

American
Lit. * ? I will
be in a different
format

Collins

Passage 1: Hair-raising Problems

(Use this handout to answer question 15.)

Why is it that we are so completely obsessed with the hair on our heads? Millions of dollars are spent each year on cutting hair, lengthening hair, bleaching hair, straightening hair, curling hair, highlighting hair, and even growing hair; whatever you can do to hair, someone is willing to pay to do it. Natural redheads long to be brunettes and dishwater blondes dream of shiny golden tresses. Both men and women cringe at the sight of each gray hair, and teenagers enjoy weekly experiments with magenta dyes, spikes, and tangerine streaks.

All of these thoughts cross my mind as I examine the result of my most recent hair adventure. As a mature woman watching the gray hairs rapidly mixing with my natural brunette tones, I decided over a year ago to approach my stylist with the idea of highlights. Having seen many of my peers go this route, I figured that highlighting was the answer to my reluctance to look my age.

The monthly highlighting went well, except for those times when my hair turned out a little too subdued, making me look partially gray instead of brunette. I suffered through it remarkably well, saying to myself, "She'll get it right the next time." For the most part, I've enjoyed my year of highlights, so much so that I bravely approached Donna, my stylist, two months ago and proclaimed that I was done with wimpy highlighting and ready to go blonde. Donna was surprised at my suggestion, but quickly began sharing my unbridled enthusiasm as she gathered the appropriate chemicals and concoctions that would soon transform me. The result was not quite what I expected, but I resolved to live with it!

Three months later, I find myself seesawing between tears and laughter as I attempt to cover up a patch of nearly bald scalp on the top of my head. For someone who has long been fanatical about the appearance of her hair, this absence of hair has proven to be quite a challenge to my ego and self-confidence. I've always enjoyed styling my hair, and suddenly, I have nothing to style.

Each time I begin to experience a new pang of disgust and despair over this new hair anomaly, I once again ask myself why we are so obsessed with the hair on our heads. The answer always comes to me in a flash, in a simple two-word phrase: pure vanity. Soon after this realization, I cease my crying.

Passage 2: A Modern Blacksmith

You will probably never find his name in a history book, but to this day, Walker Lee continues to contribute to American heritage. Walker Lee is an old-fashioned, modern day blacksmith who still practices the fine art of manipulating metal over a hot fire. In his words, "Blacksmithing is no dying art!"

Walter Lee began his career in hand-forged ironwork at the age of 30. The idea of creating an object out of iron, a most intractable material, appealed to him. He started on this new venture by collecting and reading every book he could find that described the process of blacksmithing: its history, its practical and decorative uses, and the equipment needed to establish and outfit his own smithy. During the course of his research, Lee discovered a tool necessary for the success of any blacksmith: the anvil, a heavy block of iron or steel upon which the blacksmith hammered and shaped the malleable metal.

Lee bought his first anvil from 84-year-old Hurley Alford Templeton of Philadelphia, lugging 20 it home to Michigan in the back of a 4-H county bus. This anvil weighed 100 pounds, about the minimum size Walker Lee needed to get started in his craft.

Lee's first anvil cost him \$100, and four months later, he paid \$75 for an additional implement—a vice—from Cornell University in New York. This important tool also made its way back to Michigan in the back of Lee's 4-H bus.

Once Lee obtained his first portable forge, he was ready to build his blacksmith shop, commonly referred to as a "smithy." In the interest of economy, he constructed this shop out of inexpensive oak planks and tarpaper. It was a crude little shack that stood for only nine years. Lee, who by then was completely hooked on blacksmithing, replaced his first shop with a finer one made of more expensive wood; this shop also had glass windows, a definite improvement over Lee's original "smithy."

The very first object Lee forged was a long, pointed Hudson Bay dagger. Many people refer to this type of knife as a "dag." As he recalls that event he says, "From the minute I first saw the thing take shape, I was hooked ...still am. There's an element of magic in it to me. You heat it up and pound it with a hammer and it goes where you want it to go." Years later, at a family event, Lee discovered that his Italian ancestors were accomplished coppersmiths. During the gathering, Lee's great uncle Johnny was proclaiming that Lee's propensity for blacksmithing was "in the blood" as he happily presented Lee with a new 125-pound anvil.

As an outside observer watches Walker Lee bending and shaping a hot metal rod into some recognizable form, it is difficult to discern the origin of the magic Lee spoke of; is it in the glowing, orange steel or in Walker himself?

PASSAGE 3: Scorpion Scare

As my sister began telling me about the scorpion in her bed that stung her as she slumbered, I could feel my eyes popping out of my head and my jaw dropping to the floor. She seemed so calm telling me this story, and all I could think about was how she is lucky to be alive. Diana's terrifying story continued, detailing how her husband threw back the bed covers, began beating the dreaded thing with a broom, and then quickly flushed it down the toilet. Only later did they learn that the corpse should have been kept for identification purposes. Some Arizonan scorpions are deadlier than others, and it is important to know which species is responsible for a given attack.

My sister characteristically chose not to seek medical treatment as her upper arm first swelled, then ached with pain, and finally became numb and useless. You could say that Diana is afraid of hospitals, doctors, and nurses. As her condition worsened, she searched the Internet for general information, discovering time and again that species identification is important in administering proper care to the sting victim.

Scorpions will sting anyone they accidentally encounter as they crawl into human habitats. Most problems occur at construction sites where the scorpions' natural homes have been upset and uprooted by bulldozers and dump trucks. Of the ninety scorpion species native to the United States, 30 percent live in Arizona. Unfortunately, one of those species is the Bark Scorpion which is just about the only species whose venom is considered truly dangerous and often fatal to humans.

My sister and her husband just moved into a new home a year ago, and dozens of homes are still being built all around them. This, indeed, is a perfect explanation for the presence of a scorpion in their bedclothes. Scorpions hide during the day and search for food and water at night. Arizonans will tell you that it's a good idea to refrain from going barefoot in the dark, both outside and inside.

Checking your shoes and clothes before putting them on wouldn't hurt, either, particularly if you know you're in an area where scorpions have been found. Wherever there is one scorpion, there are probably dozens more that can be easily detected with a black light at night when they're on the move.

If a scorpion happens to sting you, please don't follow my sister's example. Seek medical treatment immediately, especially if you've flushed the critter down the toilet and have no way of knowing the exact nature of the perpetrator! This way, you will certainly save yourself from some amount of pain and discomfort, and you might even save your life.

PASSAGE 4: Unfulfilled Promises

If you have ever entered a contest of any sort, you are well aware of the legal requirements, exclusions, and disclaimers that always accompany the contest's entry form. Many laws today regulate a contest sponsor's responsibilities to the entrants, and courts are filled with lawsuits asserting non-compliance on both sides. However, this was not always the case.

In 1896, a contest motivated a Norwegian immigrant, Helga Estby, to travel nearly 3,500 miles on foot from the state of Washington to New York City. Unfortunately, as is still sometimes true, Helga won the competition only to find that the promised \$10,000 award was mysteriously absent.

Helga had been living on her farm with her husband and nine children in Spokane, Washington, when she read of a \$10,000 prize being offered to a woman who was willing to walk across the country. The only requirement, from all accounts, was that she wear a modern, newfangled bicycle skirt as she traveled. At the time, this style of skirt was considered to be inappropriate because it revealed the female ankle. Because the Estby farm was facing foreclosure, Helga decided that walking across the country in a bicycle skirt for that kind of money was a small price to pay for a great reward.

So, in May of 1896, Helga and her 18-year-old daughter, Clara, set off on their long journey. Helga carried a revolver and a spray gun containing red pepper for protection. Presumably, Helga and Clara found food and shelter along the way, and they arrived in New York City in December, seven months after their departure. The contest sponsors, however, were nowhere to be found.

This story of bravery and persistence had been kept a secret for nearly a century, primarily because Helga's seven-month absence from the farm wreaked havoc on her family. Two of her children died of diphtheria while she was gone. Even worse, her husband had sequestered the surviving children in an unheated shed, thinking that this was the only way to keep them from being infected with the disease. Since the contest sponsor failed to award Helga the money, the Estbys ended up losing the farm; her expedition had been a disaster.

