

GRADE 8
Reading

Administered March 2015

RELEASED

READING

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

"A Ribbon for Baldy" is set in the 1920s. The narrator and his classmates have been assigned a long-term project by their science teacher Professor Herbert. The narrator tries to think of a useful project that will also help support his family's farm. While riding his mule across the farm to school, he sees a hill called Little Baldy, and he finally gets an idea.

from **A Ribbon for Baldy**

by Jesse Stuart

- 1 One morning in February I left home in a white cloud that had settled over the deep valleys. I could not see an object ten feet in front of me in this mist. I crossed the pasture into the orchard and the mist began to thin. When I reached the ridge road, the light thin air was clear of mist. I looked over the sea of rolling white clouds. The tops of the dark winter hills jutted up like little islands.
- 2 I have to ride a mule, but not one of my classmates lives in a prettier place, I thought, as I surveyed my world. Look at Little Baldy! What a pretty island in the sea of clouds. A thin ribbon of cloud seemed to envelop cone-shaped Little Baldy from bottom to top like the new rope Pa had just bought for the windlass over our well.
- 3 Then, like a flash—the idea for my project came to me. And what an idea it was! I'd not tell anybody about it!
- 4 I was so happy I didn't care who laughed at me, what anyone said or who watched me eat fat meat on corn bread for my lunch. I had an idea and I knew it was a wonderful one.
- 5 "I've got something to talk over with you," I told Pa when I got home. "Look over there at that broom-sedge¹ and the scattered pines on Little Baldy. I'd like to burn the broom-sedge and briars and cut the pines and farm that this summer."
- 6 We stood in our barnlot and looked at Little Baldy.
- 7 "Yes, I've been thinkin' about clearin' that hill up someday," Pa said.
- 8 "Pa, I'll clear up all this south side and you clear up the other side," I said. "And I'll plow all of it and we'll get it in corn this year."

¹Broom-sedge is a tall, tufted grass common in the United States.

- 9 "Now this will be some undertakin'," he said. "I can't clear that land up and work six days a week on the railroad section. But if you will clear up the south side, I'll hire Bob Lavender to do the other side."
- 10 "That's a bargain," I said.
- 11 That night while the wind was still and the broom-sedge and leaves were dry, my father and I set fire all the way around the base. Next morning Little Baldy was a dark hill jutting high into February's cold, windy sky.
- 12 Pa hired Bob Lavender to clear one portion and I started working on the other. I worked early of mornings before I went to school. I hurried home and worked into the night.
- 13 By middle March, I had my side cleared. Bob Lavender had finished his too. We burned the brush and I was ready to start plowing.
- 14 By April 15th I had plowed all of Little Baldy.
- 15 If my father had known what I was up to, he might not have let me do it. But he was going early to work on the railway section and he never got home until nearly dark. So when I laid Little Baldy off to plant him in corn, I started at the bottom and went around and around this high cone-shaped hill like a corkscrew. I was three days reaching the top. Then, with a hand planter, I planted the corn on moonlit nights.
- 16 When I showed my father what I'd done, he looked strangely at me. Then he said, "What made you do a thing like this? What's behind all of this?"
- 17 "I'm going to have the longest corn row in the world," I said. "How long do you think it is, Pa?"
- 18 "That row is over 20 miles," Pa said, laughing.
- 19 Finn and I measured the corn row with a rod pole and it was 23.5 miles long.
- 20 When it came time to report on our projects and I stood up in class and said I had a row of corn on our hill farm 23.5 miles long, everybody laughed. But when I told how I got the idea and how I had worked to accomplish my project, everybody was silent.
- 21 Professor Herbert and the General Science class hiked to my home on a Saturday in early May when the young corn was pretty and green in the long row. Two newspapermen from a neighboring town came too, and a

photographer took pictures of Little Baldy and his ribbon of corn. He took pictures of me, of my home and parents and also of Professor Herbert and my classmates.

- 22 When the article and pictures were published, a few of my classmates got a little jealous of me but not one of them ever laughed at me again. And my father and mother were the proudest two parents any son could ever hope to have.

Excerpted from "A Ribbon for Baldy" in A JESSE STUART READER. Copyright 1963 McGraw Hill Company. Copyright Renewed Jesse Stuart Foundation. Used by permission of Marian Reiner on behalf of the Foundation.

- 1 By using the first-person point of view, the author is able to show —
- A how the father feels about hiring someone to help with the narrator’s project
 - B what the narrator’s classmates think about the outcome of the project
 - C the enthusiasm the narrator feels while working on the project
 - D the father’s concerns about how the project will be accomplished
-

- 2 Read the following dictionary entry.

survey \sər-ˈvā\ v
1. to collect data by asking questions
2. to take measurements on a piece of land
3. to determine the value of something
4. to look over thoroughly

Which definition most closely matches the meaning of surveyed as it is used in paragraph 2?

