

English I

Short Answer Connecting Selections Scoring Guide

March 2016

Read the two selections. Click on the tab to see the other selection. Then answer the questions that follow.

The Staff and the Stuff of Life

by Laura Faye Taxel
Northern Ohio Live
2004

- 1 I was standing in line at a bakery in my Cleveland Heights neighborhood. The small, gray-haired woman ahead of me asked for half of a large five-pound loaf of corn rye. The young man behind the counter told her he couldn't cut the loaf.
- 2 "Last week," she said, "they did it for me."
- 3 "My boss told me not to do it anymore," he replied, "because nobody's buying the other half."
- 4 She was crestfallen. I understood her disappointment. It's wonderful bread—moist, dense, and chewy—available only once a week; in fact I was there to get a loaf myself. Frustrated, she complained out loud. "It's only my husband and I. A whole loaf is too much." On impulse I said I'd buy the other half, plus another whole one. "The boss," I promised, "will never know." He shrugged and went to get a knife.
- 5 She turned to me, delight filling her face. I explained that with two teenage sons at my house, the half loaf would be gone in an hour. She told me about her kids, who were grown with kids and even grandkids of their own.
- 6 It was pleasant to chat with a stranger, getting to know a person in passing, making a friendship that would only last a moment. This could be the end of the story but it isn't. She chose a few more items. When the sales clerk gave her a total, she instructed him to charge it. "I need your credit card," he replied.
- 7 "I don't have it on me," she answered. "My wallet's in my purse and I think I left my purse at my son's house. It's not in the car. So just make me a bill."
- 8 "Do you have some kind of special account here?" he asked.
- 9 "No, no account," she said, "just write me up something to sign, and I'll send a check." She obviously came from a world and a time where this was conceivable. The boy did not. Neither do I. If I found myself without my wallet, I'd just give up and go home.
- 10 She certainly didn't look like a thief, like someone who didn't normally pay for her bread and cookies. She was well groomed, wore nice clothes, newish shoes. And what kind of scam artist would waste time on conning somebody out of \$8.62 worth of baked goods?

- 11 She patiently explained, as though to a child, that she needed bread for supper but that she didn't want to have to go all the way home to get money, and then come back again. The boy was unmoved, utterly confused about what to do, polite but at a loss for how to help. "My boss," he kept saying, "my boss won't let me do this."
- 12 "So go get the boss," said the lady.
- 13 "She's not here today. It's only me and the baker. I can't do what you want." And still she didn't give up, give in as I would have done. She stood there, secure in the rightness of her position, the legitimacy of her solution. Then the man behind me in line took his billfold, peeled off a ten, and gave it to her. She thanked him and paid for her stuff, leaving the clerk visibly relieved. Pocketing the change, she told her benefactor she'd send him a check for an even \$10, and asked him to write down his name and address for her.
- 14 The third crisis, neither of them having paper or pen, was quickly averted by my contribution of both. "Don't worry," she said to him, "I'll send you the money."
- 15 He didn't look worried at all. He looked pleased. This feeling I think was not rooted in her assurances of payback. It was in his own ability to respond, to give, to help. I'd felt the same when I volunteered to take the other half of her loaf of corn rye. Instead of being anonymous and isolated city dwellers, we three had suddenly become neighbors, members of a community in which it's normal to care about one another's welfare, to come to another's aid. And each of us left the store a bit happier than when we had come in.
- 16 Not long after this event I heard an urban planning expert speak. He characterized the best neighborhoods for living as those that offer a place, within easy walking distance of your home, where you can buy fresh bread. I knew he was absolutely right.

"The Staff and the Stuff of Life" by Laura Faye Taxel, from BEST FOOD WRITING 2004, published by Perseus Books Group. Used by permission of the author.

Where Have All the People Gone?

