Grasshopper and Toad

Long ago, Grasshopper and Toad were good friends. They did a lot of things together, but they had never shared a meal. One day, Toad asked, “Grasshopper, will you come to my house for dinner? We’ll have a delicious feast.”

When Grasshopper arrived, he and Toad washed their forelegs in the water jar. Grasshopper’s legs rubbed together and made a chirping noise, and the noise annoyed Toad. He frowned and said, “Grasshopper, you’ll have to stop that chirping. How can I eat if I have to listen to that racket?”

Grasshopper tried to eat quietly but couldn’t. His legs always rubbed together, and each time, Toad complained.

Grasshopper was upset and couldn’t eat his food. When Toad finished, Grasshopper asked, “Toad, will you come to my house for dinner tomorrow?”

The next day at Grasshopper’s house, he and Toad again washed in a water jar, but Grasshopper stopped Toad before he could eat. He said, “Go back and wash again. You are filthy from hopping in the dirt.”

Toad cleansed his legs again and hopped back to the table. Toad reached out to pick up a plate, but Grasshopper glared at him and said, “Don’t put your dirty hands in the food. You need to wash them again.”

Toad became furious. “Why did you invite me to dinner if you don’t want to eat with me? You know I hop on my legs, and I can’t help it if they get dirty when I hop to the table.”

Grasshopper was still angry from the day before. “You started it yesterday! You know I can’t eat without chirping.”

Toad left in a huff, and from that day forward, Grasshopper and Toad were no longer friends.

1. The story says, “When Grasshopper arrived, he and Toad washed their forelegs.” Which word means the same as arrived?
   - stayed
   - knocked
   - came
   - stopped

2. Why did Grasshopper and Toad first decide to share a meal?
   - They didn’t have enough food to eat alone.
   - They were good friends.
   - They ate the same kinds of food.
   - They wanted to show off their houses.

3. Which words best describe the characters of both Grasshopper and Toad in this story?
   - stubborn and easily bothered
   - relaxed and friendly
   - serious and usually quiet
   - happy and carefree

4. What is the problem in this story?
   - Grasshopper loves to make chirping noises.
   - Toad doesn’t like Grasshopper’s food.
   - The friends don’t want to eat when they are dirty.
   - Grasshopper and Toad don’t accept each other as they are.

5. The passage says, “Toad cleansed his legs again and hopped back to the table.” What does cleansed mean?
   - washed
   - rubbed
   - raised
   - crossed
Eating Bugs

How about a nice bowl of ants for breakfast? Maybe some fried crickets for lunch? You can have worm cookies for dessert. Do these sound good?

No, this isn't a nightmare or a horror movie. Some scientists think that growing and eating bugs will be important in the future.

The world's population is growing fast. People need to find new ways to get food. Scientists suggest eating bugs for many reasons. One is that insects need less food than other animals. Cattle and other livestock are warm-blooded animals. When they eat, they use a lot of energy to stay warm. Insects are cold-blooded. They grow quickly without wasting energy on staying warm. For example, silkworms grow two to three times as much as cattle by eating the same amount of feed. Many other insects are the same.

Bugs aren't picky about what they eat, either. They can grow by eating cardboard, animal waste, and leftovers from food plants. Eating bugs is good for you, too. Most insects provide more protein per pound than chicken. They are also rich in minerals such as iron.

Today, insects are grown for food in Thailand and other parts of Asia. They are used in Africa, too. But few Americans want to try eating bugs. People think bugs are dirty and might be poisonous. They imagine eating the whole bug, including the head, scratchy legs, and body. That doesn't sound like a good meal. But we don't have to eat the whole bug. We can eat just the “meaty” part, and that can be prepared in many ways. One choice is to create a “bug nugget.” It doesn't look like a bug any more than a chicken nugget looks like a chicken. Besides, it might even taste good.

So if someone tells you to go eat bugs, give them a try. Just be sure they're prepared the right way!

6. What is the main idea of the third paragraph in this passage?
   
   A Bugs can taste good if they are prepared the right way.
   B Insects grow quickly and need less food than other animals.
   C Scientists want to force bugs to grow more quickly.
   D Only certain kinds of insects are good for eating.

