

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

Shadow of the Pines

Picking her way over the deserted beach, the bear nosed around in the pine needles for abandoned remnants of long-forgotten picnic lunches.

"There is the wandering she-bear that everyone—except for me—has seen at least once," Mr. Hernandez muttered. Tucking himself further into the screen of pine trees, he watched as the bear meandered toward the lake. Her thick fur was matted and damp in some places, but when she walked in the sunshine her coat had an auburn-black sheen to it. The crunching sound of her paws reverberated in the silence, making Mr. Hernandez shiver with a touch of dread. What would he do if the bear doubled back and discovered his hiding place? Would she feel threatened, attempt to attack him, or ignore him?

Mr. Hernandez raised his binoculars to watch her lope down the beach, stopping occasionally to sniff at the sand, edging into the water, then floundering back onto the shore. Though a bear should be accustomed to the frigid temperature of the lake, perhaps this displaced bear didn't have the survival skills of bears in the wild.

After the bear rummaged in the overflowing trash bins at the marina, she suddenly turned and came back in the direction of Mr. Hernandez's hiding place. Through his binoculars, he could see that she had a brown paper bag in her jaws. The closer she came toward Mr. Hernandez's refuge, the more mesmerized he became by her movement, the reddish-black hues of her coat, her enormous, dripping jaws clenched victoriously around her rotten prize.

With something of a shock, Mr. Hernandez realized that the bear was heading straight for his hiding place. Momentarily sure that the bear could not see him, he felt safe, but then a sudden breeze from the lake gusted through the pines and he felt a sneeze forming thickly in his throat. Frantically, he buried his face into his shoulder, but this sudden movement caused his binoculars to thud against the trunk of the nearest pine.

Mercifully, the sneeze dissolved before it could explode from his nostrils, but it was too late. The bear had spotted him, and he stood, transfixed with horrified indecision. Should he climb the pine? He remembered with a surge of hysterical fear that bears were very efficient climbers. From somewhere in his memory, he retrieved a nugget of life-saving information: if you are confronted with a bear, never make sudden or antagonistic movements. Mr. Hernandez realized he wouldn't be able to move even if he wanted to, so paralyzed was he with fear...and something else—wonder. Wonder at the bear's beauty, its solitude, its clumsy attempts to feed itself on human rubbish. What a contradiction of power and weakness, magnificence and ineptitude this bear was!

For a moment, the bear held Mr. Hernandez's gaze. Their eyes locked, and the bear was statue-like for almost a full minute as it sized him up, seemingly asking, "Are you friend or foe?" Then, dropping its eyes, it turned, and shuffled away into the shadow of the pines.

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "Shadow of the Pines".

1 TEACHER READS:

Read the question to yourself and select the best answer(s).

Part A:

This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Which statement *best* describes the theme of the text?

- A. Bears are aggressive, wild creatures that can attack at any moment.
- B. Bears can be fascinating and unpredictable.
- C. Bears are a valuable part of the ecosystem.
- D. Never approach or taunt a bear.

Master ID: 434323 Revision: 1

Correct: **BC**

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.RL.9-10.2

Part B:

Select the piece of evidence from "Shadow of the Pines" that supports the answer to part A.

- A. Her thick fur was matted and damp in some places, but when she walked in the sunshine her coat had an auburn–black sheen to it.
- B. Mr. Hernandez raised his binoculars to watch her lope down the beach, stopping occasionally to sniff at the sand, edging into the water, then floundering back onto the shore. Mr. Hernandez raised his binoculars to watch her lope down the beach, stopping occasionally to sniff at the sand, edging into the water, then floundering back onto the shore.
- C. The closer she came toward Mr. Hernandez's refuge, the more mesmerized he became by her movement, the reddish–black hues of her coat, her enormous, dripping jaws clenched victoriously around her rotten prize.
- D. From somewhere in his memory, he retrieved a nugget of life–saving information: if you are confronted with a bear, never make sudden or antagonistic movements.

Master ID: 434323 Revision: 1

Correct: **BC**

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.RL.9-10.2

2 TEACHER READS:

Read the question to yourself and select the best answer.

Which statement *best* describes the theme of the story?

- A. Bears are aggressive, wild creatures that can attack at any moment.
- B. Bears can be fascinating and unpredictable.
- C. Bears are a valuable part of the ecosystem.
- D. Never approach or taunt a bear.

Master ID: 181489 Revision: 1

Correct: **B**

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.RL.9-10.2

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "Shadow of the Pines".

3 TEACHER READS:

Read the question to yourself and select the best answer.

Which of the following statements BEST describes Mr. Hernandez's primary motivation in the story?

- A. He is motivated by curiosity since he has never before seen this particular bear.
- B. He is motivated by fear because the bear's eyes are transfixed on his position.
- C. He is motivated by wonder at the strange and harsh environment he is in.
- D. He is motivated by humor because of the bear's awkwardness in fumbling for discarded food.

Master ID: 29447 Revision: 1

Correct: **A**

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.RL.9-10.3

4 TEACHER READS:

Read the question to yourself and select the best answer.