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

- 3** In paragraphs 7 through 10, why is the father’s response to the narrator’s plan important to the excerpt?
- A** It shows how pleased the father is with the narrator’s decision.
 - B** It gives the narrator a chance to explain his reasons for selecting the project.
 - C** It provides the narrator with the support he needs in order to begin the project.
 - D** It allows the father to give advice to the narrator about how to clear the land.

-
- 4** Read this sentence from paragraph 2.

A thin ribbon of cloud seemed to envelop cone-shaped Little Baldy from bottom to top like the new rope Pa had just bought for the windlass over our well.

The author uses imagery in this sentence most likely to show how —

- F** the narrator was inspired to plant corn on Little Baldy in a specific pattern
- G** large Little Baldy seemed to the narrator before he began the project
- H** the narrator is surprised by his father’s ability to repair equipment on the farm
- J** proud the narrator thinks his father will be with the outcome of the project

- 5** Paragraphs 11 through 15 support the primary theme of the excerpt by emphasizing the narrator's —
- A** diligence
 - B** satisfaction
 - C** sincerity
 - D** modesty
-

- 6** The narrator describes his mule ride to school in a way that shows his —
- F** jealousy of his classmates
 - G** fondness for using his imagination
 - H** appreciation for where he lives
 - J** gratitude for having transportation
-

- 7** Which sentence best illustrates the narrator's commitment to his project?
- A** *Next morning Little Baldy was a dark hill jutting high into February's cold, windy sky.*
 - B** *Then, with a hand planter, I planted the corn on moonlit nights.*
 - C** *We burned the brush and I was ready to start plowing.*
 - D** *I could not see an object ten feet in front of me in this mist.*

- 8** The simile in paragraph 1 helps the reader understand why the narrator —
- F** takes a specific path to school in the morning
 - G** wants to think of a project that will be useful to his family
 - H** notices the part of the landscape he will use for his project
 - J** rides over the land quickly on his way to school

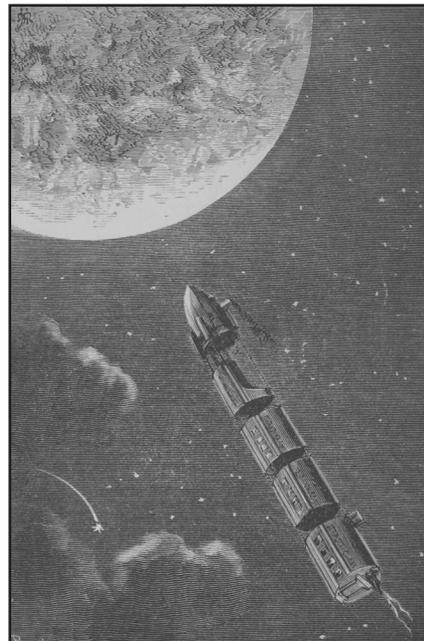
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- 9** When the narrator explains how he completed his project, his classmates' response shows that they —
- A** have changed the way they perceive the narrator
 - B** realize how much the outcome of the project means to the narrator
 - C** want to participate in a similar project on another piece of land
 - D** believe that the professor thinks the project is excellent

- 10** The father's work schedule contributes to the development of the plot because it —
- F** allows the narrator to complete his project in secret
 - G** causes concern about the cost of paying someone to help the narrator
 - H** prevents the father from having enough time to finish his part of the project
 - J** creates tension when the narrator realizes he has to complete the project without his father

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

Can Writers Predict the Future?

- 1 The human race is constantly seeking to expand its knowledge and to discover answers to the mysteries of the unknown. This desire to learn has led to technological and scientific advancements that have transformed our world. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy believed it was possible for the United States to be the first country to land a man on the moon. Many disagreed with Kennedy and thought that his idea was pure science fiction. Eight years later, on July 20, 1969, *Apollo 11* landed on the moon. Humans not only traveled into space but also walked on the moon. President Kennedy's goal was achieved, and the world as we knew it had changed.
- 2 President Kennedy was not the first to imagine sending a man to the moon. A little more than 100 years earlier, in 1865, science fiction writer Jules Verne also imagined space travel. He put his innovative thoughts in a book called *From the Earth to the Moon*. In it he described a lunar expedition that is so eerily close to the *Apollo 11* mission that a reader would think he was predicting the future. He called his spaceship with a crew of three the *Columbiad*. In his book the spacecraft launches from Florida, and the United States Navy recovers it from the Pacific Ocean. In 1969, Florida was the launch site of *Apollo 11*. The command module was named *Columbia*. When the spacecraft returned to Earth, it splashed down in the Pacific, where the navy recovered it along with its three-astronaut crew. Verne accurately delineated the future when the technology of his own time made his predictions seem highly unlikely to occur. How could he have known that his far-fetched idea was not so far-fetched after all?
- 3 Like Verne, other science fiction writers have accurately described inventions that are commonplace today. Many of H. G. Wells's ideas, for example, have become a reality. Considered by many to be one of the best science fiction writers of all time, Wells wrote about lasers, wireless communication, automatic doors, and other gadgets that did not exist at the time of his writings. But today these gadgets are such an integral part of our society that we probably cannot imagine living without them. Wells also envisioned space travel. In his 1901 book *The First Men in the Moon*, he



This illustration from Jules Verne's novel shows a rocket train traveling to the moon.