At the time, Helga's trip was considered an embarrassment by the Norwegian-American community and was kept utterly quiet. After Helga's death, her own children burned the hundreds of pages Helga had written through the years, leaving only a small scrapbook of newspaper clippings and very few details of Helga's life or her ill-fated trip. Looking back 100 years, one can only marvel at the boldness and bravery that must have energized Helga Estby to make that journey on foot across the country in an effort to save her family farm.

PASSAGE 5: A Blessing in Disguise

Last spring, I was fortunate to be chosen to participate in an exchange study program. In my application essay, I was careful to express how much I wanted to see France. I suppose my excitement really came through in my words. Once I knew that I was going, all I could think about was the fun of foreign travel and making all sorts of new and interesting friends. While traveling was inspiring and meeting people was exciting, nothing about my semester in France was what I expected.

The moment I arrived in Paris, I was greeted by a nice French couple who would become my host parents. The bit of French I had taken in high school began pouring from my mouth. Speaking the language would only become more natural over the course of the semester. At the airport, we all got into the couple's little two-door hatchback and began the journey to their townhouse in the suburbs. We talked the whole way there, getting to know one another bit by bit. Everyday thereafter, I would eat breakfast with the two of them, then we'd all go our separate ways for the day. In the evening, my host mother would make delicious dinners for the three of us. My entire experience was joyous and exhilarating until I received some shocking news from my program coordinator: there had been a death in my host parents' extended family. They had to travel outside France for several weeks to tend to all the business that arises from an unforeseen death. That afternoon, I had to move out of one family's house and into another. The exchange coordinator told me I'd have a roommate this time and asked whether I could share a bedroom with an English speaker. To avoid the temptation to speak my native language, I asked not to be placed with an English-speaking roommate. When I got to my new room, I introduced myself to my new roommate Paolo, a Brazilian the same age as I, whom I was surprised to find playing one of my favorite CDs on the stereo!

In just a few hours, we knew we'd be attached at the hip for the rest of the term. I left France with many stories, so when people ask me what my favorite part of the trip was, they are always surprised to hear me talk about my Brazilian friend Paolo and the scores of weekdays in class, weeknights on the town, and weekends exploring France we enjoyed together. I love how people can seem so different, but end up being so similar. The most valuable lesson I gained from studying in France wasn't just to respect the French people but to respect all people, for your next best friend could be just a continent away. I would recommend an exchange program to anyone who wants to experience foreign cultures.

PASSAGE 6: My Favorite Lunch Spot

A few blocks south of the apartment I'm renting, Joe's Lunch Bucket serves up amazing sandwiches. The owner runs the place, so he stays open as late as he has customers, usually until some time after midnight. The restaurant is at the end of an alley, and if you sit on the last stool by the window, you can see the big public fountain in the adjacent square. There are usually swarms of children and teenagers milling around the area; no one really enforces the curfew, especially in the summer when the nights are warm and families stroll around the shops and public spaces downtown.

Joe has a menu stuck to the front window with masking tape that is yellowed and cracked from years in the sun. I've never stopped to read it and, as far as I can tell, neither have the other regulars. Never mind the dingy interior, noisy kitchen, and lack of parking. I just go there for the food. I like to sit at the bar along the window and relax with the sinful deliciousness of Joe's Special Rueben. Newcomers to Joe's marvel at the stack of corned beef and sauerkraut spilling from the bread onto my paper plate.

Good food is the key to Joe's success. The sign outside is hardly eye-catching and the restaurant always appears to be dimly lit, but one can't help noticing the large smiley face decal affixed to the front door that reads "Keep Smiling!" The sandwiches certainly make me smile, but I can't say they do the same for Joe himself. His constant ugly expression belies the care that he takes with his meats, breads, and cheeses. So, too, does his quirky restaurant. The counters are dented and scratched from years of knife abuse. The old refrigerator case clicks and whines constantly. As I savor my sandwich, my gaze always drifts toward the caulk along the window panes, once white, which is slowly deteriorating with the rest of the place. In fact, I've often thought to offer Joe my painting services in exchange for some sustenance. Regardless of the appearance of the place, I still enjoy my delicious sandwich. The food is, after all, the only charm this little place needs. A lot of people pay daily visits to the sandwich shop.

I know many of their faces by now, but I could more easily recall their tastes in sandwiches. Older people like the classics—chicken salad, corned beef, and the like. Kids come in after school for grilled cheeses or Joe's tuna salad. When I am back home and reminiscing, I picture all of these people with their favorite meals.

Perhaps it's the familiarity that makes Joe's my favorite sandwich shop. I know that I can come in whenever I please and someone would look away from a savory sandwich and offer a friendly hello. It's nice to know that Joe's Lunch Bucket and its neighborly ambience are just a short walk away.

ACT PREP SERIES: ENGLISH

One question a day

Passage 1 & 2



1) Why is it that we are so completely obsessive with the hair on our heads?

Choose the best answer:

A. NO CHANGE

B. obsessed

C. obsessing

D. obsessed

The best answer is **B**. In this sentence, the word "obsessed" is most appropriate to describe the action taking place. The word "obsessive" can be used as an adjective. The participle "obsessing" is not appropriate, and "obsessed" is not a word, so answer choices C and D can be eliminated.

2) Millions of dollars are spent each year on cutting hair, lengthening hair, bleaching hair, straightening hair, curling hair, highlighting hair, and even growing hair; whatever you can do to hair, someone is willing to pay the money to do it

Choose the best answer:

F. NO CHANGE

G. pay

H. paying money

J. have paid

The best answer is G. Answer choice G is the most clear and concise, because it simply uses the verb "pay." As it is written, the sentence is wordy and redundant. Answer choice H, "paying money," sounds awkward and is grammatically incorrect in conjunction with the phrase that precedes it, "is willing to." Answer choice J is written in the past tense while the rest of the sentence is written in the present tense and, therefore, must be eliminated.

3) Natural redheads long for to be brunettes and dishwater blondes dream of shiny golden tresses.

Choose the best answer:

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. to have
- C. to be
- D. becoming for

The best answer is **C**. Answer choice C is grammatically correct and makes sense idiomatically. Answer choices A and B indicate that natural redheads actually want to possess brunettes, which does not make sense. Answer choice D does not make sense and is not correct for standard written English.

- 4) Both men and women cringe at the sight of each gray hair, so teenagers enjoy weekly experiments with magenta dyes, spikes, and tangerine streaks.

Choose the best answer:

F. NO CHANGE

G. however

H. yet

J. and

The best answer is J. The first part of the sentence and the second part of the sentence are independent clauses that refer to different hairstyles. Answer choice J, "and," makes most sense here. Answer choice G, "however," requires punctuation to fit in the sentence (normally between commas). Answer choice F implies that teenagers enjoy experimenting with their hair as a result of men and women cringing at the sight of gray hair. Answer choices G and H imply that the two phrases negate each other.

5) All of these thoughts cross my mind as I examine the result of my most recent hair adventure.

Choose the best answer:

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. result for
- C. result with
- D. result by

The best answer is **A**. The correct preposition to use here is "of." The phrase "result of" is idiomatic.

6) As a mature woman watching the gray hairs mixing in rapidly with my natural brunette tones, I decided over a year ago, to approach my stylist with the idea of highlights.

Choose the best answer:

F. NO CHANGE

G. rapidly mixing

H. mixed rapidly in

J. rapidly mix in to

The best answer is **G**. This answer choice correctly precedes the verb “mixing” with its modifier “rapidly.”

7) As a mature woman watching the gray hairs mixing in rapidly with my natural brunette tones, I decided over a year ago, to approach my stylist with the idea of highlights.

A. NO CHANGE

B. ago to

C. ago: to

D. ago to,

The best answer is **B**. The sentence does not have a natural pause at this point in the sentence, so a comma is inappropriate. In addition, you can eliminate answer choices A and D. A colon should be used after a complete statement to introduce directly related information, such as a list or an example, so answer choice C should be eliminated.

8) Having seen many of my peers go this route, I figured that highlighting was for to be the answer to my reluctance to look my age.

F. NO CHANGE

G. was being

H. could of been

J. was

The best answer is J. The word "was" makes the most sense in the sentence, because it clearly and simply indicates the past tense. The phrase "could of become" can never be correct. "Could of been" is not appropriate in standard written English. Some people incorrectly use "could of" when they should use "could've," which is the contraction of "could have."

