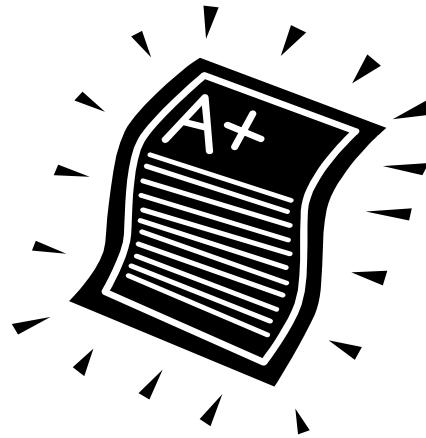


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District: _____



*Increasing Achievement for Schools,
Teachers, & Students*

Pre Test

Read the following selection. Then answer questions 1 through 12.

Egypt: Land of the Pyramids

Evidence shows that Egypt has existed for a very long time. Ancient Egypt first showed up in early records from around 3300 BC, but many **scholars** think that people lived in Egypt before that time. For example, evidence of human life from before 8000 BC has been found in the southwestern corner of Egypt.

There might have been people in Egypt even before then, but there is no way to know for certain. That is because the more that scholars study Egypt, the more clues they find. From their studies, scholars all over the world continue to learn a great deal about Egyptian society.

Most people think of pyramids when they think of Egypt. Scholars have found more than 80 pyramids there. These were built as tombs where Egyptian kings, who were called pharaohs, were buried. One pyramid is over 480 feet tall. Some scholars say that 10,000 men worked for over 20 years to build it! These workers were not slaves. Rather, they built the pyramids as their way of honoring their kings.

In Ancient Egypt, there was a place for everyone. All people, from the peasants to the pharaohs, had a role in society. Ancient Egyptians were very clean and neat. The rich lived in large homes with bathrooms. In the bathrooms they had basins, toilets, and bathtubs. The poor lived in mud and straw huts, but they bathed, too. They used the Nile River to keep themselves and their clothes clean.

Egyptian values included working, praying to their many gods, and enjoying family life. Educated Ancient Egyptians liked to read and write. During their free time, most Egyptians also played games and had parties. They especially enjoyed playing board games. A favorite was called Senet. It was a lot like some of today's board games. For example, players threw dice and moved pieces around on a marked board during the game.

The work of Ancient Egyptians included raising crops, such as barley and wheat. They raised flax, a plant from which they spun material, in order to make clothing. They raised cattle and sheep for clothing, too. From these animals, they got leather and wool. Of course, farmers also got meat and milk and cheese from cattle and sheep. Wheat was another important crop. It was used to make over 50 kinds of breads and cakes for consumption in people's daily lives.

For transportation, Egyptians used oxen, donkeys, and cattle to pull plows, carts, and flat sleds. Later on, horses came to the area, but horses cost a lot of money, so only rich people and the army could afford to buy and use horses. The army did not ride horses, but it did use them to pull chariots in which soldiers went to war.

The Nile River was very important to Ancient Egypt. It is still of great importance in modern Egypt, making it a thread tying the country's past to its present. The Nile floods every year. This flooding enriches the land, keeping Egypt from becoming just a desert with a river flowing through it. The Nile is 4,000 miles long. It comes into Egypt

Egypt: Land of the Pyramids

from Africa in the south, then it flows north to the top of Egypt. There, it forms the Nile Delta and empties into the Mediterranean Sea.

1. What is this passage primarily about?
 - A. crops in Ancient Egypt
 - B. the Nile River
 - C. a brief history of Egypt
 - D. none of the above

2. Which detail tells about Egyptian horses?
 - A. They were pretty.
 - B. They pulled plows.
 - C. They were used for war.
 - D. none of the above

3. The Nile River flows:
 - A. north to Africa
 - B. north to the Mediterranean Sea
 - C. south to Africa
 - D. none of the above

4. In which way are early Egyptians and modern Egyptians alike?
 - A. They owned cattle.
 - B. They could read and write.
 - C. They liked to bathe.
 - D. all of the above

5. Why did Egyptians build the pyramids?
 - A. to honor their pharaohs
 - B. to honor ancient civilizations
 - C. to have a place in which to live
 - D. none of the above

6. What can you infer about the Nile River from the passage?
 - A. It is necessary to life in Egypt.
 - B. It makes a mess when it floods.
 - C. It is not important to the country.
 - D. none of the above