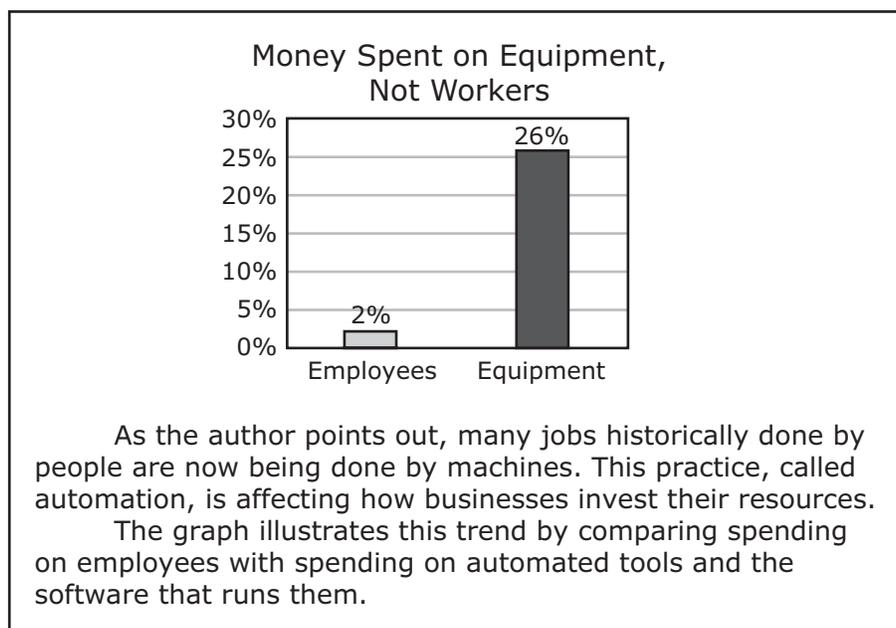
by Janine Wood

Christian Science Monitor

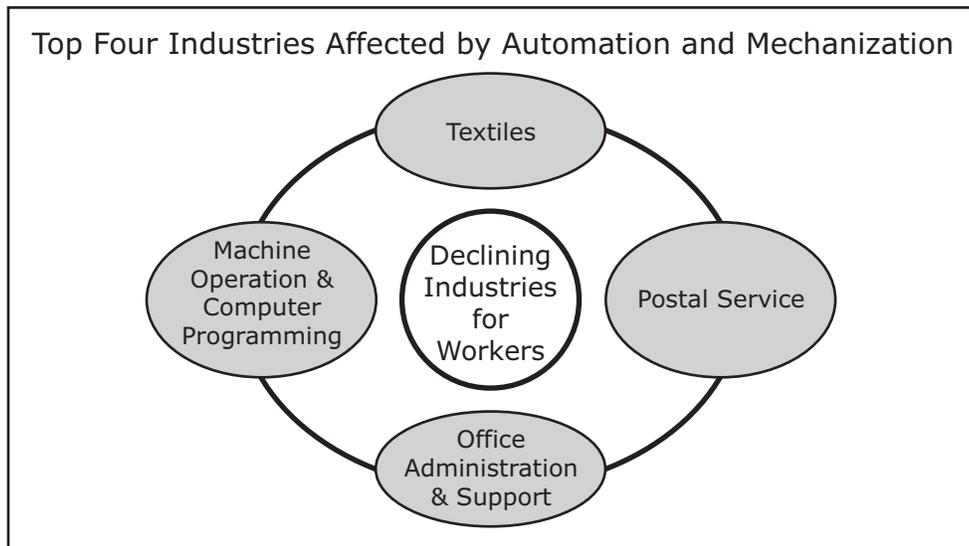
October 14, 2011

Deerfield, Ill.

- 1 I was standing in the 15-item express line at the grocery store . . . with 16 items in my cart. When the man behind me saw that I was over the limit, he threw me a look of disgust, and moved on to a shorter line. "No respect for the rules," he muttered as he left.
- 2 Yahoo! I was finally talking to a stranger. It didn't matter that the conversation was a bit disagreeable. Earlier, I had been to the bank and the gas station without ever uttering a word. Instead, I exchanged greetings with an ATM machine and a stinky gas pump.
- 3 So to restore my sanity, I drove to the library for a friendly chat with the librarian, someone my kids grew up with, someone who encouraged them to read. Finally, I would talk to a real person.
- 4 Gone!
- 5 Instead, swarms of toddlers were happily swiping their books below a computer screen for a quick and efficient check out. Automation had found its way into one of the last bastions of social interaction.
- 6 Small talk must be on the decline. Last year the local grocery store had one automated aisle; today, there are four. Sure it's fun to see the Gatorade bounce down the conveyor belt, but where I come from (as is the case for a lot of suburban and small-town residents), cashiers are some of the friendliest people around. Why would we want to give them up?