9) The monthly highlighting went well; excepting for those times when my hair turned out a little too subdued, making me look partially gray instead of brunette.

A. NO CHANGE

B. well, except

C. well except

D. well. Except

The best answer is B. The sentence is composed of a main clause ("The monthly highlighting went well") followed by a subordinator ("except for"), then an extended noun phrase ("those times when my hair turned out a little too subdued, making me look partially gray instead of brunette."). Especially as it is preceded by a subordinator, such a lengthy component of the sentence calls to be offset by a comma.

10) I suffered through it remarkably well, saying to myself, "She'll get it right the next time." For the most part, I've enjoyed my year of highlights, so much so that I bravely approached Donna, my stylist, two months ago and proclaimed that I was done with wimpy highlighting and ready to go blonde.

F. NO CHANGE

G. Also

H. Instead

J. In light of this

The best answer is F. The sentence as it is written makes the most sense in context. It sufficiently indicates that, despite some setbacks, the author's experience with highlights has been mostly positive. Answer choice G implies that the author was making some sort of list regarding her and her feelings towards her highlights. Answer choice H indicates some sort of contrast that is simply not present in the paragraph. Answer choice J suggests that the hairdresser's mistakes pleased the author.

11) [1] The monthly highlighting went well: excepting for those times when my hair turned out a little too subdued, making me look partially gray instead of brunette. [2] I suffered through it remarkably well, saying to myself, "She'll get it right the next time." [3] For the most part, I've enjoyed my year of highlights, so much so that I bravely approached Donna, my stylist, two months ago and proclaimed that I was done with wimpy highlighting and ready to go blonde. [4] The result was not quite what I expected, but I resolved to live with it! [5] Donna was surprised at my suggestion, but quickly began sharing my unbridled enthusiasm as she gathers the appropriate chemicals and concoctions that would soon transform me.

For the sake of logic and coherence, Sentence 5 should be placed:

- A. where it is now.
- B. before Sentence 1.
- C. after Sentence 2.
- D. before Sentence 4.

The best answer is D. Sentence 5 follows from the information in Sentence 3. Likewise, Sentence 4 relies on Sentence 5, and also creates a good transition into the next paragraph.

12) Donna was surprised at my suggestion, but quickly began sharing my unbridled enthusiasm as she gathers the appropriate chemicals and concoctions that would soon transform me.

F. NO CHANGE

G. she was gathering

H. she had been gathering

J. she gathered

The best answer is J. To maintain parallel tense in the sentence, since Donna "was" surprised at the author's request, the simple past tense of the verb "gather" also needs to be used. The sentence is written in the present tense; therefore answer choice F can be eliminated. Answer choices G and H are not in the parallel tense.

13) Three months later, I find myself seesawing between tears and laughter as I attempt to cover up a patch of nearly bald scalp on the top of my head.

A. NO CHANGE

B. along with

C. or

D. as well as

The best answer is **A**. The coordinating conjunction “and” is the most concise choice; it joins two functionally parallel elements within the sentence—here, two nouns: “tears” and “laughter.” The phrases “along with” and “as well as” serve a similar function to the coordinating conjunction “and,” but they are awkward and neither clear nor concise. Answer choice C is incorrect because “or” does not make sense in this context with “seesawing.”

14) For someone who has long been fanatical about the appearance of her hair, this absence of hair has proven to be quite a challenge to my ego and self-confidence. I've always enjoyed styling my hair, and suddenly, I have nothing to style. Each time I begin to experience a new pang of disgust and despair over this new hair anomaly, I once again ask myself why we are so obsessed with the hair on our heads. The answer always comes to me in a flash, in a simple two-word phrase: pure vanity. Soon after this realization, I cease my crying. (14)

The writer is considering deleting the preceding sentence (14).

If the sentence was deleted, the essay would primarily lose:

- F. a summary of the essay.
- G. the narrator's ability to put her situation into perspective.
- H. a stylistic link to the essay's introduction.
- J. an understanding of the author's purpose in writing the essay.

The best answer is G. Since the preceding sentence does not summarize the essay or relate to the introduction, answer choices F and H can be eliminated. This sentence is specifically about the narrator ceasing her crying, which is not the purpose of the essay. Eliminate answer choice J. The realization of her vanity puts her situation in perspective; therefore, answer choice G is the best answer.

15) Question 15 asks about the preceding passage as a whole. Please refer to the **Passage 1: Hair-raising Problems** handout.

Suppose the writer had chosen to write a how-to article for people wanting to change their hair color. Would this essay fulfill the writer's goal?

A. Yes, because the author's approach to changing her own hair color would ease the anxiety of others wishing to do the same.

B. Yes, because this essay emphasizes the universality of people changing their hairstyles and hair color.

C. No, because this article only deals with the narrator's own experimentation with her hair and does not provide steps for others to do the same.

D. No, because the essay discourages people from changing their hair color.

The best answer is C. The passage simply discusses the narrator's experiences in dyeing her own hair. It is unlikely that the author's decision to change her hair color would ease the apprehension of others who were considering dyeing their hair. The fact that dyeing her hair gave her a bald spot would probably deepen the fears of those who were feeling anxious about dyeing their hair. Eliminate answer choice A. Answer choice B can also be eliminated; the passage only discusses the author and other "mature" women dyeing their hair. Answer choice D is incorrect because the passage as a whole is neutral and does not attempt to influence people regarding changing hair color.



16) You will probably never find his name in a history book, but to this day, Walker Lee continues to contribute to America heritage.

F. NO CHANGE

G. American heritage.

H. Americas heritage.

J. American's heritage.

The best answer is **G**. Answer choice G is a common phrase, and sounds the best in the context of this sentence. It is appropriate to use "American" as an adjective to describe the noun "heritage." The other answer choices are grammatically incorrect. Also, answer choice J suggests that the "heritage" belongs to only one "American," which does not fit the context of the paragraph.

17) Walker Lee is an old-fashioned, modern day blacksmith who still practices the fine art of manipulating metal over a hot fire. In his words, "Blacksmithing is no dying art!"

A. NO CHANGE

B. who still continues to practice

C. who continues to still practice

D. who practices still

The best answer is **A**. To state that Walker Lee "still practices" is clear and concise. Answer choices B and C are wordy and redundant in saying that Lee "still continues to practice" and "continues to still practice." Answer choice D is awkward.

18) Walker Lee had began his career in hand-forged ironwork at the age of 30.

F. NO CHANGE

G. had begun

H. begun

J. began

The best answer is J. This passage is written in the past tense. "Began" is the simple past form of the verb "begin," therefore answer choice J is correct. Answer choice F is written in the past perfect tense, and therefore does not maintain the parallel between verbs. Answer choices G and H use "begun," the past participle of "begin," and can therefore be eliminated.

19) The idea of creating an object out of iron, a most intractable material, appealed to him.

Which of the following alternatives to the underlined portion would NOT be acceptable?

- A. one of the most intractable metals, iron,
- B. a most intractable material, that being iron
- C. iron (a most intractable material)
- D. a most intractable material, iron,

The best answer is B. The phrase “that being iron” does not make sense. The rest of the answer choices correctly use parentheses or commas in setting off their respective appositive phrases.

20) He started on this new venture by collecting and reading every book he could find that described the process of blacksmithing: its history, its practical and decorative uses, and the equipment needed to establish and outfit his own smithy. During the course of his research, Lee discovered a tool necessary for the success of any blacksmith: the anvil, a heavy block of iron or steel upon which the blacksmith hammered and shaped the malleable metal. Lee bought his first anvil from 84-year-old Hurley Alford Templeton of Philadelphia, lugging it home to Michigan in the back of a 4-H county bus.

Which choice most emphasizes the difficulty in moving the large anvil?

F. NO CHANGE

G. taking

H. driving

J. transporting

The best answer is F. The word “lugging” is the most descriptive word. It signifies carrying or pulling something heavy. None of the other answer choices addresses the effort it took to move the anvil from Pennsylvania to Michigan.

21) This anvil weighed 100 pounds, about the minimum size Walker Lee needed to get started in his craft.

At this point, the writer wants to express how Lee first began the craft of blacksmithing. Which choice would most effectively accomplish this task?

A. NO CHANGE

B. continue

C. keep going

D. move on

The best answer is A. The phrase “get started” in answer choice A clearly indicates that Lee was just beginning his career in blacksmithing. The other answer choices suggest that his career had already started.