Egypt: Land of the Pyramids

7. From information in this passage, one could conclude that:
- A. Egyptians live in a dry, infertile desert.
 - B. Egyptians like to make war.
 - C. Egyptians might have enjoyed card games.
 - D. none of the above
8. The first paragraph mentions “**scholars.**” What is a **scholar**?
- A. someone who makes movies about Egypt
 - B. someone who studies
 - C. pharaohs
 - D. all of the above
9. The third paragraph was written to:
- A. describe scholars
 - B. describe the workers
 - C. describe the pyramids
 - D. none of the above
10. The best summary of this passage is:
- A. Egypt has cold winters.
 - B. Egypt has a lot of floods.
 - C. Egypt has a lot of pyramids.
 - D. none of the above
11. The main idea of the sixth paragraph is to:
- A. explain about the work of Ancient Egyptians
 - B. describe the cows and sheep that were raised in Ancient Egypt
 - C. explain about the uses of the flax plant
 - D. none of the above
12. How were the homes of the rich different from the homes of the poor in Ancient Egypt?
- A. The rich had stoves in their kitchens; the poor cooked outside over fires.
 - B. The rich had bathrooms; the poor bathed in the rivers.
 - C. The rich had huge libraries in their homes; the poor had no books.
 - D. none of the above



Read the following selection. Then answer questions 13 through 28.

Weather in the Tropics

In the late summer and early fall, tropical waves can turn into hurricanes. These waves form near western Africa in the Atlantic Ocean. The water there is about 79°, which is what tropical waves need. The trade winds blow there, too, so when tropical waves form, the trade winds blow them westward. Not all tropical waves turn into tropical storms, but some do. That is when the National Hurricane Center in the United States gives them a name.

Even though all tropical storms can become hurricanes, only a few of them actually do. When their wind speed reaches 74 miles an hour, they officially become hurricanes. Some keep going west toward the islands south of the United States, while others head north into the Atlantic. Some tropical storms and hurricanes move toward the north, up the coast of Florida, going as far north as New York.

Others cut across or below Florida to the Gulf of Mexico. When they get into the Gulf, they go into Alabama or even as far west as Texas or Mexico. The term “making landfall” is used whenever one of these storms comes onto land. This is when the storms are the most dangerous. On land, their rains can cause flooding, and tornadoes can result from their high winds.

Hurricanes look like a doughnut with a hole in the center. This hole is small when the hurricane winds are strong, and it is large when the winds are not as strong. The hole is called the “eye.” Inside the eye, the winds are usually calm. You can sometimes see blue sky, and there is no rain.

The eye passes overhead at the halfway point of a hurricane, and the calm inside the eye can be deceiving. A lot of people think the calm means the storm is over, but the truth is, there is still the other half of the storm coming. Never go outside during this calm period. The winds start back quickly, so you could be injured or trapped outside.

Hurricanes have a lot of power. Every year, they cause millions, and sometimes billions, of dollars in damage all around the world. On the other hand, many areas of the world suffer from long periods without rain. These areas need the rain that tropical storms and hurricanes bring them. Other areas need the rain to cause local rivers to flood. This flooding **enriches** the farmland, which makes the crops grow better. Still, the little bit of good done by these storms does not **offset** their damage.

On the other hand, scientists have long wondered how to use the power that comes from hurricanes. Studies show that a fraction of the power of one hurricane would supply the United States with electrical power for a whole year. Even though hurricanes now cause a lot of harm, maybe some day they will also do enough good to balance out that harm.

13. This passage is mostly about:
- A. rain problems around the world
 - B. the winds of western Africa
 - C. storms that form in the tropics
 - D. none of the above
14. Which detail tells you when tropical storms become hurricanes?
- A. at the time that they cause tornadoes
 - B. at the time that they make landfall
 - C. at the time their winds reach 74 miles an hour
 - D. none of the above
15. What happens right after the eye of a hurricane passes over?
- A. The winds start back up.
 - B. The storm stops.
 - C. The storm gets a name.
 - D. none of the above
16. How are trade winds and hurricane winds alike?
- A. They both cause a lot of damage.
 - B. They both cross into the Gulf of Mexico.
 - C. They both occur in the eye of a storm.
 - D. none of the above
17. What causes local flooding during a hurricane?
- A. past periods of drought
 - B. high winds from the hurricane
 - C. rain from the hurricane
 - D. all of the above
18. What can you infer about hurricanes from the passage?
- A. All areas of the world are better off without them.
 - B. Their arrival is both good and bad in some areas.
 - C. They do a lot of good everywhere they go.
 - D. none of the above