Public Domain

describes a journey to the moon on a spaceship made from an antigravity material. We can only speculate that these writers might have inspired those who later turned their fiction into reality.

- 4 In 2012 a Mars rover, developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), landed on the planet Mars. No one would have been more excited to hear the news than Ray Bradbury, one of America's greatest science fiction writers. In 1950 he wrote about travel to Mars in his book *The Martian Chronicles*. The book describes an expedition that lands humans on Mars. The story then tells how the people inhabit the planet and bring their families to live there. Since NASA has successfully landed a rover on Mars, Bradbury's fantasy may yet become reality. The Mars rover, appropriately called *Curiosity*, is gathering information that will help NASA plan a manned mission to Mars sometime in the 2030s. Will future families travel to Mars to live there, as Bradbury imagined? If so, the world as we know it today will certainly be different.

Post Early for Space

by Peter J. Henniker-Heaton

Once we were wayfarers, then seafarers, then airfarers;
We shall be spacefarers soon,
Not voyaging from city to city or from coast to coast,
But from planet to planet and from moon to moon.

5 This is no fanciful flight of imagination,
No strange, incredible, utterly different thing;
It will come by obstinate thought and calculation
And the old resolve to spread an expanding wing.

We shall see homes established on distant planets,
10 Friends departing to take up a post on Mars;
They will have perils to meet, but they will meet them,
As the early settlers did on American shores.

We shall buy tickets later, as now we buy them
For a foreign vacation, reserve our seat or berth,
15 Then spending a holiday month on a moon of Saturn,
Look tenderly back to our little shining Earth.

And those who decide they will not make the journey
Will remember a son up there or a favorite niece,
Eagerly awaiting news from the old home-planet,
20 And will scribble a line to catch the post for space.

By Peter J. Henniker-Heaton. Reprinted with permission from the January 10, 1952 issue of *The Christian Science Monitor*. © 1952 *The Christian Science Monitor* (www.CSMonitor.com)

Use “Can Writers Predict the Future?” (pp. 12–13) to answer questions 11–14. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 11** The author includes the information about President Kennedy’s idea and NASA to show that —
- A** technological advancements are needed in order to change our world
 - B** something seemingly impossible can become a reality
 - C** governments typically support the development of new technology
 - D** great leaders have a remarkable ability to accomplish their goals
-
- 12** What is the best summary of the selection?
- F** Science fiction writers Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, and Ray Bradbury wrote about life in the future. Verne wrote about humankind’s first trip to the moon, and Wells described many technologies that exist today. Bradbury wrote about traveling to Mars.
 - G** President John F. Kennedy believed that it was important for people to travel into space. In 1969, the United States sent astronauts on a mission to the moon. Science fiction writers such as Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, and Ray Bradbury have described space travel and new technologies in their books.
 - H** In 1865 science fiction author Jules Verne wrote about an expedition to the moon. He described a crew of three men launching their spacecraft from Florida and splashing down in the Pacific Ocean when they returned to Earth. Some people compare his writing with the first trip humans made to the moon, which occurred in 1969.
 - J** In 1969, the United States sent three astronauts on a mission to the moon for the first time. More than 100 years earlier, Jules Verne had described an expedition that very closely resembled the 1969 mission. Verne and other well-known science fiction writers, such as H. G. Wells and Ray Bradbury, have displayed an unusual ability to predict the future in their writings.

- 13** According to the selection, one reason that humans develop new types of technology is that they want to —
- A** demonstrate that distant places are interesting to visit
 - B** discover new information
 - C** make accurate predictions about the future
 - D** engage in difficult tasks

-
- 14** Based on the information the author includes about the three science fiction writers, the reader can conclude that the author believes that the writers were —
- F** educators
 - G** realists
 - H** visionaries
 - J** scholars

Use "Post Early for Space" (p. 14) to answer questions 15–18. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

15 Read lines 11 and 12 from the poem.

They will have perils to meet, but they will meet them,
As the early settlers did on American shores.

Why does the poet compare space travelers to the early settlers of America?

- A** To highlight the difficulties that the early settlers encountered when venturing into new places
- B** To imply that the obstacles the early settlers faced discouraged them from exploring new lands
- C** To suggest that explorers will overcome the difficulties in space just as explorers in the past overcame their difficulties
- D** To demonstrate that explorers will encounter the same challenges in space as explorers in the past did in other frontiers

16 What does the final stanza of the poem suggest about the future?

- F** Some people will travel to other planets, while others will choose not to.
- G** People who travel to other planets will no longer communicate with people living on Earth.
- H** Some people will regret their decision to remain on Earth.
- J** People who travel to other planets will want their family members living on Earth to join them.

