

Day 8

Temporary Employment

by ReadWorks



What I speak is the truth—the whole truth and nothing but the truth. You can believe what you'd like.

I was working at a restaurant—a regular Italian restaurant, nothing too fancy. They hired me as a busboy, and I intended to work my way up. I had just set out on my own, and I was full of plans, big plans, plans that all ended up in the same place: a swimming pool full of money—metaphorically speaking, of course.

They had me doing all kinds of work, none of it pretty. There were the standard busboy duties: clearing plates off tables, taking out the trash, and hauling the dirty dishes back to be washed. But I think they noticed my zeal and desire to please and decided to take advantage of it. Because whenever a job popped up that was too difficult, too boring, too gross, or just "plain beneath the other employees," well, they gave it to me.

And you know what I said? "Yes, sir. Thank you, sir."

Franco was the manager. He was nice enough, but he was terrified of Debra, who owned the place. Debra only popped in once in a while, but when she was coming, we'd know. First Franco's eyes would get really wide. He'd start to tremble, and then he'd start yipping like a Chihuahua, except instead of barks he would yip orders. "Wash the bathroom!" he'd say, even though it was spotless. "Double-check the menus! Clean the sinks! Polish the table bases! Polish the silverware! Polish the countertops and the tabletops and the tops of the heads of the bald men!"

Maybe I made that last one up.

But the rest is true. He'd work himself up into a frenzy. Debra was intimidating, I give her that. Her eyes were like lasers, and her voice was sharp.

It was even worse when she didn't speak. Franco would say something dumb, and she'd just glare, which made him so nervous he'd say something even dumber, and the situation would continue like this until she spun around on her heels and strode through the double doors, pushing both open at once like some frontier desperado. She made people cower. Except for me, but as a busboy it wasn't hard to stay out of her path.

That is, except for this one time, the time I'm trying to tell you about. Like I said, I was the designated dirty work go-to guy. Someone threw up in the bathroom? I'm on it. Garbage is piling up in the

basement? Boxes and boxes of inventory need counting and restocking? Those boxes are infested with spiders? I'm your man.

On the fateful afternoon in question, I was on something of a cleaning spree. Franco had asked me to clean the staff toilets, which were tucked away in a damp corner of the basement, out of the customers' sight, and for good reason. The situation called for a wagon full of cleaning supplies. I went to the supply closet only to find cleaning supplies so grimy and full of spider webs that they couldn't even be used without a good scour and scrub.

I needed cleaning supplies for my cleaning supplies.

I left the restaurant, just for a minute, to buy what I considered necessary. I was gung-ho about the whole cleaning enterprise. I was ready to give that basement the makeover of its long and foul-smelling life. Was I overly enthusiastic? Was I overly passionate?

It wasn't as though I stormed wild-eyed through the doors, frothing at the mouth. I didn't yell out a war cry or start spraying all-purpose cleaner with bleach above my head like some sort of lunatic. There was no chanting, no war dance.

I filled a shopping cart with cleaning supplies. Thinking the lunch hour was over, I used that shopping cart to barrel through the doors, and that shopping cart crashed into someone eating lunch, and that person-seated with her back to me, whose face I couldn't see until she rose from the carpeted floor with penne a la vodka in her lap and a nightmare from the depths of the inferno in her eye-was Debra.

She said nothing at first, but rose with dignity and fury to her feet. She didn't wipe the pasta from her blouse, but let it fall of its own accord. It did, with a splatter. She stared into my eyes. I could feel my mouth opening and closing. I couldn't stop it open, close, open, close. Without thinking I said something. I said, "How fortunate, I have cleaning supplies." And I whirled around and grabbed a spray-on fabric cleaner from the cart's heaping bounty and whirled back around to see Debra's shoulders rising as she inhaled, falling as she exhaled. She breathed heavily, and the rise and fall of her shoulders reminded me of the engine movements of an old-fashioned steam locomotive, one that would shortly flatten me.

Debra raised one trembling finger and pointed it between my eyes, looking as though she wished it were the barrel of a gun. She opened her mouth, but I cut her off with a raised finger of my own. "Hold that thought," I said. And without so much as a sidelong glance, I strode past her to Franco, who thought he could hide behind a large bushy ficus plant. I threw down my apron and simply said, in the angriest voice I could muster, "I quit."

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Where does the narrator of the story work?

- A. a supermarket
- B. an office
- C. an Italian restaurant
- D. an ice cream parlor

2. After filling a shopping cart with cleaning supplies, the narrator barrels through the restaurant doors with the shopping cart. What is the result of the narrator's actions?

- A. The narrator crashes into the restaurant owner, Debra.
- B. The narrator is fired for making a mess.
- C. The narrator breaks the doors down and gets in trouble.
- D. The narrator is able to clean the basement.

3. The narrator's job is dirty and unpleasant. What evidence from the passage best supports this conclusion?

- A. He counts and restocks boxes of inventory.
- B. He cleans up vomit and takes out the trash.
- C. He polishes silverware and countertops.
- D. He is assigned the boring duties.

4. Read the following sentences: "I had just set out on my own and I was full of plans, big plans, plans that all ended up in the same place: a swimming pool full of money—metaphorically speaking, of course."

Based on this information, what can you conclude about the narrator?

- A. He is cheerful.
- B. He is practical.
- C. He is loyal.
- D. He is ambitious.