22) Lee's first anvil cost him \$100, and four months later, he paid \$75 for an additional implement—a vice—from Cornell University in New York. This important tool also made its way back to Michigan in the back of Lee's 4-H bus.

F. NO CHANGE

G. it's

H. its'

J. the

The best answer is F. In the context of the sentence, "its" is in the possessive form; therefore, no apostrophe is necessary. "It's" means "it is." "Its'" (note the apostrophe at the end) does not exist in English because "it" is a singular pronoun.

23) Lee's first anvil cost him \$100, and four months later, he paid \$75 for an additional implement—a vice—from Cornell University in New York. This important tool also made its way back to Michigan in the back of Lee's 4-H bus. Lee had spent the summer carting 4-H groups out from Michigan to the east coast for various county fairs and expositions.

Once Lee obtained his first portable forge, he was 24 ready to build his blacksmith shop, commonly referred to 24 as a "smithy."

A. NO CHANGE

B. Carting 4-H groups out from Michigan to the east coast for various county fairs and expositions, Lee had spent the summer.

C. Lee had spent the summer, for various county fairs and expositions, carting 4-H groups out from Michigan to the east coast.

D. OMIT the underlined portion

The best answer is D. Omitting the underlined portion of the sentence is the best choice in this instance. In any form, the information provided in this sentence is distractive—not related to the main topic of the essay—and is therefore unnecessary.

24) Once Lee obtained his first portable forge, he was ready to build his blacksmith shop, commonly referred to as a "smithy." In the interest of economy, he constructed this shop out of inexpensive oak planks and tarpaper. It was a crude little shack but stood for only nine years. Lee, who by then was completely hooked on blacksmithing, replaced his first shop with a finer one made of more expensive wood; this shop also had glass windows, a definite improvement over Lee's original "smithy."

Given that all of the choices are true, which one would most effectively introduce the subject of this paragraph?

F. NO CHANGE

G. Obtaining a portable forge for the shop proved to be

Lee's biggest challenge.

H. Blacksmith shops can be difficult to construct, but the most challenging task is moving the necessary equipment into it.

J. A blacksmith's forge requires some type of blower in order to keep the fire hot enough to bend the steel.

The best answer is F. Answer choice F provides a logical and relevant introduction to the topic of the paragraph. Answer choice H is incorrect because the paragraphs preceding and following this sentence have nothing to do with moving equipment. Answer choices G and J can be eliminated because neither has anything to do with the construction of Lee's first blacksmith shop, the subject of the paragraph.

25) It was a crude little shack but stood for only nine years.

A. NO CHANGE

B. that stood for

C. which standing for

D. and stands for

The best answer is B. This answer choice is correct because it is the only one that is grammatically proper and makes sense. Answer choice A does not make sense because "but" is used to introduce a contradictory element; a "crude" structure standing "only nine years" appears to be instead a correlational relationship. Answer choice C is ungrammatical and D violates tense agreement with "was."

26) The very first object Lee forged was a long, pointed Hudson Bay dagger. Many people refer to this type of knife as a “dag.” As he recalls that event he says, “From the minute I first saw the thing take shape, I was hooked ...still am. There’s an element of magic in it to me. You heat it up and pound it with a hammer and it goes where you want it to go.”

F. NO CHANGE

G. long pointed,

H. long, and pointed

J. long-pointed

The best answer is **F**. If two adjectives modify a noun in the same way, they must either be separated by a comma or joined with the word “and” with no comma.

27) Years later at a family event Lee, discovered that his Italian ancestors were accomplished coppersmiths.

A. NO CHANGE

B. later at a family, event Lee

C. later, at a family event, Lee,

D. later, at a family event, Lee

The best answer is **D**. The phrase “at a family event” is a descriptive phrase that must be set off by commas. Answer choice C is incorrect because subject and verb must not be separated by a comma. Similarly, in B, a comma makes an incorrect division of a compound.

28) During the gathering, Lee's great uncle Johnny was proclaiming that Lee's propensity for blacksmithing was "in the blood" as he happily presented Lee with a new 125-pound anvil.

F. NO CHANGE

G. proclaimed

H. had been proclaiming

J. having proclaimed

The best answer is **G**. The act of proclaiming took place during the event, so it is a completed action and should be in the past tense.

29) [1]The very first object Lee forged was a long, pointed Hudson Bay dagger. [2] Many people refer to this type of knife as a “dag.” [3] As he recalls that event he says, “From the minute I first saw the thing take shape, I was hooked ...still am. There’s an element of magic in it to me. You heat it up and pound it with a hammer and it goes where you want it to go.” [4] Years later at a family event Lee, discovered that his Italian ancestors were accomplished coppersmiths. [5] During the gathering, Lee’s great uncle Johnny was proclaiming that Lee’s propensity for blacksmithing was “in the blood” as he happily presented Lee with a new 125-pound anvil.

Which of the following sentences in this paragraph is LEAST relevant to the main focus of the essay and, therefore, could be deleted?

- A. Sentence 2
- B. Sentence 3
- C. Sentence 4
- D. Sentence 5

The best answer is A. The information given in Sentence 2 merely describes the knife from the preceding sentence, and has nothing to do with the creation of Lee’s first object.

30) As an outside observer watches Walker Lee bending and shaping a hot metal rod into some recognizable form, it is difficult to discern the origin of the magic Lee spoke of; is it in the glowing, orange steel or in Walker himself?

F. NO CHANGE

G. was watching

H. had been watching

J. watched

The best answer is **F**. No specific person or point in time is mentioned, and the remainder of the sentence is written in the present tense. Thus, the present tense of the verb “watch” must be used.

W.W. Jacobs (1863-1943)

The Monkey's Paw (1902)

Without, the night was cold and wet, but in the small parlour of Laburnam Villa the blinds were drawn and the fire burned brightly. Father and son were at chess, the former, who possessed ideas about the game involving radical changes, putting his king into such sharp and unnecessary perils that it even provoked comment from the white-haired old lady knitting placidly by the fire.

"Hark at the wind," said Mr. White, who, having seen a fatal mistake after it was too late, was amiably desirous of preventing his son from seeing it.

"I'm listening," said the latter, grimly surveying the board as he stretched out his hand. "Check."

"I should hardly think that he'd come to-night," said his father, with his hand poised over the board.

"Mate," replied the son.

"That's the worst of living so far out," bawled Mr. White, with sudden and unlooked-for violence; "of all the beastly, slushy, out-of-the-way places to live in, this is the worst. Pathway's a bog, and the road's a torrent. I don't know what people are thinking about. I suppose because only two houses on the road are let, they think it doesn't matter."

"Never mind, dear," said his wife soothingly; "perhaps you'll win the next one."

Mr. White looked up sharply, just in time to intercept a knowing glance between mother and son. The words died away on his lips, and he hid a guilty grin in his thin grey beard.

"There he is," said Herbert White, as the gate banged to loudly and heavy footsteps came toward the door.

The old man rose with hospitable haste, and opening the door, was heard condoling with the new arrival. The new arrival also consoled with himself, so that Mrs. White said, "Tut, tut!" and coughed gently as her husband entered the room, followed by a tall burly man, beady of eye and rubicund of visage.

"Sergeant-Major Morris," he said, introducing him.

The sergeant-major shook hands, and taking the proffered seat by the fire, watched contentedly while his host got out whisky and tumblers and stood a small copper kettle on the fire.

At the third glass his eyes got brighter, and he began to talk, the little family circle regarding with eager interest this visitor from distant parts, as he squared his broad shoulders in the chair and spoke of strange scenes and doughty deeds; of wars and plagues and strange peoples.

"Twenty-one years of it," said Mr. White, nodding at his wife and son. "When he went away he was a slip of a youth in the warehouse. Now look at him."

"He don't look to have taken much harm," said Mrs. White, politely.

"I'd like to go to India myself," said the old man, "just to look round a bit, you know."

"Better where you are," said the sergeant-major, shaking his head. He put down the empty glass, and sighing softly, shook it again.

"I should like to see those old temples and fakirs and jugglers," said the old man. "What was that you started telling me the other day about a monkey's paw or something, Morris?"

"Nothing," said the soldier hastily. "Leastways, nothing worth hearing."

"Monkey's paw?" said Mrs. White curiously.