17 Read these lines from the poem.

Once we were wayfarers, then seafarers, then airfarers;
We shall be spacefarers soon,

The progression from “wayfarers” to “spacefarers” demonstrates that people —

- A** have made scientific discoveries while traveling to new places
- B** have developed ways to explore new regions
- C** select the mode of transportation that is most convenient
- D** prefer some forms of transportation over others

18 What do the descriptions of the future throughout the poem suggest about the speaker?

- F** He believes that people will be intimidated by the challenge of space travel.
- G** He feels confident that people will be able to travel easily through space.
- H** He assumes that living on another planet will be different from living on Earth.
- J** He accepts that space travel likely will be unavailable during his lifetime.

Use “Can Writers Predict the Future?” and “Post Early for Space” to answer questions 19–23. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 19** How are the descriptions of space travel different in the selection and the poem?
- A** The selection presents factual information about space travel, while the poem suggests what it will be like when people travel in space.
 - B** The selection lists destinations humans may travel to in space, while the poem gives details about how it feels to look at Earth from space.
 - C** The selection primarily focuses on significant achievements in space travel, while the poem tells about events that happened before space travel was possible.
 - D** The selection explains how space travel will improve life on Earth, while the poem focuses on the difficulties of space travel.
-
- 20** With which statement would both the author of the selection and the poet most likely agree?
- F** The uncertainties of space travel make it unlikely that many people will want to leave Earth.
 - G** It will be difficult to develop technology more advanced than it already is.
 - H** Space travel will one day be a commonplace occurrence for many people.
 - J** The creation of new technology is influenced by the technology described in science fiction books.

- 21** One difference between the selection and the poem is that only the selection presents the idea that —
- A** people once doubted that a moon landing was possible
 - B** space travel is a challenge that can be accomplished
 - C** people may one day travel to other planets
 - D** the world looks very different from outer space

-
- 22** Which idea about humankind is expressed in both the selection and the poem?
- F** Humans have a desire to explore new frontiers.
 - G** Humans' ability to accurately imagine the future is remarkable.
 - H** Humans have developed new technologies sooner than predicted.
 - J** Humans' ability to incorporate technology into daily tasks has made life easier.

23 Read this line from the poem.

Friends departing to take up a post on Mars;

This idea is most closely related to the ideas of which person discussed in the selection?

- A** John F. Kennedy
- B** Ray Bradbury
- C** Jules Verne
- D** H. G. Wells

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

Fierce Fighters of the West

- 1 Writer and filmmaker Sande Zeig was hurrying through the Phoenix, Arizona, airport one afternoon when a group of women wearing bright yellow shirts caught her eye. "The air was just vibrating around them," Zeig recalls. "I asked who they were, and they said they were Apache firefighters. And 'I want to make a film about you' just came out of my mouth." Zeig's documentary, *Apache 8*, was entered in the Native American Film + Video Festival in 2011 and has made its way to other film festivals across the country. It tells the remarkable story of the first all-woman American Indian firefighting crew.
- 2 The women of *Apache 8* have been fighting fierce blazes in Arizona and across the western United States for more than 30 years. Zeig's documentary highlights these brave women and the crew they lead. Ronnie Lupe, the chairman of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, said, "They can climb the highest mountain, carry the heaviest burden on their back, and still put out the fire. We are so proud of them."
- 3 Zeig had to get permission to film from the tribal council, which was skeptical about letting outsiders onto their reservation. Despite their initial misgivings, they granted Zeig permission to observe the team for a year. After a while the women began to trust Zeig and to share their stories with her.
- 4 Cheryl Bones, the *Apache 8* crew boss, and the others have earned a reputation for bravery and excellence in their work. In fact, Bones was selected to be the only female model for the Wildland Firefighters Monument, a bronze statue that honors all firefighters, in Boise, Idaho. Ericka Hinton, also featured in *Apache 8*, joined the crew right out of high school for a two-week stint. Those two weeks changed Hinton's life, and she has been with the crew ever since. In 2009 she became one of only two women to join the Apache Hotshots, firefighters who parachute into the front lines of dangerous fires ahead of the main team. Another woman featured in the documentary, Katy Aday, was told by a forestry director that she was too petite to carry the equipment. "You can't do it," the director stated. "You won't be able to handle the job." This only made Aday, who had a distinguished military career, more determined to succeed. And she did.
- 5 The group was formed in the 1970s and soon became one of the elite firefighting crews in the country. Some of the crew had personal reasons for becoming firefighters. Hinton needed a job in order to provide for her family

and her young son. Aday, who joined to prove to herself and the forestry director that she could do the job, speaks excitedly of the early days with Apache 8. "You never knew what you were going to find. You were with a bunch of women that could handle anything."