5. What is this story mostly about?

- A. Debra, the owner of the Italian restaurant
- B. the relationship between Debra and Franco
- C. the life of a busboy at an Italian restaurant
- D. how to get rich while working in a restaurant

6. Read the following sentences: "But I think they noticed my zeal and desire to please and decided to take advantage of it. Because whenever a job popped up that was too difficult, too boring, too gross, or just 'plain beneath the other employees,' well, they gave it me. And you know what I said? 'Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.'"

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

- A. hesitation
- B. enthusiasm
- C. anger
- D. laziness

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

 the narrator has to do the dirty work in the restaurant, he does his job with zeal.

- A. Even though
- B. Moreover
- C. As a result
- D. Particularly

8. What does the narrator tell his manager at the end of the story?

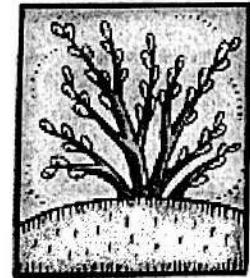
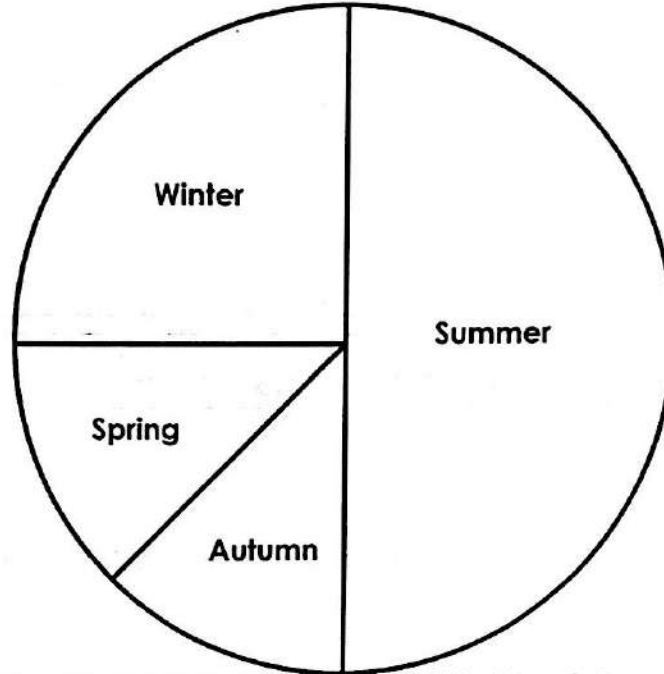
9. What motivates the narrator to do his job as busboy with "zeal and desire to please"?

10. Based on the story, explain whether or not the narrator is a good employee. Support your answer using information from the story.

Name: _____

Favorite Season

Pablo asked each of his classmates which season was their favorite. He made a pie graph of the results.



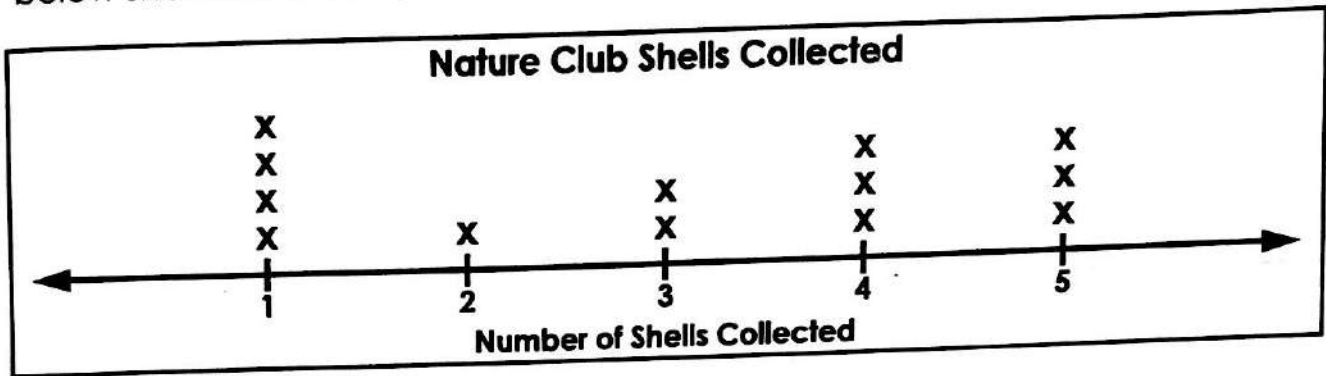
1. What **percentage** of Pablo's classmates said Winter was their favorite season?
2. What **percentage** of Pablo's classmates said Summer was their favorite season?
3. What **fraction** of Pablo's classmates chose Winter as their favorite season?
4. What **fraction** of Pablo's classmates chose Spring as their favorite season?
5. What **percentage** of Pablo's classmates chose Summer or Winter as their favorite season?
6. If Pablo surveyed 20 classmates, how many chose Summer?
7. If Pablo surveyed 32 classmates, how many chose Autumn?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Name: _____

Line Plot: Median, Mean, Mode, and Range

The nature club at Westville Middle School went on a field trip to the seashore. Each member collected seashells to put on display at the school. The line plot below shows how many shells each club member collected.



1. What is the median number of shells collected? _____
2. What is the mode? _____
3. What is the range? _____
4. How many shells were collected in all? _____
5. What is the mean, or average, number of shells collected? _____