

Read the two texts and answer questions 1 through 4.

The Campaign

Sasha says,
"I'm friendly, fun-loving, fantastic,
A good friend I have been,
Soon to be sixth-grade president
With your help, I will surely win!

I'll do what candidates do,
I'll smile wide, even hug a tree,
I'll kiss babies and hug teachers, so
Everyone will vote for me.

You will be my campaign manager,
You're a loyal friend and true,
Without you being beside me,
I don't know what I'll do!"

I say:
"Oh, Sasha, you don't like politics,
You like to gossip and giggle,
You say 'Why work so hard,
When you can just dance and wiggle!'"

Sasha says,
"Now dear Mandy, we would be POPULAR,
And popular girls have so much fun,
As President, I'd be so sought after,
Oh, please say you'll help me run."

I say,
"What programs will you push?
Students' uniforms or student rights?
Student-teacher relationships
Is this what you think excites?"

Sasha says,
"My campaign will have none of that
It interests me in the very least,
That is just awful BOR-ING,
And boredom can be a beast!

This candidate runs on fun and parties,
That's where I'll end and begin,
So what do you say, my loyal friend,
Are you in or ARE YOU IN?"

I say,
"I'm your friend, Sasha,
That I'll always try to be,
But get someone else to help you,
For you and I just don't agree."

Sasha says,
"Some loyal friend you are,
But don't you worry about me,
I'll win this election without you,
You just wait and see!"

The Last Game

- 1 If I'm honest, and why wouldn't I be, I would say that our basketball team this year was south of good. Or, in simple terms, we stank. Even so, we were a young team, full of enthusiasm, and had given the season our all, despite injuries by key players.
- 2 It all came to an end in our last game as we struggled to even the score. I had sprained my ankle a month before, and it still ached that night. So when we fell back ten points in the fourth quarter, Coach pulled me from the game. Kevin replaced me as point guard and immediately started a rally.
- 3 The difference in score changed from ten to eight to five to three to one point until Coach Maris called time. Huddling on the sidelines, Coach laid out a play to hold the ball forty seconds until Kevin took the last shot. I was relieved not to be in the game, as my bum ankle made it impossible for me to move as fast as Kevin.
- 4 Jared dribbled the ball out to center court, moving it in toward the goal and then back to stall for time. Then, with five seconds to go, he moved to shoot, but a guard on the opposite team ran into him. Jared shot a foul shot for one point, but the ball bounced harmlessly off the rim. He missed the second shot too, but our center caught the ball as it glanced off the backboard. He threw it to Kevin, who shot and missed again as the buzzer sounded. Game over, game lost.
- 5 Back in the locker room, Coach Maris told us how well we played, and how much we had improved over the year. Next year, he promised, next year.
- 6 After he left the locker room, the criticizing began when Piper said, "If we'd had a decent coach, that would have all gone differently."
- 7 Jared said, "If he'd let me take the last shot, we would have won the game, because I would have made it, no sweat. Besides, if Coach hadn't put Kevin in and taken Gordie out, we'd have won with no problem."
- 8 Kevin pulled back as if trying to shrink to the size of a peanut, and I decided it was time to speak up.
- 9 "Stop it, you guys. Coach Maris made good decisions tonight, because I was hurting and couldn't play. And don't forget that Kevin started the rally, not any of you. So stop blaming Coach, because he did a lot with the talent he had. We've been injured and we're inexperienced, so it wasn't our year."

- 10 Kevin smiled and everyone else looked at me in mild shock. Then I waved good-bye and said, "Until next year."

1 Read this sentence from the first paragraph of "The Last Game."

If I'm honest, and why wouldn't I be, I would say that our basketball team this year was south of good.

What does the narrator mean when he uses the term south of good?

- A not a winning team
- B a place where they play in the gym
- C not able to score
- D a way of being honest

2 What question is answered in both "The Campaign" and "The Last Game"?

- A When is it necessary to show your loyalty?
- B How can winning improve friendships and popularity?
- C How does competing build character?
- D When is friendship more important than loyalty?