19. What can you conclude about the results of scientific studies on the power of hurricanes?
- A. Their power could never be used.
 - B. Their power might do a few people some good.
 - C. Their power could benefit a lot of people.
 - D. none of the above
20. The passage reads, “. . . this flooding **enriches** the farmland. . .”
What does **enriches** mean the way it is used in the passage?
- A. worsens
 - B. reduces
 - C. hurts
 - D. none of the above
21. Why did the author write the last paragraph?
- A. to show there could be hope for the future
 - B. to show that no good can ever come from hurricanes
 - C. to show the importance of studies
 - D. none of the above
22. Which is the best summary of this passage?
- A. Tornadoes can be dangerous.
 - B. The trade winds are our enemies.
 - C. A hurricane is one of the “Seven Wonders of the World.”
 - D. none of the above
23. What can you infer from this passage about what happens when a hurricane makes “landfall”?
- A. that is when hurricanes cause the most property damage
 - B. that is when the land blocks the hurricane’s winds
 - C. that is when the hurricane is actually named
 - D. none of the above
24. Which detail belongs in a summary of this passage?
- A. Trade winds blow harder than hurricane winds.
 - B. Hurricanes are the same as tropical storms.
 - C. No one knows which direction hurricanes will take.
 - D. none of the above

25. Why does the National Hurricane Center name some storms and not others?
- A. because it likes some storms more than others
 - B. because some storms only reach tropical storm strength
 - C. because some storms are formed off the coast of Africa
 - D. none of the above

26. What was the author's purpose for writing the sixth paragraph?
- A. to show the good side of what hurricanes do
 - B. to tell about farming around the world
 - C. to explain why rivers flood
 - D. none of the above

27. The author writes, "... does not **offset** their damage."
What does **offset** mean the way it is used in the passage?
- A. balance out
 - B. increase
 - C. decrease
 - D. all of the above

28. What conclusion can you draw about tropical storms?
- A. They can become tropical waves.
 - B. They are good for surfing.
 - C. They are always dangerous.
 - D. none of the above



Read the following selection. Then answer questions 29 through 43.

The Curse

“Hurry up, Sierra! It’s a certainty that everybody’s already on the bus and waiting on us. We’re going to get detention if we don’t leave immediately!” Julie yelled forcefully.

“Yeah, we’ve really got to go,” echoed her friend, Shauna, who was nearby. “What are you doing, anyway? You know Mr. Harrison simply detests it when anyone is late.”

“Wait until you see what I stumbled across,” answered Sierra, hurrying toward them.

“It’s not important enough to get us in trouble,” Julie said. “Leave it, and come on.”

“No,” Sierra replied, hurrying into the main dining hall of the old castle she and her friends had been visiting with their history class all morning. “Look! It’s some kind of metal contraption with writing on it.” She held out an engraved piece of bronze, which looked absolutely nothing like anything the three teens had ever seen before.

“Weird,” said Julie, frowning at the metal gleaming dully in the gloom of the huge, echoing room. “I can’t even speculate as to what it could possibly be.”

“Me neither! I’ve been wondering whether it came from the huge collection of armor suits the old guy who built this castle had. You know, the stuff we saw downstairs when we got here this morning,” Sierra answered, turning the thick slab of metal to reveal an odd series of letters inscribed diagonally across the back.

“What does all that scratching on the back signify?” asked Shauna.

“It probably translates into, *Made in China*,” giggled Julie.

“It most certainly does not!” Sierra replied impatiently, holding the metal out in the direction of her friends. “I believe it’s, what was that language Mr. Harrison lectured about in class yesterday, Gaelic? Don’t you remember?”

“It might be a curse,” suggested Julie.

“Well, all of this is very interesting,” said Shauna, who always enjoyed history class. “But I’m wondering why are we sightseeing at a silly American castle built by some geezer who wanted to show off his money. I was anxious to see an **authentic** castle, not some duplicate of the real thing.”

“But there aren’t any authentic castles in this country, so this is the only one we can actually see, even if it’s not exactly real,” Julie said. “It’s been cool seeing all the stuff we’ve read about, but Sierra needs to put that down. We are definitely going to be late!”

“Let’s make an attempt to interpret the inscription, first!” Sierra said.

“It’s just a bunch of scratching,” Julie announced, looking closely at the worn letters. “Except for this,” she said slowly, taking the piece of metal from Sierra and narrowing her eyes to study it more closely.

“I told you those letters meant something important!” Sierra cried excitedly.

“This is not about the letters,” Julie said slowly. “I mean the significance of this primitive illustration. It might be a curse. See, there’s a reproduction of a skull and crossbones.”