"Well, it's just a bit of what you might call magic, perhaps," said the sergeant-major off-handedly.

His three listeners leaned forward eagerly. The visitor absentmindedly put his empty glass to his lips and then set it down again. His host filled it for him.

"To look at," said the sergeant-major, fumbling in his pocket, "it's just an ordinary little paw, dried to a mummy."

He took something out of his pocket and proffered it. Mrs. White drew back with a grimace, but her son, taking it, examined it curiously.

"And what is there special about it?" inquired Mr. White, as he took it from his son and, having examined it, placed it upon the table.

"It had a spell put on it by an old fakir," said the sergeant-major, "a very holy man. He wanted to show that fate ruled people's lives, and that those who interfered with it did so to their sorrow. He put a spell on it so that three separate men could each have three wishes from it."

His manner was so impressive that his hearers were conscious that their light laughter jarred somewhat.

"Well, why don't you have three, sir?" said Herbert White cleverly.

The soldier regarded him in the way that middle age is wont to regard presumptuous youth. "I have," he said quietly, and his blotchy face whitened.

"And did you really have the three wishes granted?" asked Mrs. White.

"I did," said the sergeant-major, and his glass tapped against his strong teeth.

"And has anybody else wished?" inquired the old lady.

"The first man had his three wishes, yes," was the reply. "I don't know what the first two were, but the third was for death. That's how I got the paw."

His tones were so grave that a hush fell upon the group.

"If you've had your three wishes, it's no good to you now, then, Morris," said the old man at last. "What do you keep it for?"

The soldier shook his head. "Fancy, I suppose," he said slowly.

"If you could have another three wishes," said the old man, eyeing him keenly, "would you have them?"

"I don't know," said the other. "I don't know."

He took the paw, and dangling it between his front finger and thumb, suddenly threw it upon the fire. White, with a slight cry, stooped down and snatched it off.

"Better let it burn," said the soldier solemnly.

"If you don't want it, Morris," said the old man, "give it to me."

"I won't," said his friend doggedly. "I threw it on the fire. If you keep it, don't blame me for what happens. Pitch it on the fire again, like a sensible man."

The other shook his head and examined his new possession closely. "How do you do it?" he inquired.

"Hold it up in your right hand and wish aloud," said the sergeant-major, "but I warn you of the consequences."

"Sounds like the *Arabian Nights*," said Mrs. White, as she rose and began to set the supper. "Don't you think you might wish for four pairs of hands for me?"

Her husband drew the talisman from his pocket and then all three burst into laughter as the sergeant-major, with a look of alarm on his face, caught him by the arm.

"If you must wish," he said gruffly, "wish for something sensible."

Mr. White dropped it back into his pocket, and placing chairs, motioned his friend to the table. In the business of supper the talisman was partly forgotten, and afterward the three sat listening in an enthralled fashion to a second instalment of the soldier's adventures in India.

"If the tale about the monkey paw is not more truthful than those he has been telling us," said Herbert, as the door closed behind their guest, just in time for him to catch the last train, "we shan't make much out of it."

"Did you give him anything for it, father?" inquired Mrs. White, regarding her husband closely.

"A trifle," said he, coloring slightly. "He didn't want it, but I made him take it. And he pressed me again to throw it away."

"Likely," said Herbert, with pretended horror. "Why, we're going to be rich, and famous, and happy. Wish to be an emperor, father, to begin with; then you can't be henpecked."

He darted round the table, pursued by the maligned Mrs. White armed with an antimacassar.

Mr. White took the paw from his pocket and eyed it dubiously. "I don't know what to wish for, and that's a fact," he said slowly. "It seems to me I've got all I want."

"If you only cleared the house, you'd be quite happy, wouldn't you?" said Herbert, with his hand on his shoulder. "Well, wish for two hundred pounds, then; that'll just do it."

His father, smiling shamefacedly at his own credulity, held up the talisman, as his son, with a solemn face somewhat marred by a wink at his mother, sat down at the piano and struck a few impressive chords.

"I wish for two hundred pounds," said the old man distinctly.

A fine crash from the piano greeted the words, interrupted by a shuddering cry from the old man. His wife and son ran toward him.

"It moved, he cried, with a glance of disgust at the object as it lay on the floor. "As I wished it twisted in my hands like a snake."

"Well, I don't see the money," said his son, as he picked it up and placed it on the table, "and I bet I never shall."

"It must have been your fancy, father, " said his wife, regarding him anxiously.

He shook his head. "Never mind, though; there's no harm done, but it gave me a shock all the same."

They sat down by the fire again while the two men finished their pipes. Outside, the wind was higher than ever, and the old man started nervously at the sound of a door banging upstairs. A silence unusual and depressing settled upon all three, which lasted until the old couple rose to retire for the night.

"I expect you'll find the cash tied up in a big bag in the middle of your bed," said Herbert, as he bade them good-night, "and something horrible squatting up on top of the wardrobe watching you as you pocket your ill-gotten gains."

He sat alone in the darkness, gazing at the dying fire, and seeing faces in it. The last face was so horrible and so simian that he gazed at it in amazement. It got so vivid that, with a little uneasy laugh, he felt on the table for a glass containing a little water to throw over it. His hand grasped the monkey's paw, and with a little shiver he wiped his hand on his coat and went up to bed.

II

In the brightness of the wintry sun next morning as it streamed over the breakfast table Herbert laughed at his fears. There was an air of prosaic wholesomeness about the room which it had lacked on the previous night, and the dirty, shrivelled little paw was pitched on the sideboard with a carelessness which betokened no great belief in its virtues.

"I suppose all old soldiers are the same," said Mrs White. "The idea of our listening to such nonsense! How could wishes be granted in these days? And if they could, how could two hundred pounds hurt you, father?"

"Might drop on his head from the sky," said the frivolous Herbert.

"Morris said the things happened so naturally," said his father, "that you might if you so wished attribute it to coincidence."

"Well, don't break into the money before I come back," said Herbert, as he rose from the table. "I'm afraid it'll turn you into a mean, avaricious man, and we shall have to disown you."

His mother laughed, and following him to the door, watched him down the road, and returning to the breakfast table, was very happy at the expense of her husband's credulity. All of which did not prevent her from scurrying to the door at the postman's knock, nor prevent her from referring somewhat shortly to retired sergeant-majors of bibulous habits when she found that the post brought a tailor's bill.

"Herbert will have some more of his funny remarks, I expect, when he comes home," she said, as they sat at dinner.

"I dare say," said Mr. White, pouring himself out some beer; "but for all that, the thing moved in my hand; that I'll swear to."

"You thought it did," said the old lady soothingly.

"I say it did," replied the other. "There was no thought about it; I had just—What's the matter?"

His wife made no reply. She was watching the mysterious movements of a man outside, who, peering in an undecided fashion at the house, appeared to be trying to make up his mind to enter. In mental connection with the two hundred pounds, she noticed that the stranger was well dressed and wore a silk hat of glossy newness. Three times he paused at the gate, and then walked on again. The fourth time he stood with his hand upon it, and then with sudden resolution flung it open and walked up the path. Mrs. White at the same moment placed her hands behind her, and hurriedly unfastening the strings of her apron, put that useful article of apparel beneath the cushion of her chair.

She brought the stranger, who seemed ill at ease, into the room. He gazed at her furtively, and listened in a preoccupied fashion as the old lady apologized for the appearance of the room, and her husband's coat, a garment which he usually reserved for the garden. She then waited as patiently as her sex would permit, for him to broach his business, but he was at first strangely silent.

"I—was asked to call," he said at last, and stooped and picked a piece of cotton from his trousers. "I come from Maw and Meggins."

The old lady started. "Is anything the matter?" she asked breathlessly. "Has anything happened to Herbert? What is it? What is it?"

Her husband interposed. "There, there, mother," he said hastily. "Sit down, and don't jump to conclusions. You've not brought bad news, I'm sure, sir" and he eyed the other wistfully.

"I'm sorry"—began the visitor.

"Is he hurt?" demanded the mother.

The visitor bowed in assent. "Badly hurt," he said quietly, "but he is not in any pain."

"Oh, thank God!" said the old woman, clasping her hands. "Thank God for that! Thank"—

She broke off suddenly as the sinister meaning of the assurance dawned upon her and she saw the awful confirmation of her fears in the other's averted face. She caught her breath, and turning to her slower-witted husband, laid her trembling old hand upon his. There was a long silence.