7. The passage says, “Most insects provide more protein per pound than chicken.” Which of these sentences uses the word pound in the same way?

   A Use a hammer to pound in that nail.
   B Trevor likes to pound on the drum.
   C This little puppy weighs less than a pound.
   D We got our new pet from the pound.

8. What would be another good title for this passage?

   A “A New Source of Food”
   B “American Bugs”
   C “Cattle and Other Livestock”
   D “The Whole Bug”

9. From the author's view, what is probably the worst thing about the idea of using bugs as food?

   A having cookies for dessert
   B making bug nuggets
   C getting lots of protein
   D eating the heads and legs

10. The passage says, “People think bugs are dirty and might be poisonous.” What does poisonous mean?

    A tasty
    B healthy
    C harmful
    D colorful
Midyear Test

Directions: Read the passage. Then use the information from the passage to answer questions 11–15.

Sam’s Journal

June 23
My parents told me a while ago that we would be going to Yellowstone National Park, and we are finally on our way. I've been as high as a kite all week! The flight to Jackson, Wyoming, was fun. They gave us lots of snacks.

June 24
It’s hard to describe the smell here. People say it smells like rotten eggs. I've never smelled a rotten egg, but the smell is bad. My little sister, Francine, keeps making gagging noises and pretends she’s going to throw up on me. She's pretty funny. A ranger explained that the smell comes from the sulfur in the hot springs. We've seen big herds of elk. Today, a bald eagle circled over our heads. The rangers say that this is where the animals live and the people are just visitors.

June 25
We left to see Giant Geyser today. It sends a spray more than 250 feet in the air. On the way, we had to stop our car for a herd of buffalo in the road. Francine was about to open the door and get out. She thought they looked furry and friendly, but I grabbed her. The ranger said that buffalo can be dangerous. They can run a lot faster than people—up to 30 miles an hour! There aren’t any fences in the park, and we've seen big herds of elk. Today, a bald eagle circled over our heads. The rangers say that this is where the animals live and the people are just visitors.

June 26
I learned why there are so many hot springs and geysers here. In most places, Earth’s crust is about 20 miles thick. But in Yellowstone, it's only about two miles thick. The ground is closer to Earth's core, which is very hot. In some places, the ground is so hot you can't touch it. Today is our last day here. I wish we could stay longer.

11. What will most likely happen tomorrow?
   A. Sam and his family will go home.
   B. Sam will go to see Old Faithful again.
   C. Sam and his sister will go hiking.
   D. Sam will walk near the buffalo.

12. Why did Francine keep pretending to throw up?
   A. She did not feel well.
   B. She wanted to go home.
   C. She was too close to the animals.
   D. She wanted to make Sam laugh.

13. Why did Sam grab Francine when she started to open the car door near the buffalo?
   A. He wanted his parents to keep driving.
   B. He wanted her to see the eagle instead.
   C. He didn't want her to get hurt.
   D. He didn't want her to scare the buffalo.

14. How was June 23 different from the other days?
   A. The family saw geysers that day.
   B. They flew on a plane that day.
   C. The family went sightseeing that day.
   D. Sam did not write in his journal that day.

15. Sam says, “I've been as high as a kite all week!” What does this sentence mean?
   A. I’m up in the air.
   B. I’ve been feeling tired.
   C. I’m flying on a plane.
   D. I’ve been excited.
Midyear Test

Name ___________________________________ Date _____________

Directions: Read the passage. Then use the information from the passage to answer questions 16–20.

Defending the Goal

It was the last chance for the United States against Brazil. Both teams wanted to win the women's soccer World Cup in 2011. At the end of overtime, the score was tied at 2. The victor would be the team that scored the most goals on penalty kicks.

Hope Solo stood in the U.S. goal. She had played in big games before with teams in Sweden and France. But this was the most important game of her life.

She blocked one of Brazil's five penalty kicks. That was enough! Her team scored all five of their penalty kicks to win the game. The U.S. team then went on to the finals. It was the high point of Solo's career.

Hope Solo's father taught her to play soccer when she was young. But the road to becoming the world's best goalkeeper wasn't always smooth. Her parents split up when she was six. Her father lived outside of Seattle, Washington, in a tent in the woods. But he kept in contact with Hope. She went to the University of Washington, and he went to all of her home games.