© Photo by Victoria Westover

A Member of the Apache 8 Crew

- 6 The Apache 8 crew became a coed team in 2005, so now the Apache women fight fires alongside male firefighters. Zeig followed the crew all year as they worked to thin forests and start prescribed fires, which are intentionally set to consume dry fuel and reduce the risk of accidental fires. She also observed the women as they fought very real and very dangerous wildfires. Zeig watched in awe as the female firefighters fought alongside the men on the front lines of several forest fires—4,000 yellow-clad figures working hard to save homes and lives. Zeig recorded in her documentary that the women's calm, quiet efficiency made them stand out as veterans.
- 7 The women of Apache 8 are nationally recognized for their extraordinary service and are seen as heroes in their communities. In the documentary, *Bones*, Hinton, Aday, and other Apache 8 crew members speak passionately about their love for their community and their pride in being firefighters from Fort Apache. It is easy to tell that these extraordinary women have accomplished far more than just fighting fires. Marjorie Grimes, who was a crew leader for Apache 6, a predecessor of the Apache 8 team, puts it this way: "The public was not open to women firefighters when we began. We had to fight for the right to fight fires." Truly, the women of Apache 8 have done just that. They have set an example for girls and young women across the country, proving that with will, determination, and passion, anything is possible.

- 24** What is the author’s primary purpose for writing this selection?
- F** To describe the accomplishments of the Apache 8 crew
 - G** To suggest that the Apache 8 crew deserves more honors
 - H** To show that the Apache 8 crew has experienced discrimination
 - J** To convince people to watch the *Apache 8* documentary
-

- 25** Based on her yearlong observations of the crew, Zeig most likely believes that the women of Apache 8 have —
- A** improved the crew’s reputation by allowing men to join the all-female crew
 - B** significantly changed the strategies involved in fighting and preventing forest fires
 - C** positively affected the way people view women working in traditionally male professions
 - D** brought a needed enthusiasm to the firefighting community
-

- 26** Which words from paragraph 6 help the reader understand the meaning of prescribed?
- F** *calm, quiet efficiency*
 - G** *intentionally set*
 - H** *very real and very dangerous*
 - J** *stand out as veterans*

- 27** Which information from the selection supports the idea that the women of Apache 8 have encountered obstacles?
- A** The attention the crew received from Sande Zeig’s film
 - B** The meeting with Sande Zeig at the Phoenix airport
 - C** The response the forestry director gave Katy Aday
 - D** The reason Ericka Hinton joined the Apache 8 crew
-

- 28** Which idea does the author emphasize throughout the selection?
- F** The Apache 8 crew is more skilled at firefighting than all-male crews.
 - G** The members of the Apache 8 crew are respected for the work they have done.
 - H** The women in Apache 8 are good role models for women in other professions.
 - J** The Apache 8 are members of a prominent American Indian tribe.
-

- 29** Some of the women of Apache 8 joined the crew because —
- A** they had wanted to become firefighters since childhood
 - B** not many jobs were available for American Indian women
 - C** several tribal councils encouraged female tribe members to become firefighters
 - D** they were motivated by their own circumstances

30 The author organizes the selection by —

- F** presenting the accomplishments of the Apache 8 women and then describing their methods of fighting fires
- G** explaining that the firefighting community was composed mostly of men and then showing how the Apache 8 women became an exception
- H** describing a documentary about the Apache 8 women and then sharing the history and background of the crew
- J** listing the ways the Apache 8 women have been recognized and then convincing readers that they are the best firefighting crew in the nation

31 Paragraphs 1 and 2 are mainly about the reasons —

- A** the Apache 8 women have been fighting fires for more than 30 years
- B** Zeig decided to feature the Apache 8 crew in a film
- C** Zeig had to seek permission to film the Apache 8 crew
- D** the Apache 8 crew encourages girls and young women

32 The word misgivings in paragraph 3 means —

- F** enthusiasm
- G** understanding
- H** uncertainty
- J** seriousness

33 Which sentence from the selection best shows that the author admires the bravery of the members of Apache 8?

- A** *Zeig watched in awe as the female firefighters fought alongside the men on the front lines of several forest fires—4,000 yellow-clad figures working hard to save homes and lives.*
- B** *In fact, Bones was selected to be the only female model for the Wildland Firefighters Monument, a bronze statue that honors all firefighters, in Boise, Idaho.*
- C** *In the documentary, Bones, Hinton, Aday, and other Apache 8 crew members speak passionately about their love for their community and their pride in being firefighters from Fort Apache.*
- D** *Zeig’s documentary, Apache 8, was entered in the Native American Film + Video Festival in 2011 and has made its way to other film festivals across the country.*

