenon is called the midnight sun, when the sun has not set at midnight. Try sleeping through that!

During parts of the fall and winter in Earth's Northern Hemisphere, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted in such a way that the sun doesn't come over the horizon in northern Alaska for a little over two months. Therefore, nights last more than 24 hours. This phenomenon is called the polar night. Although the sun never rises above the horizon during parts of the fall and winter in the Arctic Circle, enough light often shines so that people who live there don't need flashlights to walk around outside.

It may be hard for many people to get through these times of very little or prolonged sunlight. But arctic plants and wildlife have adapted to these seasons of long days and long nights. In the arctic winter, some animals hibernate, and others travel south to where there is more sunlight.

In the arctic summer, there are pools of still water from melted ice, and the 24-hour sunlight warms the Arctic Circle. These conditions are favorable for mosquitoes, which lay their eggs on the surface of water, to thrive. The birds that eat these insects now have plenty of food in the arctic summer. For animals like caribou that mainly eat plants, they can easily find food during the long days of summer.

Most animals, including humans, are used to a period of sunlight and a period of no sunlight every 24 hours. In places where there are months when the sun continuously stays above the horizon or below the horizon, living things have had to adapt to survive.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is the sun?

- A. a planet that can only be seen from northern Alaska
- B. an asteroid that shines light onto the earth
- C. a star that can only be seen from northern Alaska
- D. a star that shines light onto the earth

2. Midnight sun in northern Alaska is an effect described in the passage. What is its cause?

- A. animals moving south in the winter
- B. getting a sunburn in the winter
- C. the Northern Hemisphere tilting away from the sun
- D. the Northern Hemisphere tilting toward the sun

3. Read the following sentences: "During part of the spring and summer in Earth's Northern Hemisphere, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted towards the sun so much that the sun in northern Alaska, which is located in the Arctic Circle, never goes below the horizon. . . . During parts of the fall and winter in Earth's Northern Hemisphere, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted in such a way that the sun doesn't come over the horizon in northern Alaska for a little over two months."

What conclusion about the impact of the tilt of the earth does this information support?

- A. The tilt of the earth has no impact on the amount of sunlight different parts of the earth receive.
- B. The tilt of the earth has an impact on how fast the earth moves around the sun.
- C. The tilt of the earth has an impact on the amount of sunlight different parts of the earth receive.
- D. The tilt of the earth has an impact on how fast the Earth rotates on its axis.

4. Based on the text, how does the Northern Hemisphere tilt during the Northern Hemisphere's winter months?
- A. away from the sun
 - B. towards the sun
 - C. away from the moon
 - D. towards the moon
5. What is this passage mostly about?
- A. the town of Barrow, Alaska, and what people there do in the arctic summer
 - B. sunrise, sunset, midnight sun, and polar night
 - C. mosquitoes, caribou, and adult birds
 - D. how living things have adapted to survive the arctic summer and winter
6. Read the following sentences: "During some of the spring and summer in Earth's Northern Hemisphere, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted towards the sun so much that the sun in northern Alaska, which is located in the Arctic Circle, never goes below the horizon. In Barrow, Alaska, the sun doesn't set for almost three months! This phenomenon is called the midnight sun, when the sun has not set at midnight."

What does the word "**phenomenon**" mean above?

- A. large body of water
- B. event or occurrence
- C. big problem or disaster
- D. the study of stars, planets, and space

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

The midnight sun is when the sun never sets; _____, the polar night is when the sun never rises.

- A. for instance
- B. most importantly
- C. in contrast
- D. in the end

8. How does the Northern Hemisphere of the earth tilt when northern Alaska is experiencing the midnight sun?

9. How does the Northern Hemisphere of the earth tilt when northern Alaska is experiencing the polar night? Use information from the text to support your answer.

10. How does the earth's tilt affect the earth? Use information from the text to support your answer.

Summer Reading Responses

Non-Fiction:

- What did you know about the topic before opening the book?
- List three facts you've learned while reading the book.
- What is the author's purpose for writing the book?
- What information surprised you and why?
- What information do you question or think might not be correct? Why? How might you check it out?
- What is the most important information you've learned and why?
- What would you like to learn more about regarding this topic and why?
- Create a timeline of important events that you have read about so far.
- What features helped you determine that this book was non-fiction?
- Does the author include opinion and fact statements in the book? Find examples of each.

Fiction:

- Did you enjoy reading this book? Why or why not?
- Did anything about this book remind of you of something that happened in your own life? Did a character remind you of someone you know? Explain.
- Are the characters realistic? Why or why not?
- Create a timeline of important events that you have read about so far.
- Describe a character you'd like to meet. List 4 questions you'd ask him or her.
- Describe the conflict and the solution.
- Describe the setting - time and place. Based on the details and events in the story, would you add anything to the setting? Why or why not?
- Compare and contrast two characters in the story.
- What is the theme of the story? Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Reading Response

Date: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Fiction/ Non-Fiction (circle one, add the genre for extra credit) _____

Reading Response chosen: _____

Your Response: _____

Reading Response

Date: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Fiction/ Non-Fiction (circle one, add the genre for extra credit) _____

Reading Response chosen: _____

Your Response: _____