- 7 Critics of Facebook tell us to shun social media for more face-to-face conversations, but, unfortunately, our offline world now mimics our online world. We talk only to those who are just like us—our age group, our economic level, our friends, and our colleagues. And there’s a lot less of that conversation taking place now, too.
- 8 What suffers when we start to turn away from human contact in our daily transactions? In such a polarized political climate, don’t we need, now more than ever, to be trading stories with those outside our immediate circle? Or should efficiency be our only goal? Maybe customers should wait in line a bit longer in order to hear from the woman bagging groceries, about how her husband was recently laid off and how she was forced to take this job.
- 9 “I really, really, really miss the people,” said a librarian from a suburban library. “I miss teasing them, and they miss my teasing.”
- 10 Businesses get it. Trader Joe’s has long extolled its chatty cashiers, in contrast to the flat-screen TVs some of its rivals have installed at the beginning of store checkout lines. And Ally Bank recently launched its “People Sense” ad campaign. “Talk to a live person 24/7 just by pressing 0 and see why we have over 90 percent customer satisfaction,” the ad notes.



- 11 "Why don't you hold a flash mob as a protest," suggested my daughter when she heard that her favorite librarian was relegated to the back office and was not at the checkout desk talking to a young patron about *Little House on the Prairie*.
- 12 Small Talkers Unite! Refuse to use the machine when there is a working person available. Let's bring back the ghosts of the past—the gas station attendant, the toll-way ticket takers, the live operator.
- 13 Back at the grocery store, a group of older people sits on a bench between a noisy machine that counts coins and the fluorescent lights of a quick service bank. They sip free cups of coffee that the store provides.
- 14 "Do you cook this roast on high or low?" one elderly woman asks the cashier, as she gets up from the bench and pushes her cart through the check-out aisle.
- 15 Who will she talk to when all the cashiers are gone?

"Where Have All the People Gone?" by Janine Wood, from the Christian Science Monitor, October 14, 2011. Used by permission of the author.

English I Short Answer Connecting Selections

How is the idea of human interaction important in “The Staff and the Stuff of Life” and “Where Have All the People Gone?” Support your answer with evidence from **both** selections.

Score Point 0 – Insufficient Response to the Question

Insufficient responses indicate a very limited reading performance.

These responses have one of the following problems.

- ❑ For one or both selections, the idea is not an answer to the question asked.
- ❑ The idea is incorrect because it is not based on one or both selections.
- ❑ For one or both selections, the idea is too general, vague, or unclear to determine whether it is reasonable.
- ❑ No idea is present from either selection. Sometimes the response contains only text evidence from one or both selections. At other times there appears to be an idea; however, this idea cannot be considered an answer to the question because it merely repeats verbatim, or “echoes,” the text evidence.

In the story "The Staff and the Staff of Life" and "Where Have all the people Gone?" both show how the idea of human interaction is important. For example in "the staff and the staff", the narrator states that "it was in his [the clerk] own ability to respond, to give, to help. I'd [narrator] felt the same when I volunteered to take the other half of her loaf of corn rye. Instead of being anonymous and isolated city dwellers, we three had suddenly become neighbors, members of a community in which it's normal to care about one another's welfare, to come to another's aid." The narrator in "Where have all the people gone?" claims "we talk to only those who are just like us our age group, our economic level, and our colleagues. And there is a lot less of that conversation taking place now, too." This evidence shows how human interaction is important.

Score Point 0

The student provides textual evidence from both selections but does not offer an idea for either. Stating that human interaction is important in both selections repeats the question; it does not constitute an original idea. Because no idea is presented, this response is insufficient.

They both take place at a store, and both are in line. Each person in the two stories have a problem concerning the store and also has to do with the clerk. in "The Staff and Staff of Life" and "Where Have All the People Gone?" These two stories both show how stores are changing.

Score Point 0

The student presents an idea that is not an answer to the question asked. The student describes the setting of the selections and does not address how the idea of human interaction is important. This response indicates a very limited reading performance.

Human interaction is important in both selections, because all these equipment machines are causing job loss and now people are having to talk to machines instead of real people, like in "Where Have All The People Gone?", it says, "I exchanged greetings with an ATM machine & a stinky gas pump."