3 How is the theme in "The Last Game" different from the theme in "The Campaign"?

- A In "The Last Game," the narrator is loyal to his coach, while in "The Campaign," Mandy decides that being loyal is not always the best thing to do.
- B In "The Last Game," the narrator questions his loyalty to his coach, while in "The Campaign," Mandy questions her friendship with Sasha.
- C In "The Campaign," Sasha questions Mandy's loyalty to their friendship, while the narrator in "The Last Game" shows his loyalty to his teammates.
- D In "The Campaign," Mandy decides that being loyal is better than doing what is right, and the narrator in "The Last Game" decides that loyalty is overrated.

4 Read this sentence from paragraph 8 of "The Last Game."

Kevin pulled back as if trying to shrink to the size of a peanut, and I decided it was time to speak up.

What do the underlined words mean in the sentence?

- A Kevin wants no one to notice him.
- B Kevin is trying to appear likeable.
- C Kevin thinks he's too short to play well.
- D Kevin believes that it is his fault that they lost the game.

Read the following passage and answer questions 5 through 11. (This is customizable text.)

Wu Zetian: The Woman Who Became Emperor

- 1 Oh, my sons and daughters, listen carefully to this story. More than a thousand years have passed since these events took place, but their lessons are still fresh as dew on the morning grass. Confucius taught, "Study the past if you would define the future." So together let us turn our eyes to the past.
- 2 In all the long history of the great land of China, only one woman has held the title of emperor. Her name was Wu Zetian. She was born into a wealthy family in the seventh year of the reign of Emperor Gaozu. In the year of her birth, the moon stood in front of the sun, blocking its light. This was clearly a sign of Wu's future power.
- 3 Wu Zetian was not like other girls she knew, for sewing and needlework held no interest for her. She wanted only to read and travel and learn about the wider world. At age 14, she was sent to live in the palace of the Emperor Taizong, and although many people lived there, Wu's knowledge and gifts stood out. The emperor called her Meiniang, which means "charming lady." Oh, she was charming — but she was also clever and ruthless.
- 4 Step by step, Wu learned about government affairs. She also learned how to scheme and trick her way into power. She committed a terrible crime and blamed it on the empress. The emperor believed her, so he put the empress to death. He then married Wu Zetian, who ruled alongside him.
- 5 If you have been listening well, you surely know what happened next. The emperor died, and Wu Zetian put her weakest son in his place, but she remained in control. Before long, she forced her son to step aside. Wu Zetian, now known as Emperor Shengshen, officially ruled all of China. During her long reign, Wu found talented people to run government offices. She improved education and helped the peasants. Under her leadership, the country prospered. Yet she also used a secret police force to eliminate those who might oppose her.
- 6 Over the centuries, Wu has been seen through different spectacles. Some say she was an evil tyrant who did anything to achieve her goals, while others protest that she was just a strong woman trying to succeed in a world run by men. Is it acceptable to claw your way to power if you use it well once you attain it? Even today, we still ask this question.

- 5** Read this statement about ancient China.

In ancient China, opportunities for girls were limited.

Which sentence from the story supports this conclusion?

- A She was born into a wealthy family in the seventh year of the reign of Emperor Gaozu.
- B Wu Zetian was not like other girls she knew, for sewing and needlework held no interest for her.
- C Before long, she forced her son to step aside.
- D Under her leadership, the country prospered.

- 6** Based on paragraph 4, which word **BEST** describes Wu Zetian?

- A cunning
- B cowardly
- C emotional
- D unorganized

- 7** The author uses a first-person narrator to introduce the passage in a way that sounds like a storyteller who

- A is passing on history to the next generation.
- B is establishing an air of mystery around the characters.
- C is convincing readers that the story is based on research.
- D is setting a humorous tone.

- 8** Read these sentences from paragraph 1.

Oh, my sons and daughters, listen carefully to this story. More than a thousand years have passed since these events took place, but their lessons are still fresh as dew on the morning grass.

Which underlined words tell the reader that this paragraph is written in the first person?

- A my sons and daughters
- B a thousand years
- C these events took place
- D their lessons

- 9** By using the first-person point of view in the first paragraph, the writer **MOST LIKELY** intends to do which of the following?

- A entertain as well as inform
- B convince readers of the passage's accuracy
- C contradict previous versions of the story
- D establish a formal tone

10

Which sentence from the passage BEST supports the idea that people disagree about how to interpret Wu Zetian's reign?