How does the external conflict between the bear and Mr. Hernandez affect the plot?

- A. It makes the story action-packed because Mr. Hernandez is being chased by the bear.
- B. It makes the reader wonder if Mr. Hernandez will be attacked, so the plot is full of tension.
- C. It makes the reader worry that Mr. Hernandez's binoculars are damaged.
- D. It makes the reader fear that Mr. Hernandez will sneeze and scare the bear.

Master ID: 7413 Revision: 1

Correct: **B**

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.RL.9-10.3

5 TEACHER READS:

Read the question to yourself and select the best answer.

How does Mr. Hernandez's inner conflict about the bear affect the plot?

- A. Mr. Hernandez's fear and indecision increase suspense in the story.
- B. Mr. Hernandez's inability to climb trees frightens him because bears are good climbers.
- C. Mr. Hernandez's disgust that the bear eats from trash cans makes the story interesting.
- D. Mr. Hernandez's interest in the bear's behavior makes the story mysterious.

Master ID: 7412 Revision: 1

Correct: **A**

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.RL.9-10.3

Directions: Answer the following question(s).

6 TEACHER READS:

Read the question to yourself and select the best answer(s).

Read the paragraph below.

We feel all students in our school system should learn to play a musical instrument. The practice required to master an instrument teaches focus and persistence. Playing an instrument in a band or orchestra encourages teamwork. Participating in a musical group also allows students to see how a complex project, such as a performance, comes together over time. Studying a musical instrument helps teach students to set goals and learn from mistakes. Perhaps most importantly, playing an instrument boosts creativity, which we believe is not stressed enough in our schools today.

Which of the following possible additions to the paragraph offers factual evidence that supports the author's argument? Select *all* that apply.

- A. A study conducted last year showed that students who played in a school band scored the same on academic tests as students who did not.
- B. In interviews, middle school students who play a musical instrument report fewer problems starting and completing homework than their peers.
- C. A recent national survey concluded that students who participate in band or orchestra are slightly more likely than other students to have problems getting along with peers.
- D. Playing a musical instrument is enjoyable.
- E. According to a major medical journal, fourth-graders who study a musical instrument demonstrate greater concentration than other fourth-graders.

Master ID: 351975 Revision: 1

Correct: **BE**

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.W.9-10.1.b

7 TEACHER READS:

Read the question to yourself and select the best answer(s).

Read the paragraph below.

We believe the Town Council should enact a new law to protect the green turtles nesting on our beach. The law should require residents and visitors to extinguish electric lights along the beach between dusk and dawn during the turtles' nesting season. Signs along the beach and flyers in businesses around the area could easily alert everyone to the new law. Some residents are already working voluntarily to keep nesting areas safe. A new law will encourage everyone in our town to respect the needs of the green turtles.

Which of the following sentences provide factual evidence that supports the author's argument? Select *all* that apply.

- A. Green turtles should be protected because they are beautiful animals.
- B. We need to do more to protect these animals, since the federal government recently listed them as an endangered species.
- C. Turning off lights along the beach will probably lead to lower electric bills for many people.
- D. Studies have shown that electric lights are harmful to newly-hatched green turtles.

Master ID: 322184 Revision: 1

Correct: **BD**

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.W.9-10.1.b

Directions: Answer the following question(s).

- 8 What is the most appropriate call to action for a student's speech on the need for the U.S. to stop funding war operations?
- A. A graph that shows how much money the U.S. spends on defense, education, research, and healthcare.
- B. A plea for fellow students to write letters to Congress explaining why we need more money in schools instead of in defense
- C. An explanation of the ways that we could better tax people who make higher income in order to fund different government projects
- D. All of the above.

Master ID: 283200 Revision: 2

Correct: B

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.W.9-10.1.a
CCSS.LA.9-10.W.9-10.1.b

- 9 What would be the STRONGEST evidence a writer should look for in order to support this topic sentence? Harry Potter is a courageous character who always puts his values before his own safety.
- A. A different character saying that Harry Potter is courageous
- B. Harry Potter winning an award for courage
- C. An example of Harry Potter putting his life in danger while saving his friends from evil forces
- D. An example of Harry Potter making the winning shot during the final game of Quidditch.

Master ID: 283193 Revision: 1

Correct: C

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.W.9-10.1.a
CCSS.LA.9-10.W.9-10.1.b

10 **TEACHER READS:**

Read and complete the task that follows.

Read the following claim from an argumentative essay.

Paris is a more preferable city to visit in the summer instead of Rome because Paris is cleaner, milder, and more hospitable.

Explain what type of sources would provide the most credible evidence for the claim presented in the excerpt above.

Master ID: 338215 Revision: 1

Rubric: 2 Point(s)

2 The response:

- Provides a thorough explanation of the type(s) of credible sources
- Gives examples of what the sources may be
- Clarifies why the sources are the most credible for the claim presented

Good sources to support this argumentative essay would be first-hand accounts of regular travelers to both cities. In addition, information from the state or tourism departments from both cities can provide useful information about things such as the weather and the number of tourists who visit on an annual basis. By discovering the number of tourists who visit each city, a comparison can be done on which city is more preferable for tourists to travel to.