“What?” Sierra shrieked. “You mean the international symbol for ‘Beware’?”

“Exactly,” Julie replied. “Scrutinize this.” She held the metal up for Sierra to see.

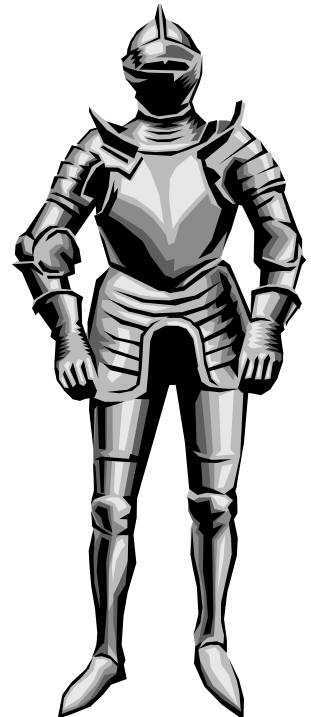
“No way!” Sierra shrieked. “I have a bus to catch!” She spun quickly and tore across the room, her feet echoing on the flagstone floor.

“There’s no skull and crossbones on this, Julie!” Shauna said, laughing.

The Curse

“Of course not,” Julie replied. “But we’d never have gotten Sierra on the bus if I hadn’t made that up.” She smiled at Shauna. “Mission accomplished. Let’s go!”

29. What is another good title for this story?
- A. An Interesting Field Trip
 - B. How Not to Miss the Bus
 - C. Three Crazy Friends
 - D. none of the above
30. Which detail explains why the girls are visiting a castle?
- A. They are on vacation.
 - B. They are being punished.
 - C. They are on a field trip.
 - D. none of the above
31. What happened right after Julie showed Sierra the skull and crossbones?
- A. Sierra shrieked.
 - B. Shauna ran out of the room.
 - C. The bus left without the girls.
 - D. all of the above
32. Compare Sierra’s feelings about the metal at the start of the story with her feelings at the end:
- A. She liked it at first; then she was scared of it.
 - B. She didn’t think it was important; then she changed her mind.
 - C. She wanted to keep it at first; then she wanted to sell it.
 - D. none of the above
33. Why did Julie make up the story about a curse?
- A. to get the metal away from Sierra
 - B. to get Shauna interested in the metal
 - C. to get Sierra on the bus
 - D. none of the above
34. What can you infer about the amount of light in the dining hall?
- A. The sun shines in brightly.
 - B. There is not a lot of light.
 - C. It is pitch dark.
 - D. none of the above



The Curse

35. What conclusion can you draw about the importance of field trips from the story?
- A. Students usually find them boring.
 - B. They can sometimes be exciting.
 - C. They are a waste of time.
 - D. none of the above
36. The passage reads, “. . . see an **authentic** castle. . .”
What does **authentic** mean?
- A. a good copy
 - B. something real
 - C. a bad copy
 - D. none of the above
37. The author wrote this story to:
- A. explain how curses work
 - B. inform the reader about historic castles
 - C. entertain the reader
 - D. none of the above
38. The best summary of this passage is:
- A. Never believe everything a friend tells you.
 - B. Never go on a school field trip.
 - C. Never ride on a school bus.
 - D. none of the above
39. What happened after Shauna asked what the scratching on the metal meant?
- A. Sierra said it meant *Made in China*.
 - B. Julie said it meant *Made in China*.
 - C. Julie said it meant ‘Beware.’
 - D. none of the above
40. The best summary of Shauna’s feeling about the castle is:
- A. She was glad it was real.
 - B. She was unhappy it was a fake.
 - C. She thought it was too big.
 - D. none of the above



The Curse

41. Which book would help you to learn more about field trips?
- A. The World Almanac
 - B. Bartlett's Familiar Quotations
 - C. Roget's Thesaurus
 - D. none of the above
42. Where should you look to find the definition of the word 'curse'?
- A. in a glossary
 - B. in a recent magazine
 - C. in the table of contents of a scary novel
 - D. none of the above
43. Where might you find information about castles?
- A. in the 'C' book of an encyclopedia
 - B. in a calendar of events
 - C. in a literary anthology
 - D. none of the above
-

44. Where would be the best place to look for a map of your hometown?
- A. a history textbook
 - B. a local newspaper
 - C. an atlas
 - D. none of the above



Egypt: Land of the Pyramids (6.7)
Weather in the Tropics (6.6)
The Curse (6.5)