- A During her long reign, Wu found talented people to run government offices.
- B She improved education and helped the peasants.
- C Yet she also used a secret police force to eliminate those who might oppose her.
- D Over the centuries, Wu has been seen through different spectacles.

11

Beginning with paragraph 2, it is clear the author's purpose is to

- A inform the audience about the life and reign of one of China's emperors.
- B narrate a fictional story that is set in China's past.
- C persuade the audience that even cruel leaders have good qualities.
- D explain how young leaders can rise to power.

Read the two texts and answer questions 12 through 16.

Excerpt from *Betty Gordon in the Land of Oil*

by Alice B. Emerson

The Oklahoma oil boom drew many people to the state during the early twentieth century. In this novel excerpt, Betty and her friend Bob tour an oil field with Betty's uncle.

- 1 "I thought you knew, goosie, that we measured oil by barrels. That well is flowing slightly over five thousand barrels a day. Altogether our wells are now yielding well over fifty thousand barrels of oil a day."
- 2 "I read in one of the papers about a man who paid three thousand dollars for one acre of oil land," said Bob thoughtfully. "How did he know he was going to find oil here?"
- 3 "He didn't know," was the prompt answer. "There is no way of knowing positively. Many and many a small investor has lost the savings of a lifetime because he had a 'hunch' that he would bring in a good well. Right here in Oklahoma, statistics show that in one section, of five thousand two hundred and forty-six wells driven, one thousand three hundred and fifty-six were dry. Now it takes a lot of money to drive a well, between twenty and thirty thousand dollars in fact, so you may count up the loss."
- 4 "But there is oil here—just look!" Bob waved comprehensively toward the beehive of industry that surrounded them.
- 5 "Right, my boy. And when they do strike oil, they strike it rich. Huge fortunes have been made in oil and will be made again...."
- 6 From the station they walked to one of the largest storage tanks, a huge reservoir of oil, capable of holding fifty-five thousand barrels when full, Mr. Gordon told them. It was half empty at the time, and three long flights of steps were bare that would be covered when the storage capacity was used.
- 7 "If there isn't a laundry or a hotel in Flame City," observed Betty suddenly, "there is everything to run the oil business with, that's certain. Is it all right to say you have very complete equipment, Uncle Dick?"
- 8 "Your phrase is correct," admitted her uncle, smiling. "Poor tools are the height of folly for any business or worker, Betty. As for Flame City, the place is literally swamped. People poured in from the day the first good well came in, and they've been arriving in droves ever since. You can't persuade any of them to take up the business they had before—to run a boarding house, or open a restaurant or a store. No, every blessed one of 'em has set his heart on owning and operating an oil well. It was just so in the California gold drive—the forty-niners wanted a gold mine, and they walked right over those that lay at their feet."

The Chance of a Lifetime

- 1 I know what sensible and cautious people in my life would have told me if I'd revealed my wish to go to Oklahoma when the thought first entered my mind. They'd have told me that I was being foolish. They would have said that I had a successful restaurant, that I shouldn't take such a risk when I already had enough money coming in to look after my family and some to spare. I had all of these same thoughts myself, at first. The thing is, the lure of that Oklahoma black gold was just too strong to resist.

- 2 The night before I left, I sat at my sturdy kitchen table, counting out the thousands of dollars I would need to purchase one acre of oil land and drive a well. I'd worked for years to earn and save this money, had poured countless cups of coffee and fried who knew how many egg and bacon breakfast specials. Now I was getting ready to go to another state and take the ultimate roll of the dice. I could come back with more money than the wealthiest business owner in town, but on the other hand I might return with only the clothes on my back. There was no way of knowing. More than once I thought of forgetting the whole thing.
- 3 Despite the uncertainty, I got in my car and headed north. You'll never know if you never try, I told myself. When I arrived at my destination, I found it full of other people just like me. As I settled in, I got to know the other risk takers in the area. I heard stories of sudden wealth and heartbreaking ones about wells that did not yield a single drop of oil.
- 4 As for me, I'll soon know the happy—or tragic—ending of my own story. The well is almost complete. In my dreams, I see a bubbling river of oil—thousands of barrels worth—gushing out of the ground I purchased. I know there is a chance there'll be nothing beneath the surface but dirt and rock. For now, though, I remain hopeful that my investment will give me my own little piece of the Oklahoma oil dream. Whatever the outcome, I know I made the right call.