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

A Gift from a Ghost

by Mike Cox

- 1 I'd had a great day catching my limit of red snapper, but eight hours on a boat out in the Gulf of Mexico under a summer sun wrings out a lot of energy along with the sweat. Now, though, having enjoyed a long shower and fried shrimp for supper, I sat with my wife on the balcony of our rented condo four stories above a South Padre Island beach, taking in the surreal scene below as dozens of moving flashlight beams played back and forth across the sand.
- 2 The roar of the surf all but washed out the excited squeals of the kids below as they scurried here and there chasing ghosts—ghost crabs (*Ocypode quadrata*). It's the seaside version of catching fireflies and putting them in a jar, except that the crabs are bigger than bugs, about the size of a small child's fist.
- 3 Our daughter Hallie opened the sliding-glass door and joined us on the porch. "Daddy, I want to go catch some crabs," she said. I tried at first to beg off, but she persisted. Finally, realizing how disappointed she would be if we didn't go, I gave in. Looking back, I'm sure glad I did.
- 4 Ghost crabs, whose pale coloring blends in so well with the sand that they seem to disappear, are so named because they primarily come out at night to scavenge the beach for food—from sand fleas to dead fish. During the day, these crustaceans spend most of their time digging, cleaning and repairing their burrows. And they dash to the water's edge several times a day to wet their gills, thereby enabling them to extract oxygen from the air.
- 5 With large, black eyes on the ends of long, vertical stalks, ghost crabs have excellent 360-degree vision—and a startling appearance. They also live up to their genus name, *Ocypode*, which is derived from a Greek phrase that means "swift-footed." When ghost crabs spot something threatening or bigger than they are—like a little girl with a flashlight and a green plastic bucket with a yellow handle—their eight legs can propel them up to speeds of 10 mph.
- 6 Operating on pure fight-or-flight instinct, the crabs don't realize it's all just a game when a kid is on their trail. If captured, they don't get cooked or even kept for "life." A seasoned crab chaser, Hallie only holds them in her partially sand-filled bucket overnight. She releases them on the beach the next morning, none the worse for wear.

7 On a good night, she can round up a dozen or more crabs in an hour. And each year, she gets better at it. Now on the verge of being too cool for such childish behavior, especially with her dad tagging along to offer an extra light as well as parental supervision, she could offer ghost-crabbing lessons:

- The bigger crabs, maybe 3 inches wide, tend to be found farther from the surf.
- Those larger crabs, though not as common, run slower and are easier to catch.
- Bigger crabs are best captured by throwing sand on them. When the sand hits them, they usually stop running and dig in. But they seldom get deep enough to save themselves from a bucket ride.
- Sometimes, a particularly sizable crab will turn and stand to fight, its pinchers snapping menacingly in the air. Keep the crab occupied while your buddy sneaks around and catches it from behind. And try not to let it pinch you.

8 Despite the experiential knowledge Hallie has gained on our annual trips to South Padre, a crab taught father and daughter a lesson neither of us has forgotten.

9 As we walked along the beach on the night that I tried to get out of going with her, Hallie's flashlight beam soon locked on a hefty crab scooting rapidly across the sand on its spindly legs. I tried to keep my flashlight trained on it as it zigged and zagged. The chase went on and on, a human-crab version of "America's Scariest Chase Videos." Finally, Hallie got it cornered, tossing a handful of sand on it.

10 "It's daring us," she said, moving in for the capture. I looked closer and saw its larger of two claws extended and ominously opening and closing in a silent warning to back off. Then I spotted something shiny in the circle of light my flashlight made: coins. The feisty crab had drawn its figurative line in the sand surrounded by coins. "Looks like somebody lost some money," I said.

11 Hallie waited for the right moment and snatched the crab as I started collecting the scattered coins—an assortment of quarters, dimes and nickels. Catching her breath after the spirited race, Hallie began to process what had just happened. "He led us to treasure," she said. "He paid for his freedom." Thinking for a moment, she added, "I'm gonna let him go."



Artwork by Kenneth Spirduso

- 12 "Good idea," I said, busy counting the ransom money.
- 13 As treasures go, it wasn't much. A little more than \$3, barely enough for a caffe latte. But treasure, I began to realize, is not just money. That night's real treasure was the chance to experience a real-life fairy tale with a young princess. Not only had the crab led us leprechaun-style to a small pot of gold—well, contemporary silver coins—it had turned the tables and captured us in a special father-daughter moment.
- 14 As I pocketed the gritty change, Hallie reached in the bucket, pulled out the crab and gently released it. We both watched as it hurried away, its own story to tell.

"A Gift from a Ghost" by Mike Cox, from *Texas Co-op Power* magazine, August 2011, copyright © 2011 by Mike Cox. Used by permission of the author and in agreement with the Texas Electric Cooperatives.