1 The response:

- Provides an explanation of the type(s) of sources
- Includes sources that may not be credible or too general for the claim
- May not provide clarity as to why the sources are the most credible to support the claim

Sources that would provide credible support for the claim in the argumentative essay are books about Paris and about Rome. In addition, some travel pamphlets might be helpful to get to know what each city is like in order to make a comparison.

0 A response gets no credit if no sources are provided or are unrelated to the topic of the argumentative claim.

European cities are great places to visit because they contain so much culture and history that is lacking in the United States.

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.W.9-10.1.b

Directions: Answer the following question(s).

11 TEACHER READS:

Read and complete the task that follows.

A local hotel chain is running a new ad campaign to encourage people to visit their hotel for "staycations," or short trips where they stay at local hotels instead of going far away from home. This chain has asked for local people to write one-paragraph essays that argue that hotels are more fun to stay in than houses are. The best, most effective arguments will be published in a flyer. Here is what one person wrote.

Hotels can be really huge and people love them. Hotels are clean and someone else does the cleaning. Hotels have lots of rooms, so they offer chances to meet new people and make new friends. Sometimes it can be hard to make new friends. People like to stay in their houses, but they like to go out of their hotel rooms and find things to do in the hotel. Hotels also have fun stuff to do that houses do not have, like game rooms, indoor pools, outdoor pools, restaurants, and even sometimes saunas and exercise rooms. Hotels also have staff members who bring stuff up to the room that people staying the hotel may have forgotten, like toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, scissors, lotion, tissues, and toothbrushes. In houses, people have to buy their own toiletries like those. Hotels also have people who can bring room service so guests do not have to cook. Finally, many hotels have beautiful, comfortable beds and lots of cable channels on the television. Hotels just make things easier for people.

As it is, this paragraph is ineffective as an argument because it is so unfocused and disorganized. Rewrite the paragraph, making it organized, logical, and clear in its argument.

Make sure your new paragraph:

- **Has a clear argumentative thesis that includes a definite claim on the issue**
- **Flows in a logical manner through the argument and contains appropriate transitions**
- **Ends with a decisive conclusion that ties back to the claim in the thesis**

- **Eliminates all unnecessary information that is not related to your argument**

NOTE: You do not need to add more information or evidence to support the claim that is not already in the paragraph, but you may do so if you think it would make the paragraph more convincing as an argument.

Directions: Answer the following question(s).

Master ID: 286949 Revision: 1

Rubric: 2 Point(s)

2 The response:

- Has a clear thesis that includes a decisive claim
- Flows logically
- Includes a conclusion that ties back to the claim in the thesis

Hotels are more enjoyable to stay in than houses are because they provide services as well as unique entertainment. When a family stays home, they are responsible for cooking and cleaning, which takes a lot of time, planning, and energy. At a hotel, though, there are hired workers who cook for the guests either in hotel restaurants or through room service. In addition to that, hotels have staff members who clean up the rooms, halls, and common areas throughout the hotel, making the guests feel like they are staying in a nice, sanitary place. Beyond the services, hotels are also more enjoyable than staying home because of the entertainment they offer. At home, a family may watch its limited television, play board games, or attempt to create other ways to be entertained. These pastimes can all become repetitive and eventually boring. At a hotel, though, all the entertainment is easily accessed. Many hotels have exercise rooms, saunas, pools, game rooms, and extensive channels available on the television. Hotels also offer opportunities to make new friends by meeting all sorts of other guests. All together, staying in a hotel, even a local hotel, can be a great deal more enjoyable than simply staying home.

1 The response:

- Has a thesis and a claim, but the claim may or may not be convincing
- Includes several supporting pieces of evidence or information
- Attempts a conclusion

Hotels are great because they have lots of entertainment, and many staff members to do almost anything so the guests are more comfortable. Many hotels have restaurants, game rooms, exercise rooms, pools, and other fun things to do. Not all houses have those things. Also, hotels have people who will cook, clean, deliver things, and even wake up the guests if they want to be woken up early in the morning. Hotels do things for guests so guests can relax and focus on each other and on enjoying themselves.

0 A response receives no credit if it fails to include a thesis with a claim, does not have logical supporting evidence, and does not have a conclusion.

Hotels are clean and someone else does the cleaning. Hotels have lots of rooms, so they offer chances to meet new people and make new friends. Hotels also have fun stuff to do that houses do not have, like game rooms, indoor pools, outdoor pools, restaurants, and even sometimes saunas and exercise rooms. Hotels also have staff members who bring stuff up to the room that people staying the hotel may have forgotten, like toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, scissors, lotion, tissues, and toothbrushes. In houses, people have to buy their own toiletries like those. Hotels also have people who can bring room service so guests do not have to cook. In their houses, people have to cook for themselves most of the time. Finally, many hotels have beautiful, comfortable beds and lots of cable channels on the television. Few people have beds as comfortable as hotel beds, and many people do not have access to as many channels on television in their houses.

Standards:

CCSS.LA.9-10.W.9-10.1.a