12 In the third sentence of the first paragraph of “Excerpt from *Betty Gordon in the Land of Oil*,” what does the word yielding mean?

- A producing
- B manufacturing
- C preventing
- D shipping

13 In paragraph 8 of “Excerpt from *Betty Gordon in the Land of Oil*,” Uncle Dick says, “they’ve been arriving in droves.” How does the use of the word droves affect the tone of what Uncle Dick is saying?

- A It suggests a low opinion of the newcomers because he describes them with a term used for groups of animals.
- B It reflects admiration for the newcomers’ spirits because they are in large groups with strong purpose.
- C It indicates Uncle Dick’s pride in himself and his fellow oilmen because they have been bringing in thousands of barrels of oil.
- D It demonstrates Uncle Dick’s enthusiasm for the business that has brought so many new people and so much new wealth.

14 Which choice **BEST** describes a difference in how the texts approach the topic of the Oklahoma oil boom?

- A "Excerpt from *Betty Gordon in the Land of Oil*" relates a lot of factual information, while "The Chance of a Lifetime" focuses on personal thoughts and emotions.
- B "Excerpt from *Betty Gordon in the Land of Oil*" describes the experiences of many people, while "The Chance of a Lifetime" describes only the narrator's experience.
- C "Excerpt from *Betty Gordon in the Land of Oil*" features characters that are not involved in the oil business, while "The Chance of a Lifetime" focuses on someone who is.
- D "Excerpt from *Betty Gordon in the Land of Oil*" talks about the money that people can make in oil, while "The Chance of a Lifetime" describes the possible losses.

15 Read this sentence from paragraph 2 of "The Chance of a Lifetime."

I could come back with more money than the wealthiest business owner in town, but on the other hand I might return with only the clothes on my back.

What does the underlined statement imply about the narrator?

- A He could end up losing his money and coming back with nothing.
- B He could end up spending his money on expensive and fine things.
- C He could end up leaving a lot of things behind when he returns.
- D He could end up dressing like the rich business men in his town.

16 Which idea is shared by both "Excerpt from *Betty Gordon in the Land of Oil*" and "The Chance of a Lifetime" ?

- A The promise of finding oil led people to take great risks.
- B The people who drilled for oil in Oklahoma experienced hardships.
- C The cost of looking for oil was more than the profit from finding it.
- D The best way to find oil in Oklahoma was to follow a hunch.

Read the following draft of a letter written by a student. It contains errors. Then answer question 17.

Dorian Watkins
2567 N. 62nd Street
Chicago, IL 60617

January 9, 2013

Alderman Carson
541 Wabash Ave.
Chicago, IL 60617

Dear Alderman Carson,

(1) I read in the newspaper that the city is making changes to the park on 63rd and Silver Streets. (2) This park is in my neighborhood, so I have some suggestions about what to build in the park. (3) I hope you will use mine ideas for making a better park that the neighborhood can enjoy.

(4) There are many toddlers and young schoolchildren in my neighborhood, including my younger sister. (5) I know her would like a smaller play structure for younger kids one with swings and a sandpit. (6) A splash pad with waterspouts would be used a great deal in the summer months. (7) It would be a nice place for kids to gather.

(8) As an older kid, I would like to have basketball courts and a baseball diamond at the park. (9) Right now, there is only one basketball court, and they are always full. (10) If more courts are added, more games can happen at the same time, and if a baseball diamond is added as well, there would be more fun options for older kids during the summer and after school.

(11) In addition, they would like a play structure that is separate from the smaller structure. (12) This structure should have at least one set of monkey bars and pull-up bars where kids can exercise. (13) It should have higher slides that have soft places for safe landings, not hard asphalt. (14) This kind of equipmint would help kids be active and healthy.

(15) Thank you for your time. (16) I appreciate your consiteration. (17) I hope you will use my suggestions for the city park.

Sincerely,

Dorian Watkins

17 Read sentence 5.

I know her would like a smaller play structure for younger kids one with swings and a sandpit.

What is the correct way to rewrite the underlined part of the sentence?

- A she
- B hers
- C we
- D us

Read the following draft of an essay written by a student. It contains errors. Then answer questions 18.

What's the Big Deal About GM Foods?

