

## CRCT READING PRACTICE

1. Which of the following is an example of a metaphor?
  - a. Sleeping makes me happy.
  - b. Sleeping and fountains are both rejuvenating.
  - c. Sleep is like a fountain.
  - d. Sleep is a fountain.
  
2. Which poetic device is used in the phrase, "While I nodded, nearly napping"?
  - a. alliteration
  - b. assonance
  - c. onomatopoeia
  
3. Both fiction and non-fiction stories \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. use real people as characters
  - b. are based on real events
  - c. contain conflict
  - d. are at least partly true

### Critical Reading

*The questions below are based on the following selection.*

*This excerpt is from an early section of Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography. In the final sentence, the word discovered means "revealed."*

My Brother had in 1720 or 21, begun to print a Newspaper. . . . Being still a Boy, and suspecting that my Brother would object to printing any Thing of mine in his Paper if he knew it to be mine, I contrived to disguise my Hand, and writing an anonymous Paper, I put it in at Night under the Door of the Printing House. It was found in the Morning and communicated to his Writing friends when they called in as usual. They read it, commented on it in my Hearing, and I had the exquisite Pleasure of finding it met with their Approbation, and that in their different Guesses at the Author none were named but men of some Character among us for Learning and Ingenuity.

I suppose now that I was rather lucky in my Judges: And that perhaps they were not really so very good ones as I then esteemed them. Encouraged, however, by this, I wrote and conveyed in the same Way to the Press several more papers, which were equally approved, and I kept my Secret till my small Fund of Sense for such Performances was pretty well exhausted, and then I discovered it; when I began to be considered a little more by my Brother's Acquaintance, and in a manner that did not quite please him, as he thought, probably with reason, that it tended to make me too vain. . . .

4. What is the best characterization of Franklin's attitude toward his brother during this period, as it is revealed in the selection?
  - a. fond
  - b. hostile
  - c. competitive
  - d. casual
  
5. Which of the following sentences is an example of a **simile**?
  - a. The fresh snow glistened in the moonlight.
  - b. The branches swaying in the breeze were like long, thin arms waving farewell.
  - c. The wind, howling and moaning all night long, frightened the children.
  - d. Her mind was a well-oiled machine.

6. All of the following elements contribute to the musical effect of a poem *except* —

- a. rhyme
- b. personification
- c. meter
- d. alliteration

7. Which part of the plot structure is best described as “the moment of truth.”

- a. the falling action
- b. the resolution
- c. the climax
- d. the rising action

### The 10K Mind Change

“A *race*? On *foot*? You’re kidding,” Ken said to his best friend, Deric. “We’re fleet of mind, not fleet of foot,” he added, in reference to the boys’ skills as computer programmers. “Ten kilometers—that’s more than *six miles*!”

“It’s a piece of cake,” Deric told his friend. “It’ll benefit our minds as well as our bodies,” he said. “Come on, amigo—are we men or mice? Squeak up!”

Ken reluctantly agreed to enter his city’s annual Heart to Heart 10K race—but only if they could walk it, not run it. Forced to accept this compromise, Deric mapped out a training schedule for the six weeks prior to the race. The boys met before school each morning. They stretched their muscles for a few minutes and then walked around the school track several times, adding a lap every few days and increasing their pace. Ken complained loudly and frequently about having to wake up early, about the stretching, about the “endless laps” around the track. Deric was starting to lose patience with his unhappy friend. “I’m trying, I’m *trying*,” Ken would protest.

“Yes, you are,” Deric would answer. “*Very* trying.” The only thing that kept Deric from giving up on his friend was that he noticed Ken had lost a few excess pounds and that he was walking—or trudging—slightly faster around the track each week.

On the day of the race, the boys positioned themselves near the starting line. “I can’t believe you talked me into this,” Ken growled to his friend. At the sound of the starting gun, the pack moved forward in one huge wave. After the first fifty yards or so, the runners began to sort themselves out. Deric and Ken let the remaining runners pass and began to find their rhythm.

As the boys settled into their pace, Deric noticed that his friend’s mood seemed to be improving. The spectators who lined the course clapped and shouted encouraging words to the participants. Deric thought he saw a smile creep across Ken’s face and noticed that his friend’s gait quickened at the applause.

At last, the finish line came into sight. As the boys strode across it, Ken looked over at Deric. “Well, I’m glad *that’s* over,” he said. “Now I can go back to a life of leisure.”

The following Monday, Deric arrived at school early to complete a science project, and as he approached the front door, something in the distance caught his eye. It was a lone figure, walking briskly around the school track, arms pumping energetically at his sides. Deric smiled and entered the building.

8. What is the conflict in this selection?

- a. Ken does not think he can win a race.
- b. Ken does not want to enter a race.
- c. Two friends compete against each other in a race.
- d. Two friends cannot agree on a training schedule.