"He was caught in the machinery," said the visitor at length, in a low voice.

"Caught in the machinery," repeated Mr. White, in a dazed fashion, "yes."

He sat staring blankly out at the window, and taking his wife's hand between his own, pressed it as he had been wont to do in their old courting days nearly forty years before.

"He was the only one left to us," he said, turning gently to the visitor. "It is hard."

The other coughed, and rising, walked slowly to the window. "The firm wished me to convey their sincere sympathy with you in your great loss," he said, without looking round. "I beg that you will understand I am only their servant and merely obeying orders."

There was no reply; the old woman's face was white, her eyes staring, and her breath inaudible; on the husband's face was a look such as his friend the sergeant might have carried into his first action.

"I was to say that Maw and Meggins disclaim all responsibility," continued the other. "They admit no liability at all, but in consideration of your son's services they wish to present you with a certain sum as compensation."

Mr. White dropped his wife's hand, and rising to his feet, gazed with a look of horror at his visitor. His dry lips shaped the words, "How much?"

"Two hundred pounds," was the answer.

Unconscious of his wife's shriek, the old man smiled faintly, put out his hands like a sightless man, and dropped, a senseless heap, to the floor.

III

In the huge new cemetery, some two miles distant, the old people buried their dead, and came back to a house steeped in shadow and silence. It was all over so quickly that at first they could hardly realize it, and remained in a state of expectation as though of something else to happen--something else which was to lighten this load, too heavy for old hearts to bear.

But the days passed, and expectation gave place to resignation--the hopeless resignation of the old, sometimes miscalled, apathy. Sometimes they hardly exchanged a word, for now they had nothing to talk about, and their days were long to weariness.

It was about a week after that that the old man, waking suddenly in the night, stretched out his hand and found himself alone. The room was in darkness, and the sound of subdued weeping came from the window. He raised himself in bed and listened.

"Come back," he said tenderly. "You will be cold."

"It is colder for my son," said the old woman, and wept afresh.

The sound of her sobs died away on his ears. The bed was warm, and his eyes heavy with sleep. He dozed fitfully, and then slept until a sudden wild cry from his wife awoke him with a start.

"*The paw!*" she cried wildly. "The monkey's paw!"

He started up in alarm. "Where? Where is it? What's the matter?"

She came stumbling across the room toward him. "I want it," she said quietly. "You've not destroyed it?"

"It's in the parlor, on the bracket," he replied, marveling. "Why?"

She cried and laughed together, and bending over, kissed his cheek.

"I only just thought of it," she said hysterically. "Why didn't I think of it before? Why didn't *you* think of it?"

"Think of what?" he questioned.

"The other two wishes," she replied rapidly. "We've only had one."

"Was not that enough?" he demanded fiercely.

"No," she cried, triumphantly; "we'll have one more. Go down and get it quickly, and wish our boy alive again."

The man sat up in bed and flung the bedclothes from his quaking limbs. "Good God, you are mad!" he cried aghast.

"Get it," she panted; "get it quickly, and wish—Oh, my boy, my boy!"

Her husband struck a match and lit the candle. "Get back to bed," he said, unsteadily. "You don't know what you are saying."

"We had the first wish granted," said the old woman, feverishly; "why not the second?"

"A coincidence," stammered the old man.

"Go and get it and wish," cried the old woman, quivering with excitement.

The old man turned and regarded her, and his voice shook. "He has been dead ten days, and besides he—I would not tell you else, but—I could only recognize him by his clothing. If he was too terrible for you to see then, how now?"

"Bring him back," cried the old woman, and dragged him toward the door. "Do you think I fear the child I have nursed?"

He went down in the darkness, and felt his way to the parlor, and then to the mantelpiece. The talisman was in its place, and a horrible fear that the unspoken wish might bring his mutilated son before him ere he could escape from the room seized upon him, and he caught his breath as he found that he had lost the direction of the door. His brow cold with sweat, he felt his way round the table, and groped along the wall until he found himself in the small passage with the unwholesome thing in his hand.

Even his wife's face seemed changed as he entered the room. It was white and expectant, and to his fears seemed to have an unnatural look upon it. He was afraid of her.

"*Wish!*" she cried, in a strong voice.

"It is foolish and wicked," he faltered.

"*Wish!*" repeated his wife.

He raised his hand. "I wish my son alive again."

The talisman fell to the floor, and he regarded it fearfully. Then he sank trembling into a chair as the old woman, with burning eyes, walked to the window and raised the blind.

He sat until he was chilled with the cold, glancing occasionally at the figure of the old woman peering through the window. The candle end, which had burnt below the rim of the china candlestick, was throwing pulsating shadows on the ceiling and walls, until, with a flicker larger than the rest, it expired. The old man, with an unspeakable sense of relief at the failure of the talisman, crept back to his bed, and a minute or two afterward the old woman came silently and apathetically beside him.

Neither spoke, but both lay silently listening to the ticking of the clock. A stair creaked, and a squeaky mouse scurried noisily through the wall. The darkness was oppressive, and after lying for some time screwing up his courage, the husband took the box of matches, and striking one, went downstairs for a candle.

At the foot of the stairs the match went out, and he paused to strike another, and at the same moment a knock, so quiet and stealthy as to be scarcely audible, sounded on the front door.

The matches fell from his hand. He stood motionless, his breath suspended until the knock was repeated. Then he turned and fled swiftly back to his room, and closed the door behind him. A third knock sounded through the house.

"What's that?" cried the old woman, starting up.

"A rat," said the old man, in shaking tones—"a rat. It passed me on the stairs."

His wife sat up in bed listening. A loud knock resounded through the house.

"It's Herbert!" she screamed. "It's Herbert!"

She ran to the door, but her husband was before her, and catching her by the arm, held her tightly.

"What are you going to do?" he whispered hoarsely.

"It's my boy; it's Herbert!" she cried, struggling mechanically. "I forgot it was two miles away. What are you holding me for? Let go. I must open the door."

"For God's sake, don't let it in," cried the old man trembling.

"You're afraid of your own son," she cried, struggling. "Let me go. I'm coming, Herbert; I'm coming."

There was another knock, and another. The old woman with a sudden wrench broke free and ran from the room. Her husband followed to the landing, and called after her appealingly as

she hurried downstairs. He heard the chain rattle back and the bottom bolt drawn slowly and stiffly from the socket. Then the old woman's voice, strained and panting.

"The bolt," she cried loudly. "Come down. I can't reach it."

But her husband was on his hands and knees groping wildly on the floor in search of the paw. If he could only find it before the thing outside got in. A perfect fusillade of knocks reverberated through the house, and he heard the scraping of a chair as his wife put it down in the passage against the door. He heard the creaking of the bolt as it came slowly back, and at the same moment he found the monkey's paw, and frantically breathed his third and last wish.

The knocking ceased suddenly, although the echoes of it were still in the house. He heard the chair drawn back and the door opened. A cold wind rushed up the staircase, and a long loud wail of disappointment and misery from his wife gave him courage to run down to her side, and then to the gate beyond. The street lamp flickering opposite shone on a quiet and deserted road.

The Open Window

by H. H. Munro (Saki)

"My aunt will be down presently, Mr. Nuttel," said a very self-possessed young lady of fifteen; "in the meantime you must try and put up with me."

Framton Nuttel endeavoured to say the correct something which should duly flatter the niece of the moment without unduly discounting the aunt that was to come. Privately he doubted more than ever whether these formal visits on a succession of total strangers would do much towards helping the nerve cure which he was supposed to be undergoing.

"I know how it will be," his sister had said when he was preparing to migrate to this rural retreat; "you will bury yourself down there and not speak to a living soul, and your nerves will be worse than ever from moping. I shall just give you letters of introduction to all the people I know there. Some of them, as far as I can remember, were quite nice."

Framton wondered whether Mrs. Sappleton, the lady to whom he was presenting one of the letters of introduction, came into the nice division.

"Do you know many of the people round here?" asked the niece, when she judged that they had had sufficient silent communion.

"Hardly a soul," said Framton. "My sister was staying here, at the rectory, you know, some four years ago, and she gave me letters of introduction to some of the people here."

He made the last statement in a tone of distinct regret.