34 The author uses a bulleted list in order to highlight —

- F** ways to avoid being pinched by a crab
- G** tips for being successful at capturing crabs
- H** the various sizes of crabs found on the beach
- J** the advantages of being an experienced crab chaser

35 The title of this selection refers both to the money found on the beach and to —

- A** the battle between the author and the crab
- B** the author’s memorable experience with his daughter
- C** the lesson the author learns about wild creatures
- D** the new appreciation the author has for his daughter’s crab-catching abilities

- 36** Which sentence suggests that catching crabs is a popular activity on the beach?
- F** *A seasoned crab chaser, Hallie only holds them in her partially sand-filled bucket overnight.*
 - G** *Operating on pure fight-or-flight instinct, the crabs don't realize it's all just a game when a kid is on their trail.*
 - H** *It's the seaside version of catching fireflies and putting them in a jar, except that the crabs are bigger than bugs, about the size of a small child's fist.*
 - J** *When ghost crabs spot something threatening or bigger than they are—like a little girl with a flashlight and a green plastic bucket with a yellow handle—their eight legs can propel them up to speeds of 10 mph.*
-

- 37** The author includes the detailed description of ghost crabs most likely to —
- A** help readers relate to the challenge of capturing the crabs
 - B** demonstrate that he is knowledgeable about sea life
 - C** explain why he values the time he spends at the beach with his family
 - D** motivate readers to learn more about the characteristics of the crabs

- 38** What is the best summary of the events leading up to the author and his daughter chasing crabs?
- F** After a day in the sun, a girl wants to go to the beach and catch ghost crabs. She has caught ghost crabs before and has grown to be good at it.
 - G** After a day of fishing, a father is relaxing and watching people chase ghost crabs. His daughter asks to go to the beach to catch some crabs, and the father agrees.
 - H** A family is staying in a condominium on the beach at South Padre Island. The father frequently takes his daughter out to chase ghost crabs, and she wants to go again.
 - J** A father who has been fishing in the Gulf of Mexico returns to his condominium, takes a shower, and eats a dinner of fried shrimp. The waves of the ocean make it difficult for him to hear the people on the beach.

-
- 39** What is the most likely reason why the author is glad that he agreed to Hallie's request?
- A** He witnesses Hallie capturing the largest crab she has ever chased.
 - B** He understands that catching such a large crab can be a challenging task.
 - C** He recognizes that finding money on the beach at night is an unusual event.
 - D** He realizes that Hallie is reaching an age when she will no longer want to chase crabs.

- 40** What can readers conclude about Hallie based on her father’s description of their experience with the crab on the beach?
- F** She respects the crab’s efforts to avoid being captured.
 - G** She realizes that she needs her father’s help in order to catch the crab.
 - H** She is not very experienced at catching crabs.
 - J** She thinks that chasing crabs is an activity that families should do together.

41 In paragraph 10, the word ominously means —

- A** with alarming strength
- B** in a slow movement
- C** with an intimidating sound
- D** in a threatening manner

- 42** In which sentence does the author use an analogy to express the significance of the night on the beach with Hallie?
- F** *As I pocketed the gritty change, Hallie reached in the bucket, pulled out the crab and gently released it.*
 - G** *Despite the experiential knowledge Hallie has gained on our annual trips to South Padre, a crab taught father and daughter a lesson neither of us has forgotten.*
 - H** *Not only had the crab led us leprechaun-style to a small pot of gold—well, contemporary silver coins—it had turned the tables and captured us in a special father-daughter moment.*
 - J** *The feisty crab had drawn its figurative line in the sand surrounded by coins.*

-
- 43** The imagery in paragraph 9 shows that the crab chase is —
- A** discouraging
 - B** embarrassing
 - C** difficult to observe
 - D** fast-paced

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

Sneaky Supermarket Spies

Shoppers and Their Buying Habits

- 1 Shoppers in a grocery store have all kinds of things on their mind as they weave in and out of aisles looking for sales, planning menus, and selecting food. But one new development in supermarket strategy may really surprise them. They're being watched! And not just by employees or hidden cameras in corners of the store—shoppers and their buying habits are now being tracked in ways they might never imagine.
- 2 Americans spend about 1.5 billion dollars a day on groceries, but supermarkets and grocery stores want shoppers to spend even more. A typical grocery store has about 50,000 products to sell to customers. Grocery stores have found creative and clever methods to make sure that shoppers buy more of these products.

Who Else Is Watching?

Supermarkets can track your shopping habits, but in what other ways are you tracked as you go about your day?

- Search engines on the Internet track your search data so that the next time you use the search engine, you may see advertisements related to what you have searched for.
- Next time you're in a car at an intersection, look for a traffic camera. With just a photo of the license-plate number, the police can access a person's name, address, and driving information.
- The location of many cell phones can be tracked from a computer, which is convenient if you've lost your phone. On the other hand, that means that your location can easily be determined by others.

Using Technology to Track and Attract Customers

- 3 Some stores use heat maps to track which aisles customers linger in, looking at products. This helps supermarket owners and managers figure out where people spend the most time in the store. Many stores provide discount cards that not only offer reduced prices to shoppers but also can electronically track products that customers purchase. At the checkout counter customers will be offered coupons for items similar to their purchases. One supermarket has started giving customers a handheld self-checkout device linked to the store's discount card. This device alerts customers to sales as they walk by or scan certain products. This may sound convenient, but researchers like Joseph Turow of the University of Pennsylvania worry about customer privacy and the possibility of stores selling the shopping details of their customers to other companies.