## Reading Comprehension

### The 10K Mind Change

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9. A subplot of this story involves —

- a. using computer programming skills
- b. trying to lose weight
- c. working on a science project
- d. participating in an event

## Reading Comprehension

**DIRECTIONS:** Read each selection. Then, read each question about the selection. Choose the best answer to the question. Then, mark the space for the answer you have chosen.

### SAMPLE

#### Garlic: Wonder Drug?

After Jeb's mother read the magazine article that said garlic was the next "health food," she asked Jeb to buy a pound of it at the supermarket. She added, "While you are there, don't forget to buy a jar of garlic powder. You will find that in the spice section." Jeb rolled his eyes and sighed as his mother pressed some money into his hands. "Stop by the pharmacy," she added, "and ask Mrs. Chang about the garlic pills I've been hearing about on the radio."

10. Jeb is going to the supermarket *mainly* to —
- A. buy a radio
  - B. talk to the pharmacist
  - C. buy a magazine
  - D. buy garlic products
11. Which word *best* describes Jeb's feelings about his errands?
- A. Accepting
  - B. Doubtful
  - C. Angry
  - D. Curious

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the selection, and answer the following questions.

#### The Mystery Animal

At first, all Ted and Martin could see was a small mound of black fur. It was a small animal, about the size of a cat, lying next to a barbed-wire fence post. The boys stood back and watched for several minutes, but the furry mound didn't move. Ted whistled loudly. There was no response.

The humid afternoon was made dark by a sky heavy with storm clouds. The two brothers were nervous about being outside in a storm. Two weeks ago, they had been caught in a heavy downpour and had spent an hour huddled in a small shed. The storms in the country were so different from the ones they had been used to in the city. It was hard for them to tell if the menacing clouds would bring a tornado, furious hail, or just a drenching summer shower. The boys and their parents had recently moved to the country from the city, and the boys were still adjusting to their new surroundings.

Ted turned to his younger brother. "It's dead. Let's bury it."

"I don't know," Martin said slowly. "Maybe it's just pretending to be dead. I think you have to listen for its heartbeat to know if it's *really* dead."

"To listen to its heartbeat we'll have to touch it."

"Hey, I'm not going to touch it," Martin replied. "We don't even know what it is. It might have

rabies or something.”

As they watched it, the animal began to move slightly. It twitched its small nose. Then its front right paw moved up toward its face as if it were trying to wipe something off its mouth. It lifted its long, bushy tail a few inches off the ground, but the effort seemed to be too much for it.

“Look!” Martin said in a whisper. “It *is* alive! But it’s barely moving. It must be *really* hurt. Let’s take it home. Maybe there’s something in the garage we can use to carry it. Come on!”

The boys ran across the field to the garage, which was dark and smelled like paint and car oil. Leaving the door open for some light, they began looking around. “Here!” Martin yelled when he spotted an old box.

Holding up an old blanket, Ted said, “We can line it with this.” He thought the wounded animal might prefer a little soft padding.

The boys gathered up their supplies and ran back to the barbed-wire fence. The section of the fence near the animal was *dilapidated*. The sagging posts and drooping barbed wires formed a bush of metal thorns. The animal seemed not to have moved since the boys were last there.

When the boys moved closer, they noticed that the fur on the animal’s belly was caked with dried blood. “It must have gotten caught on the barbed wire,” Ted said. “I hate these fences.”

“Do you think it’s safe to pick it up?” Martin asked.

“I think it’s OK if we’re careful,” Ted replied. “Besides, it’s not very big, and it looks too hurt to try to fight us.”

“Sometimes animals attack when they’re hurt,” Martin pointed out. “It might have claws.”

“So you just want to leave it here to die?” Ted asked.

“I guess not,” Martin admitted. “But maybe we should get someone to help us.”

“If you’re scared, I’ll do it myself.” Ted carefully started moving closer to the wounded animal.

At that moment, a voice shouted out behind them, “Boys! Get away from there right now!”

The small animal stretched out its front legs and patted them on the ground. It began to arch its bushy tail, raising it straight up off the ground and over its back so that the tip nearly touched the top of its small black head. A narrow white stripe ran straight down the middle of that furry back and tail.

Ted and Martin didn’t notice the animal’s tail, though, because they had turned around to see who was shouting at them. Suddenly they started coughing and choking. Their eyes began to burn and water. Worse yet, the air around them was filled with a stench more awful than anything they had ever smelled before.

The boys started running away from the small animal—and ran straight into their mom. “Oh, kids,” she groaned. “Don’t you know a skunk when you see one?”