"Then you know practically nothing about my aunt?" pursued the self-possessed young lady.

"Only her name and address," admitted the caller. He was wondering whether Mrs. Sappleton was in the married or widowed state. An undefinable something about the room seemed to suggest masculine habitation.

"Her great tragedy happened just three years ago," said the child; "that would be since your sister's time."

"Her tragedy?" asked Framton; somehow in this restful country spot tragedies seemed out of place.

"You may wonder why we keep that window wide open on an October afternoon," said the niece, indicating a large French window that opened on to a lawn.

"It is quite warm for the time of the year," said Framton; "but has that window got anything to do with the tragedy?"

"Out through that window, three years ago to a day, her husband and her two young brothers went off for their day's shooting. They never came back. In crossing the moor to their favourite snipe shooting ground they were all three engulfed in a treacherous piece of bog. It had been that dreadful wet summer, you know, and places that were safe in other years gave way suddenly without warning. Their bodies were never recovered. That was the dreadful part of it." Here the child's voice lost its self-possessed note and became falteringly human. "Poor aunt always thinks that they will come back some day, they and the little brown spaniel that was lost with them, and walk in at that window just as they used to do. That is why the window is kept open every evening till it is quite dusk. Poor dear aunt, she has often told me how they went out; her husband with his white waterproof coat over his arm, and Ronnie, her youngest brother, singing 'Bertie, why do you bound?' as he always did to tease her, because she said it got on her nerves. Do you know,

sometimes on still, quiet evenings like this, I almost get a creepy feeling that they will all walk in through that window - "

She broke off with a little shudder. It was a relief to Framton when the aunt bustled into the room with a whirl of apologies for being late in making her appearance.

"I hope Vera has been amusing you?" she said.

"She has been very interesting," said Framton.

"I hope you don't mind the open window," said Mrs. Sappleton briskly; "my husband and brothers will be home directly from shooting, and they always come in this way. They've been out for snipe in the marshes to-day, so they'll make a fine mess over my poor carpets. So like you men-folk, isn't it?"

She rattled on cheerfully about the shooting and the scarcity of birds, and the prospects for duck in the winter. To Framton it was all purely horrible. He made a desperate but only partially successful effort to turn the talk on to a less ghastly topic; he was conscious that his hostess was giving him only a fragment of her attention, and her eyes were constantly straying past him to the open window and the lawn beyond. It was certainly an unfortunate coincidence that he should have paid his visit on this tragic anniversary.

"The doctors agree in ordering me complete rest, an absence of mental excitement, and avoidance of anything in the nature of violent physical exercise," announced Framton, who laboured under the tolerably wide-spread delusion that total strangers and chance acquaintances are hungry for the least detail of one's ailments and infirmities, their cause and cure. "On the matter of diet they are not so much in agreement," he continued.

"No?" said Mrs. Sappleton, in a voice which only replaced a yawn at the last moment. Then she suddenly brightened into alert attention - but not to what Framton was saying.

"Here they are at last!" she cried. "Just in time for tea, and don't they look as if they were muddy up to the eyes!"

Framton shivered slightly and turned towards the niece with a look intended to convey sympathetic comprehension. The child was staring out through the open window with dazed horror in her eyes. In a chill shock of nameless fear Framton swung round in his seat and looked in the same direction.

In the deepening twilight three figures were walking across the lawn towards the window; they all carried guns under their arms, and one of them was additionally burdened with a white coat hung over his shoulders. A tired brown spaniel kept close at their heels. Noiselessly they neared the house, and then a hoarse young voice chanted out of the dusk: "I said, Bertie, why do you bound?"

Framton grabbed wildly at his stick and hat; the hall-door, the gravel-drive, and the front gate were dimly-noted stages in his headlong retreat. A cyclist coming along the road had to run into the hedge to avoid an imminent collision.

"Here we are, my dear," said the bearer of the white mackintosh, coming in through the window; "fairly muddy, but most of it's dry. Who was that who bolted out as we came up?"

"A most extraordinary man, a Mr. Nuttel," said Mrs. Sappleton; "could only talk about his illnesses, and dashed off without a word of good-bye or apology when you arrived. One would think he had seen a ghost."

"I expect it was the spaniel," said the niece calmly; "he told me he had a horror of dogs. He was once hunted into a cemetery somewhere on the banks of the Ganges by a pack of pariah dogs, and had to spend the night in a newly dug grave with the creatures snarling and grinning and foaming just above him. Enough to make anyone their nerve."

Romance at short notice was her speciality.

Close Reading Questions over "The Open Window"



Directions: Answer in complete sentences.

1. How old is the girl who answers the door?
2. What is wrong with Framton Nuttel?
3. Why is he visiting total strangers?
4. Who is Mrs. Sappleton?
5. Why is Nuttel visiting in this particular area?
6. Does Nuttel know anything about these people?
7. Why is it unusual to have the large French window open in October?
8. What does Vera tell Nuttel is Mrs. Sappleton's great tragedy?
9. How long ago did the great tragedy occur?
10. How does Vera say Mrs. Sappleton is reacting to the tragedy?
11. When Mrs. Sappleton comes into the room, why does she say she has the window open?
12. Why does Nuttel say he is visiting her?
13. Who appears in the deepening twilight?

14. What is Nuttel's reaction to the sighting?

15. How does Vera explain Nuttel's sudden departure?

16. What does the last line of the story, "Romance at short notice was her specialty," tell you about Vera?

"The Open Window" Quiz

Directions: Choose the *best* answer and circle it.

1. What occurs in the **exposition** of the short story?
 - a. Framton Nuttel visits and is talking to Vera Sappleton, a fifteen-year-old girl in the country.
 - b. The Sappleton men who were hunting on the moor return home.
 - c. Vera Sappleton informs Framton Nuttel that her aunt keeps a window open hoping that the husband and brothers return home from a hunting trip when they died three years ago.
 - d. Vera Sappleton looks at the hunters who have returned in horror and Framton flees in terror.
2. What occurs in the **rising action** of the short story?
 - a. Framton Nuttel visits and is talking to Vera Sappleton, a fifteen-year-old girl in the country.
 - b. The Sappleton men who were hunting on the moor return home.
 - c. Vera Sappleton informs Framton Nuttel that her aunt keeps a window open hoping that the husband and brothers return home from a hunting trip when they died three years ago.
 - d. Vera Sappleton looks at the hunters who have returned in horror and Framton flees in terror.
3. What occurs in the **climax** of the short story?
 - a. The Sappleton men who were hunting on the moor return home.
 - b. Vera Sappleton informs Framton Nuttel that her aunt keeps a window open hoping that the husband and brothers return home from a hunting trip when they died three years ago.
 - c. Vera Sappleton informs her aunt that Framton Nuttel left because he is afraid of dogs and the narrator reveals that Vera is a creative storyteller.
 - d. Vera Sappleton looks at the hunters who have returned in horror and Framton flees in terror.
4. What occurs in the **falling action** of the short story?
 - a. The Sappleton men who were hunting on the moor return home.
 - b. Vera Sappleton informs Framton Nuttel that her aunt keeps a window open hoping that the husband and brothers return home from a hunting trip when they died three years ago.
 - c. Vera Sappleton informs her aunt that Framton Nuttel left because he is afraid of dogs and the narrator reveals that Vera is a creative storyteller.
 - d. Vera Sappleton looks at the hunters who have returned in horror and Framton flees in terror.
5. What occurs in the **resolution** of the short story?
 - a. The Sappleton men who were hunting on the moor return home.
 - b. Vera Sappleton informs Framton Nuttel that her aunt keeps a window open hoping that the husband and brothers return home from a hunting trip when they died three years ago.
 - c. Vera Sappleton informs her aunt that Framton Nuttel left because he is afraid of dogs and the narrator reveals that Vera is a creative storyteller.
 - d. Vera Sappleton looks at the hunters who have returned in horror and Framton flees in terror.
6. What is the "twist ending" that the reader infers by the story's **resolution**?
 - a. Everyone in the story is already dead and not living.
 - b. Framton is the only character alive in the short story; everyone else is a ghost.
 - c. The hunters are ghosts who can stay on earth if they pass through the open window.
 - d. Vera lies and tells an elaborate story to Framton to entertain herself and scare or trick him.
7. Why doesn't Mrs. Sappleton act excited, horrified, or shocked to see the hunters return home?
 - a. She doesn't react dramatically to their return because she knows that they're ghosts.
 - b. She doesn't react dramatically to their return because she knows they're not real.
 - c. She doesn't react dramatically to their return because she's fallen in love with Framton.
 - d. She doesn't react dramatically to their return because she's unaware of Vera's story.