- 1 (1) The other day at lunch, I observed my classmate eating a shiny apple. (2) I couldn't help but wonder if it was a part of the genetically modified (GM) foods family. (3) I'm sure my classmate wasn't thinking about whether their fruit had been modified. (4) When I asked him, he wasn't quite sure what GM foods were, let alone understanding the big fuss about them. (5) In fact, most people may not realize that their foods are genetically altered. (6) My classmate and me wanted to explore this topic further.
- 2 (7) GM refers to foods that have been altered using a technology that combines genes from various living things to produce new crops. (8) Rice, nuts, and fruits are just a few of these that are genetically engineered. (9) In 2006, 252 million GM crops including soybeans, corn, and canola were planted in 22 different countries. (10) Some GM foods are even produced with extra nutrients. (11) For example, GM rice with increased iron and vitamins may help control poor diets in some Asian countries.
- 3 (12) There is much debate about this topic, and I have discovered a wealth of literachure explaining the benefits of GM foods. (13) Some of these advantages include improved taste and quality and reduced matureation time. (14) For the environment, GM foods help to conserve soil, water, and energy. (15) Large quantities of GM crops can also help to feed large quantities of people. (16) However, according to the united states department of agriculture (usda), there are some concerns. (17) Many people believe that unknown effects of GM foods can be damaging to the body not to mention the possible long-term effects on the environment.
- 4 (18) Who is responsible for protecting these bodies of ours? (19) We are responsible for making the right choices. (20) Examine the pros and the cons in order to make an informed decision. (21) In the meantime, I'll just allow my classmate to enjoy his lunch.

18

Read sentence 16.

However, according to the united states department of agriculture (usda), there are some concerns.

What is the correct way to rewrite the underlined part of the sentence?

- A The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- B The United States department of agriculture (USda)
- C the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- D the United States Department of Agriculture (usda)

Read the following draft of an essay written by a student. It contains errors. Then answer questions 19 through 20.

The Gullah People of the South

(1) The coast of South Carolina and Georgia is rich in history and it is rich in culture, too. (2) During the 1700s, rice plantations were introduced into this region. (3) This area is the home of a little-known group of people called Gullahs.

(4) I have lived in coastal South Carolina for a long time and many visitors don't realize that there is a group of people called Gullahs who have been here for hundreds of years. (5) Aparintly, the Gullah people are descendants of African slaves who worked on rice plantations. (6) Upon reaching the southern coast, different African tribes were separated and had little contact with whites. (7) Due to this privacy, different African tribes were able to create their own music and traditions.

(8) The Gullah people created their own distink language, a combination of English and West African languages. (9) Although the owners and working Gullahs profited from the rice industry, owners abandend rice plantations around 1900. (10) However, they still remained in the area despite not having many resources.

(11) In my opinion, the Gullah quality that is most appreciated is their yummy food. (12) The Gullah food is both unique and delicious. (13) Some notable dishes include gumbo, shrimp and grits, and fluffy rice. (14) These are must haves among the people of Charleston, South Carolina. (15) Some Gullah traditions are still practiced, including storytelling, quilt making and a wide variety of woodworking.

19 Read sentence 1.

The coast of South Carolina and Georgia is rich in history and it is rich in culture, too.

What is the BEST way to revise this sentence?

- A** The coast of South Carolina and Georgia is rich in history and culture.
- B** The history is rich in Georgia, and the culture is rich in South Carolina.
- C** Both rich in culture and history, people love living on the coast of South Carolina and Georgia.
- D** South Carolina and Georgia is rich in culture and history.

Read sentences 6 and 7.

Upon reaching the southern coast, different African tribes were separated and had little contact with whites. Due to this privacy, different African tribes were able to create their own music and traditions.

Which revision is the BEST way to rewrite these sentences to add interest to the ideas?

- A** Although it was not fair, African tribes had privacy on the southern coast. This led to tribes creating their own separate culture.
- B** African tribes created their own culture, which included music and traditions. This was a direct result of having little contact with whites.
- C** There are many different cultures around the world. African tribes had little contact with whites, making it easier for them to establish their own music, traditions, and other cultural differences.
- D** When African tribes reached the southern coast they had little contact with whites, making it possible for the Gullah to create their unique traditions, some of which have become known far and wide.