Ted and Martin didn’t see their mystery animal waddle off under the fence to get some peace and quiet so that it could heal. What they did see—when they could open their eyes a little—was the expression on their mother’s face, and the way she held her nose closed with her fingers. Just as they walked up onto the porch of their house, the boys heard a clap of thunder followed by the sound of big raindrops falling onto the dirt.

Later, after two tomato-juice baths, Ted and Martin were quite certain that they would recognize a skunk if they ever saw one again.

12. Which one of the following character traits *best* applies to Martin and Ted?

- a. They are argumentative.
- b. They are cautious.
- c. They are knowledgeable about country life.
- d. They are unkind to animals.

### Critical Reading

The questions below are based on the following selection.

*In this excerpt from “The Pit and the Pendulum,” a short story by Edgar Allan Poe, a prisoner condemned to death has been trapped in a lightless dungeon. When an eerie glow from an unknown source enables him to see his surroundings, he compares the impressions he gained in the dark with what he observes when the dungeon is lit.*

In its size I had been greatly mistaken. The whole circuit of its walls did not exceed twenty-five yards. For some minutes this fact occasioned me a world of vain trouble; vain indeed! For what could be of less importance, under the terrible circumstances which environed me, than the mere dimensions of my dungeon? But my soul took a wild interest in trifles, and I busied myself in endeavors to account for the error I had committed in my measurement. The truth at length flashed upon me. In my first attempt at exploration I had counted forty-two paces, up to the period when I fell . . . upon awaking, I must have returned upon my steps—thus supposing the circuit nearly double what it actually was.

I had been deceived, too, in respect to the shape of the enclosure. In feeling my way I had found many angles, and thus deduced an idea of great irregularity, so potent is the effect of darkness . . . . The angles were simply those of a few slight depressions, or niches, at odd intervals. The general shape of the prison was square. What I had taken for masonry seemed now to be iron, or some other metal, in huge plates . . . . The entire surface of this metallic enclosure was [covered] in . . . . hideous and repulsive devices . . . .

13. Which of the following lines from the selection includes descriptive details that contribute to mood?

- a. In feeling my way I had found many angles . . .
- b. The angles were simply those of a few slight depressions . . .
- c. The entire surface of this metallic enclosure was [covered] in . . . hideous and repulsive devices . . . .
- d. In its size I had been greatly mistaken.

## Reading Comprehension

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the selection. Then, read each question about the selection. Choose the best answer to the question. Then, mark the space for the answer you have chosen.

### Early Sunday Morning

by Dan Masterson

- My big brother & I grew up behind  
Three windows over our father's barber  
Shop where half-drawn shades painted  
Squares of buttery light on the wall
- 5 Beside the sink & on the mirror near  
The worn end of the corduroy sofa.
- We played barefoot stickball with Mongie  
Stritt & Potatoes McGowen & Dutch Finn  
& if the cobblestones got too hot
- 10 We'd send Mongie for his father's stilson  
Wrench & open the fireplug crank-nut  
& hose caps, the sideways flood splish  
Splashing downhill past Cudlip's Candy Store  
& around the diner into the schoolyard.
- 15 I don't know why the iceman came early  
On Sunday mornings, but he did, hauling  
50-pound blocks of ice into McGinley's  
Before dancing up the outside stairs  
With 25-pounders for all the neighbors,
- 20 While my brother & I scooped up slivers  
Of ice from the wet wooden planks  
Of the wagon & fed them to the pull-horse,  
Watching him do his own kind of dance,  
Happy to be done with his awful thirst.
- 25 On muggy nights, we'd climb out our bedroom  
Window & go up the fire escape to spread  
Double layers of newspapers side by side  
On the bubbly tar roof & lie on our backs  
Giving new names to old stars & listening
- 30 To the Hudson River slap the rocks on its  
Way to the Atlantic where soon my brother  
Would sail off to war & promise to come back.  
He even crossed his heart & hoped to die.

"Early Sunday Morning" by Dan Masterson from *Heart to Heart: New Poems Inspired by Twentieth-Century American Art*, edited by Jan Greenberg. Copyright © 2001 by **Dan Masterson**. Reproduced by permission of the author.

14. Which of the following *best* demonstrates the use of personification of the setting?
- a. "Squares of buttery light on the wall"      c. "Before dancing up the outside stairs"  
b. "if the cobblestones got too hot"      d. "listening to the Hudson River slap the rocks"

15. Which of the following statements is the *best* example of a story's **theme**?

- a. Society has many rules and customs.
- b. People from many cultures live in the United States.
- c. Freedom is precious, and it must be carefully guarded.
- d. Our garden is the largest in our community.

16. Which of the following might be an appropriate symbol for home for someone who grew up in the desert?

- a. a big, grassy backyard
- b. rivers and lakes
- c. a cactus
- d. all of the above