Supermarket Strategy

- 4 Store owners know that milk and eggs are common items on many grocery lists, so these items should be at the front of the store, right? Actually, most stores place those items deeper into the store so that shoppers have to pass tantalizing products on their way to get the needed items. Sights and smells are also powerful and persuasive tools. Florists, bakeries, and produce sections are usually at the front of the store because the items in them will appeal to shoppers' senses, enticing customers to make purchases. Managers know that red signs get the attention of shoppers and that yellow and white signs have a calming effect. They also know that the human eye is likely to focus on products that are at eye level, so that is where the most expensive products are placed on the shelves. Less expensive products are placed higher or lower. Some companies negotiate with the supermarket to ensure that their products are in prime locations to make them more appealing than a competing brand's products.



Supermarkets stock items on shelves in a specially designed way.

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- 5 Supermarkets know that they can sell products that customers may not even be looking for by placing items commonly bought together, like cheese and crackers, close to each other. Some stores no longer use straight rows of aisles across the store but create loops of aisles that force customers to walk past products they may not ordinarily shop for. And there are other industry tricks that increase food sales. The products at the end of an aisle are more likely to be sold, so items that are close to expiring or that need to sell quickly are often placed there. Many grocers feature chopped or shredded vegetables in their produce departments. Customers like the expediency of these products, but buying them can cost more than twice as much as purchasing the items whole.

Shop Smart

- 6 While the customer is trying to spend the shortest amount of time and the least amount of money while shopping, the supermarket is trying to encourage the shopper to do the opposite. A study by a food marketing group showed that about 60% of the items bought at the supermarket were not on the customer's original list. If it sounds sneaky, it is! But an informed customer can see through these gimmicks and avoid coming home with extra items.

44 Which sentence indicates that strategies used by supermarkets are effective?

- F** *Americans spend about 1.5 billion dollars a day on groceries, but supermarkets and grocery stores want shoppers to spend even more.*
- G** *While the customer is trying to spend the shortest amount of time and the least amount of money while shopping, the supermarket is trying to encourage the shopper to do the opposite.*
- H** *A typical grocery store has about 50,000 products to sell to customers.*
- J** *A study by a food marketing group showed that about 60% of the items bought at the supermarket were not on the customer's original list.*

45 The information in the text box suggests that tracking technologies can —

- A** increase consumers' dependence on technology
- B** offer both advantages and disadvantages to consumers
- C** encourage consumers to use technology in other ways
- D** give consumers more opportunities to access their own personal data

46 Which of these is an assertion rather than a fact?

- F** *Grocery stores have found creative and clever methods to make sure that shoppers buy more of these products.*
- G** *Some stores use heat maps to track which aisles customers linger in, looking at products.*
- H** *Many grocers feature chopped or shredded vegetables in their produce departments.*
- J** *This device alerts customers to sales as they walk by or scan certain products.*

47 Which idea is supported by the information in paragraph 3?

- A** Supermarkets plan to distribute handheld self-checkout devices to customers in the future.
- B** Monitoring customers allows supermarkets to make more profitable decisions.
- C** Technology has helped reduce the time a customer spends in the supermarket.
- D** Using a supermarket discount card is the most effective way to find an item on sale.

48 What are paragraphs 4 and 5 mainly about?

- F** The reason companies request a particular space to display their products in a supermarket
- G** The products that are the most profitable for the supermarket to sell
- H** The different designs used by supermarkets to keep their products organized
- J** The specific techniques used by supermarkets to encourage people to purchase more products

49 The Latin word *expedire*, meaning “to be useful,” helps the reader understand that the word expediency in paragraph 5 means —

- A** convenience
- B** controversy
- C** significance
- D** permanence

- 50** Based on the information in the selection, how can customers benefit from being tracked by technology?
- F** They can purchase different varieties of the products they usually buy.
 - G** They can be made aware of offers and promotions specific to their needs.
 - H** They can find out which products at the supermarket are the most popular.
 - J** They can look up which products they have purchased before.

-
- 51** Which sentence relates to the information in the text box following paragraph 2?
- A** *The products at the end of an aisle are more likely to be sold, so items that are close to expiring or that need to sell quickly are often placed there.*
 - B** *Many stores provide discount cards that not only offer reduced prices to shoppers but also can electronically track products that customers purchase.*
 - C** *Store owners know that milk and eggs are common items on many grocery lists, so these items should be at the front of the store, right?*
 - D** *Sights and smells are also powerful and persuasive tools.*

- 52** Based on information in the selection, the reader can infer that an “informed customer” will most likely —
- F** spend a long time in the supermarket
 - G** compare all the brands of a needed item
 - H** stay focused on purchasing only needed items
 - J** purchase only products that are on sale

BE SURE YOU HAVE RECORDED ALL OF YOUR ANSWERS
ON THE ANSWER DOCUMENT.



**STAAR
GRADE 8
Reading
March 2015**