Score Point 0

The student presents an idea that is reasonable for "Where Have all the People Gone?" and supports that idea with relevant textual evidence. However, the response contains neither an idea nor textual evidence for "The Staff and the Stuff of Life." Because the student does not address both selections, this response is insufficient.

Human interaction in both "the staff and the stuff of life" and "where have all the people gone?" is important because, we can feel different. In the first selection the narrator states "Own ability to give,..." in the second selection the narrator states "we need ... trading stories". It is important to have human interaction.

Score Point 0

The student presents an idea that is too unclear to determine whether it is reasonable. The idea that human interaction is important because "we can feel different" is not specific enough to be considered a valid answer to the question. For both selections the text evidence cannot be considered relevant because the portions of text provided are too partial to adequately support how human interaction makes people feel. An unclear idea, without either relevant textual evidence from both selections or further explanation, indicates a very limited reading performance.

Score Point 1 — Partially Sufficient Response to the Question

Partially sufficient responses indicate a basic reading performance.

These responses have one of the following characteristics.

- ❑ The idea is reasonable for both selections, but the response contains no text evidence (from one or both selections).
- ❑ The idea is reasonable for both selections, but the text evidence (from one or both selections) is flawed and does not adequately support the idea. Text evidence is considered inadequate when it is
 - only a general reference to the text,
 - too partial to support the idea,
 - weakly linked to the idea, or
 - used inappropriately because it wrongly manipulates the meaning of the text.
- ❑ For one or both selections, the idea needs more explanation or specificity even though it is supported with text evidence from both selections.
- ❑ For one or both selections, the idea represents only a literal reading of the text, with or without text evidence (from one or both selections).
- ❑ The response contains relevant textual evidence from both selections, but the student offers an idea that is reasonable for only one selection.
- ❑ The response contains an idea and relevant text evidence for both selections, but the idea for one selection contains an inaccuracy.

The idea of human interaction is important because it helps us and others. In "The Staff and the Stuff of Life," the narrator helps. "We three had suddenly become neighbors, members of a community in which it's normal to care about one another's welfare, to come to another's aid." In "Where Have All the People Gone?" "Unfortunately, our offline world now mimics our online world. We talk only to people who are just like us. And there's a lot less of that conversation taking place now too."

Score Point 1

The student offers the idea that "human interaction is important because it helps us and others" and supports it with relevant textual evidence from both selections. However, the response is only partially sufficient because the idea needs more explanation or specificity to be considered reasonable.

In both stories human interaction is important because they felt good to finally talk to someone. "each of us left the store a bit happier". "Yahoo!" who would you talk to if there was no clerks or other shoppers to help you out.

Score Point 1

The student presents the reasonable idea that human interaction is important because it "felt good to finally talk to someone." The text evidence from "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" adequately supports the idea because it shows the positive feelings derived from human interaction (each of us left the store a bit happier). However, the response is only partially sufficient because the textual evidence from "Where Have All the People Gone?" is flawed. The inclusion of the exclamation "Yahoo!" is too partial to support the student's idea. Because the idea is not supported with relevant text from both selections, the response can be considered only a basic reading performance.

In "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" the idea of human interaction is very important in that the narrator describes how friendships can be made just by talking to people standing in line at a bakery. She states, "It was pleasant to talk to a stranger, getting to know a person in passing, making a friendship that would only last a moment" (paragraph 6). In "Where Have All the People Gone?" the narrator describes the importance as "cashiers are some of the friendliest people around. Why would we want to give them up?"

Score Point 1

The student offers an idea that "friendships can be made just by talking to people standing in line at a bakery." The idea, which is reasonable only for "The Staff and the Stuff of Life," is supported with relevant textual evidence from that selection. The student provides relevant textual evidence from "Where Have All the People Gone?," but there is no corresponding idea for that selection. Responses that contain relevant textual evidence from both selections but a reasonable idea for only one selection indicate a basic reading performance.

The idea of human interaction in "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" and "Where Have All The People Gone?" is important because the stories are about the advantage of dealing with humans (that computers don't have). Laura Taxel states in "The Staff and the Stuff of Life", "He shrugged and went to get a knife." Jannie Wood states in "Where Have All The People Gone," "Automation has found its way into one of the last bastions of social interaction." Showing less and less people interact.