Then just before the 2007 World Cup games, he died suddenly. Hope's memory of him helped her play.

That year at the World Cup, the U.S. coach decided to use a different goalkeeper against Brazil—and the U.S. team lost. After the game, Hope Solo was interviewed by a reporter. She said the coach had made a mistake. So the coach told her she couldn't play in the last game. Hope knew she had said the wrong things and apologized.

She thought about quitting soccer after that. Instead, she came back and worked hard in practices. Soon, she won her job back, and the team trusted her again. After their performance at the World Cup in 2011, Hope and her teammates knew they had a great future ahead.

16. The passage says, “The victor would be the team that scored the most goals on penalty kicks.” The word victor means ________.
   A. goalkeeper  
   B. player  
   C. winning team  
   D. final score

17. Information in this passage is organized mainly by ________.
   A. causes and effects  
   B. time order  
   C. questions and answers  
   D. problems and solutions

18. Which sentence from the passage states an opinion?
   A. Hope Solo's father taught her to play soccer when she was young.  
   B. Then just before the 2007 World Cup games, he died suddenly.  
   C. But this was the most important game of her life.  
   D. At the end of overtime, the score was tied at 2.

19. What can you tell about Hope's relationship with her father?
   A. She wished he had taught her more about soccer.  
   B. She cared deeply about him.  
   C. She didn't play well when he came to her games.  
   D. She did not want to help him.

20. The passage says, “But the road to becoming the world's best goalkeeper wasn't always smooth.” What does this sentence mean?
   A. Hope had to drive on rough roads to play soccer.  
   B. When Hope played in goal, she felt like she was on a bumpy road.  
   C. Her parents didn't like to travel to see her play soccer.  
   D. Hope faced some difficulties as she worked at becoming a goalkeeper.
Midyear Test

Name ___________________________________ Date _____________

Directions: Read the passage. Then use the information from the passage to answer questions 21–25.

Science to the Rescue

On August 5, 2010, an explosion trapped 33 miners 2,300 feet underground in Chile. Sixty-nine days later, the miners were pulled to the top. Some people called the rescue a miracle. Much of it depended on science and technology.

Drilling

Rescuers drilled down thousands of feet to reach the miners. But scientists helped them hit the target. The drill needed to be in just the right position. If it were tipped just a tiny bit, it would miss the target badly. First, two small holes were drilled to provide air, food, water, and clothing to the miners. The holes were lined with steel. Long, thin capsules, less than 5 inches (12.5 centimeters) across, carried supplies up and down.

The Rescue Capsule

Scientists from the space program in the United States gave advice on building the rescue capsule. It contained oxygen tanks for breathing. It also included a safety harness and communication. When the miners finally came up, their eyes had to be protected from the bright sun. But they were generally healthy. With the help of science, all of the miners survived.

21. Which is the best summary of this passage?
   A. Finding the miners alive in Chile was a miracle.
   B. Rescuing the miners depended on science and technology.
   C. Working in underground mines is a dangerous job.
   D. The United States provided a lot of help in the rescue.

22. In which part of the passage can you find how wide the supply capsules were?
   A. the first paragraph
   B. The Mine Rescue
   C. Drilling
   D. The Rescue Capsule

23. Where is the oxygen supply located in the rescue capsule?
   A. at the bottom
   B. at the top
   C. on the miner’s back
   D. between the miner’s feet

24. How deep were the miners trapped?
   A. 69 feet deep
   B. a few hundred feet deep
   C. 1,000 feet deep
   D. 2,300 feet deep

25. The author’s purpose in this passage is to _______.
   A. describe how brave the miners were
   B. explain the importance of mining
   C. discuss the laws covering mine safety
   D. give information about a mine rescue
Midyear Test

Name ___________________________________ Date _____________

Directions: Read the passage. Then use the information from the passage to answer questions 26–30.

Learning to Think by Horace Sanders

I'll never forget how Mr. Grant looked when I first studied him. It seemed like his eyes were smiling a little. He looked like he knew some things I did not, but he'd be glad to share them.