Score Point 1

The student offers the reasonable idea that human interaction is important because dealing with humans has advantages that dealing with computers does not. The text evidence from "Where Have All the People Gone?" adequately supports the idea because it shows that automation is taking away the advantage of social interaction. However, the text evidence from "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" is weakly linked to the idea. This quotation indicates that the clerk went to get a knife; it does not directly support any advantage derived from dealing with a human. Because the student does not support the idea with relevant textual evidence from both selections, the response is partially sufficient.

Score Point 2 – Sufficient Response to the Question

Sufficient responses indicate a satisfactory reading performance.

These responses have the following characteristics.

- ❑ For both selections, the idea is reasonable and goes beyond a literal reading of the text. It is explained specifically enough to show that the student can make appropriate connections across the selections and draw valid conclusions.
- ❑ For both selections, the text evidence that is used to support the idea is accurate and relevant.
- ❑ For both selections, the idea and text evidence used to support it are clearly linked.
- ❑ For both selections, the combination of the idea and the text evidence demonstrates a good understanding of the text.

The idea of human interaction is important in both selections because it makes people happy. "And each of us left the store a bit happier than when we came in." "Yahoo! I was talking to a stranger. It didn't matter that the conversation was a bit disagreeable." The idea of human interaction enlightened both authors from both selections.

Score Point 2

The student offers the reasonable idea that "human interaction is important in both selections because it makes people happy." The student supports this idea by providing a direct quotation from each selection that shows happiness as a result of human interaction. The combination of the idea and text evidence demonstrates a good understanding of the texts.

The idea of human interaction is important because it lets you get to know people in your neighborhood and if they are willing to help if you need it. In "The Staff and the Stuff of Life", it said, "On impulse he said 'I'd buy the other half.' That old lady would have never gotten her loaf if there was a machine. In "Where Have All the People Gone", a customer asks the cashier about roast beef preparations. That is so very true, people will barely have anyone to talk to when machines replace them.

Score Point 2

The student offers the reasonable idea that human interaction is important because it allows you to get to know people in your neighborhood and get help if you need it. For "The Staff and the Stuff of Life," the idea is explained and supported with a direct quotation of relevant text showing that the narrator helped the old woman. For "Where Have All the People Gone?" the idea is supported with a paraphrase of relevant text showing that a customer was able to ask for help (a customer asks the cashier about roast beef preparations, people will barely have anyone to talk to when machines replace them). For both selections, the idea and text are clearly linked, indicating a satisfactory reading performance.

The idea of human interaction is important in both selections because having casual conversation with a stranger helps you to become friendlier and more sociable. In "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" paragraph 15, lines 18 and 19 say, "Instead of being anonymous city dwellers, we three had suddenly become neighbors." In "Where Have All the People Gone?" paragraph 6, lines 9, 10, and 11 say, "Cashiers are some of the friendliest people around. Why would we get rid of them?"

Score Point 2

The student offers the reasonable idea that human interaction is important in both selections because casually speaking to strangers can make people friendlier and more sociable. The quotations the student provides are clearly linked to the idea. Because the reasonable idea is fully supported with relevant text from both selections, the response is sufficient.

In "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" it's important to have human contact so you can get to know the people in your community and build relationships. "He didn't look worried at all. He looked pleased" (Taxel 5) This quote shows that the man was happy that he could help the woman and that human contact pleased him. In "Where did all the People go?" "It's good to have human contact so technology doesn't completely take over our lives." "...Swarms of bottles were happily swinging their nocks below a computer screen" (Wood 5) This shows that technology is once again taking over and replacing human contact.

Score Point 2

The student offers a separate reasonable idea for each selection. In "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" human interaction is important because helping the woman in the store made the man happy, which builds relationships. In "Where Have All the People Gone?" it is important because technology is taking over and replacing human contact. The student provides direct quotations from each selection to support these ideas. The combination of idea and text evidence indicates a good understanding of the texts, making this a sufficient response.

Score Point 3 — Exemplary Response to the Question

Exemplary responses indicate an accomplished reading performance.

These responses have the following characteristics.