Almost everyone in our class in elementary school went to the after-school program. The recreation center was in even worse shape than our school. It had two floors and an outdoor basketball court with rusty backboards. But we spent hours there, playing every game you could think of. Mr. Grant would usually shoot a few baskets. But before long he'd be back inside in his own room. It had a couple of folding tables covered in chessboards. The blackboard had a permanent picture of a chessboard on it.

He would play a game of chess and explain all the moves. He taught us how the pieces moved, what “check” meant, and some ways to start the game. Before I knew it, I was hooked. Sometimes, I'd go right to the chess room because I'd been thinking about a chess problem all day.

Mr. Grant established a chess club for boys and girls of all ages. We played against teams from other parts of the city. In high school, we even played in a state championship. Mr. Grant was always teaching us, even when we got good enough to beat him sometimes.

Today, I run my own company with more than 100 employees. I think a lot of my success began with Mr. Grant and chess. He taught me to think ahead and plan my actions. In chess, I had to consider several options and decide on the best one, just as I do in business. Mr. Grant wasn't really just teaching us how to play chess. He was teaching us how to think. I'll always be grateful for how he took some rough young kids and turned them into thinkers.

26. What can you tell about the neighborhood where the author grew up?

A. It was in a rural area.
B. It was poor and rundown.
C. It had excellent schools.
D. It had a lot of parks and playgrounds.

27. The author thinks learning to play chess helped him to ________.  

A. understand how other people think
B. find the right college
C. get along better with his friends
D. run a successful business

28. The passage says, “Mr. Grant established a chess club for boys and girls of all ages.” The word established means ________.

A. set up
B. advertised
C. announced
D. supported

29. Which sentence best describes the character of Mr. Grant?

A. He wanted to help his students learn and grow.
B. He didn't care about basketball or other sports.
C. He almost always had a big smile on his face.
D. He only wanted the smartest kids to play chess.

30. The author probably wrote this passage because he ________.

A. thinks that everyone should learn to play chess
B. hopes that people will build a new recreation center
C. wants people to know what Mr. Grant did
D. feels proud of his own business and his success
Midyear Test

Name ___________________________________ Date _____________

Directions: Read the passage. Then use the information from the passage to answer questions 31–36.

Jackstones

During colonial times, children played a game called “jackstones.” They enjoyed it so much they would play until the cows came home. Today, the game is called “jacks.” It is played with a rubber ball. It’s a snap to pick up and lots of fun.

In the old days, children used one larger, rounded stone and five or six smaller ones. The smaller stones were called jackstones. Sometimes children used other things, such as seeds or sticks.

How to Play:
1. One player throws the jackstones on the floor or the ground. The player then throws the larger stone in the air. He or she picks up one jackstone and then catches the larger stone in the same hand before it hits the ground. The player continues with the other stones one at a time in the same way.
2. If each single stone is picked up successfully, the player moves on to pick up two at a time. Each time a player succeeds, he or she moves up to the next number—“threes,” “fours,” and so on. The winner is the player who advances to pick up all the stones in one try.

31. The passage says, “They enjoyed it so much they would play until the cows came home.” This sentence means that they played ________.
   A for hours and hours   B in the barn near the cows
   C before they did their chores   D only on farms

32. The passage says that the player “catches the larger stone in the same hand.” Which sentence uses the word hand in the same way?
   A Please deal another hand of cards.
   B Could you hand me that pen?
   C Mia held the key in her hand.
   D On Friday, I gave Dad a hand.

33. The passage says, “It’s a snap to pick up and lots of fun.” This sentence means that ________.
   A sometimes the pieces break   B people snap their fingers
   C the stones make a snapping noise   D the game is easy to learn

34. Before beginning “fours,” a player must ________.
   A pick up the jacks three at a time successfully
   B wait until another player has completed “threes”
   C toss the larger stone in the air and catch it three times in a row
   D stop the other players from completing “threes”

35. The passage says, “Each time a player succeeds, he or she moves up to the next number.” Which word in the passage means the opposite of succeeds?
   A picks   B throws
   C fails   D advances

36. What happens when a player makes a mistake?
   A The player loses the game.
   B The player must begin again at “ones.”
   C The player's turn is over.
   D The player must pick up all the jacks.