- For both selections, the idea is perceptive and reflects an awareness of the complexities of the text. The student is able to develop a coherent explanation of the idea by making discerning connections across both selections.
- For both selections, the text evidence that is used to support the idea is specific and well chosen. Overall, the evidence strongly supports the validity of the idea.
- For both selections, the combination of the idea and the text evidence demonstrates a deep understanding of the text.

In both passages, the concept of human interaction is meaningful because it makes life more enjoyable. In the first passage, the narrator, Laura Taxel, reflects upon how the interaction improved her day and says, "each of us [her, the old lady, and man] left the store a bit happier than when we had come in." Laura also conveys the warmth of the interaction by saying that "we three had suddenly become neighbors, members of a community." In the second passage, the narrator, Janine Wood, "drove to the library for a friendly chat with the librarian" so that she could "restore [her] sanity". Both Laura and Janine express the fact that life with human interaction is more satisfying than life without. After all, "who will [the elderly lady] talk to when all the cashiers are gone?"

Score Point 3

The student demonstrates an accomplished reading performance by offering the perceptive idea that human interaction is important in both selections because it makes life more enjoyable. The student develops a coherent explanation of how the narrators come to realize that human interaction improves their lives (The warmth of human interaction improves Taxel's day while Wood needs it to restore her sanity). Specific and well-chosen quotations from each selection support the idea, making this an exemplary response.

Real human interaction is a good way to learn about life, to have new experiences and how to be sociable. It helps us in sometimes small ways to express ourselves to others—like strangers—and could encourage us to try new things or it could make our day better. "In such a polarized political climate, don't we need, now more than ever to be trading stories with those outside our immediate circle?" Human interaction also helps gain the trust of others, where you can count on the help of a random stranger and can also rely on you. "We three had suddenly become neighbors, members of a community in which it's normal to care about one another's welfare, to come to another aid."

Score Point 3

The student presents an insightful idea for each selection. In "Where Have All the People Gone?," human interaction is important because it allows people to become more sociable by having new experiences and learning about life. In "The Staff and the Stuff of Life," it is important because it leads to trust and the ability for people to count on each other. The student's analysis of these ideas reflects an awareness of the complexities of the texts. Additionally, the text evidence is well chosen and strongly supports the validity of the idea, making this an exemplary response.

Human interaction is an important theme in both "The Staff and the Stuff of Life": the importance of communication is portrayed in the following quote, "It was pleasant to chat with a stranger, getting to know a person in passing, making a friendship that would only last a moment." The narrator is discovering how human interaction affects daily life and helps people make friendships they would of never had otherwise. In "Where Have All the People Gone?", human interaction is displayed as diminishing and that is causing society to be much less communicative. This is seen in the following quote, "We only talk to those who are just like us—our age group, our economic level, our friends, and our colleagues. And there's a lot less of that conversation taking place now, too." In both Communication and Interaction are becoming less and less pursued but casually interacting is a delightful act that should be preserved in our society.

Score Point 3

The student presents the perceptive idea that in both selections human interaction is diminishing and should be preserved in our society. The student makes discerning connections across the selections by recognizing the positive effects of human interaction in "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" and explaining how having less interaction has negative effects. Well-chosen text evidence from each selection is provided to strongly support the validity of the idea. The student demonstrates a deep understanding of the selections, making this an exemplary response.

The idea of human interaction is important in "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" and "Where Have All the People Gone" because in the first selection, where human interaction still appears, the people in the story seem to have more compassion for one another than in the second selection where human interaction is being removed. The author of "The Staff and the Stuff of Life" talks about how much happier she felt after helping the woman: "And each of us left the store a bit happier than when we had come in" (Toxel, Para. 15). Human interaction is good and it can be beneficial to be with others. In the next selection, however, human interaction is being removed and there seems to be less compassion: "I was standing in the 15-item express line...with 16 items in my cart. When the man behind me saw that I was over the limit, he threw me a look of disgust..." (Wood, Para. 1). This shows that where we have less human interaction we lose our love for others.

Score Point 3

The student presents the perceptive idea that human interaction is important because where it still occurs, the people are more compassionate. This idea makes a discerning connection and reflects an awareness of the complexities of the texts by describing the relationship between compassion and interaction in each selection. A combination of additional explanation and well-chosen text evidence strongly supports the validity of the idea, demonstrating an accomplished reading performance.