8. Why does Vera explain Framton's sudden departure to her family?
 - a. Vera explains Framton's sudden departure because she cares about Framton Nuttel's health.
 - b. Vera explains Framton's sudden departure because she wants her aunt to assist Framton.
 - c. Vera explains Framton's sudden departure, so she can see him again.
 - d. Vera explains Framton's sudden departure, so she doesn't get caught and get in trouble.
9. What does Framton Nuttel's name suggest about him?
 - a. Framton Nuttel's name suggests that he's a country, down to earth guy from the farm.
 - b. Framton Nuttel's name suggests that he's a guy who likes to frame innocent people.
 - c. Framton Nuttel's name suggests that he's "nuts" or excited about peanut butter.
 - d. Framton Nuttel's name suggests that he's "nuts" or not mentally well.
10. Considering that Vera's name in Latin means "truth," how is her name significant?
 - a. Vera's name is significant because she does tell the truth to everyone all the time.
 - b. Vera's name is significant because she ironically doesn't tell the truth; she lies for fun.
 - c. Vera's name is significant because she is the only person who can see the truth in others.
 - d. Vera's name is significant because she is the wisest person who uses knowledge for good.
11. When Mrs. Sappleton says, "A most extraordinary man, a Mr. Nuttel [...] could only talk about his illnesses, and dashed off without a word of goodbye or apology when you arrived," what type(s) of irony is/are present in this quote and the **resolution** of the short story?
 - i. **Dramatic irony** is evident because the reader soon learns why Mr. Nuttel departed quickly, but Mrs. Sappleton isn't aware of this information.
 - ii. **Situational irony** is evident because Mr. Nuttel came to the country to relieve his anxiety, but his visit to the Sappletons' home has likely made him more anxious and upset.
 - iii. **Verbal irony** is evident because she says that Mr. Nuttel is an extraordinary man, but she doesn't mean what she says; she really means that he is boring and rude.

a. i. and ii. b. i., ii., and iii. c. i. and iii. d. ii. and iii.
12. What is the **point of view** of the short story?
 - a. The **point of view** is **first person** because the narrator relays the events from his perspective.
 - b. The **point of view** is **third person limited** because an outside narrator relays the thoughts and feelings of one character: Framton's.
 - c. The **point of view** is **third person objective** because the narrator reports what happens without revealing insight into how any characters think or feel.
 - d. The **point of view** is **third person omniscient** because an all-knowing outside narrator relays the thoughts and feelings of more than one character.
13. We learn about all of the following in the **flashback** of the short story *except* which?
 - a. Framton is in the country to ease his depression, anxiety, and nerves.
 - b. Framton doesn't know anyone in the country.
 - c. Framton learns of the tragedy of what happened to Mrs. Sappleton's relatives from Vera.
 - d. Framton's sister arranged for Framton to meet the Sappletons, so he can make friends.
14. Vera's actions in the short story **indirectly characterize** as being what type of person?
 - a. bratty and spoiled
 - b. mischievous and sneaky
 - c. nurturing and loving
 - d. sweet and compassionate
15. What is a **theme** that readers infer from the **resolution** of the short story?
 - a. Children are innocent creatures who improve the lives of adults who know and have them.
 - b. The dead have a powerful impact upon the living.
 - c. Lying to others can't cause them or you harm.
 - d. One shouldn't so quickly believe and trust others.

"The Monkey's Paw"

Close Reading Assignment – Foreshadowing

Close Reading Focus

Foreshadowing – A literary device in which a writer provides the audience with hints and clues about what will happen next.

- Foreshadowing usually appears toward the beginning of a story.
- Foreshadowing allows readers to make better predictions about what will happen next.

Directions – Closely read and annotate the passages from W. W. Jacobs' short story, "The Monkey's Paw." As you read, look for examples of foreshadowing that W. W. Jacobs includes. In the spaces provided, write a quote that includes foreshadowing, and then explain why this is an example of foreshadowing.

Passage 1 - Foreshadowing

"It had a spell put on it by an old fakir," said the sergeant-major, "a very holy man. He wanted to show that fate ruled people's lives, and that those who interfered with it did so to their sorrow. He put a spell on it so that three separate men could each have three wishes from it."

His manner was so impressive that his hearers were conscious that their light laughter jarred somewhat.

"Well, why don't you have three, sir?" said Herbert White, cleverly.

The soldier regarded him in the way that middle age is wont to regard presumptuous youth. "I have," he said, quietly, and his blotchy face whitened.

"And did you really have the three wishes granted?" asked Mrs. White.

"I did," said the sergeant-major, and his glass tapped against his strong teeth.

"And has anybody else wished?" persisted the old lady.

"The first man had his three wishes. Yes," was the reply; "I don't know what the first two were, but the third was for death. That's how I got the paw."

Foreshadowing: _____

_____ " ()

Explanation: _____

Passage 2 - Foreshadowing

"If you've had your three wishes, it's no good to you now, then, Morris," said the old man at last. "What do you keep it for?"

The soldier shook his head. "Fancy, I suppose," he said, slowly. "I did have some idea of selling it, but I don't think I will: it has caused enough mischief already. Besides, people won't buy. They think it's a fairy tale; some of them, and those who do think anything of it want to try it first and pay me afterward."

"If you could have another three wishes," said the old man, eyeing him keenly, "would you have them?"

"I don't know," said the other. "I don't know."

He took the paw, and dangling it between his forefinger and thumb, suddenly threw it upon the fire. White, with a slight cry, stooped down and snatched it off.

"Better let it burn," said the soldier, solemnly.

"If you don't want it, Morris," said the other, "give it to me."

"I won't," said his friend, doggedly. "I threw it on the fire. If you keep it, don't blame me for what happens. Pitch it on the fire again like a sensible man."

Why do you suppose Mr. White is asking about Sergeant Major Morris' wishes?

Why do you think Morris keeps the talisman?

Why do you think Sergeant Major Morris doesn't know if he would have more wishes?

What do Sergeant Major Morris' actions and words reveal to the audience about the paw?

Why does Sergeant Major Morris not want to give the monkey's paw to his friend?

Foreshadowing: " _____"
_____ " (____).

Explanation: _____

Passage 2 - Fortification

He sat alone in the darkness, gazing at the dying fire, and seeing faces in it. The last face was so horrible and so simian that he gazed at it in amazement. It got so vivid that, with a little uneasy laugh, he felt on the table for a glass containing a little water to throw over it. His hand grasped the monkey's paw, and with a little shiver he wiped his hand on his coat and went up to bed.

ForeShadowing: " _____"
 _____"
 _____" (_____).

Explanation: _____

Write an explanatory paragraph that identifies and explains the effectiveness of W. W. Jacobs' foreshadowing in his short story "The Monkey's Paw." In your paragraph, be sure to include a topic sentence, quotes, and explanations.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

"The Monkey's Paw"

Close Reading Assignment – Figurative Language

Close Reading Focus

Figurative Language – The use of words or phrases with an intended meaning that is different than the literal interpretation.

- **Metaphor** – A figure of speech that compares one thing to another without the use of like or as.
- **Simile** – A figure of speech that compares two things using the words like or as.
- **Personification** – A figure of speech that provides human characteristics to something nonhuman.

Directions – Closely read and annotate the passages from W. W. Jacobs' short story, "The Monkey's Paw." As you read, look for examples of figurative language. In the spaces provided, write a quote that includes figurative language, and then explain the type, meaning, and effectiveness of the figurative language.

Passage 1 - Figurative Language

"That's the worst of living so far out," bawled Mr. White, with sudden and unlooked-for violence; "of all the beastly, slushy, out-of-the-way places to live in, this is the worst. Pathway's a bog, and the road's a torrent. I don't know what people are thinking about. I suppose because only two houses in the road are let, they think it doesn't matter."

Figurative Language: " _____

_____ " ()

Explanation: _____

Passage 2 - Figurative Language

A fine crash from the piano greeted the words, interrupted by a shuddering cry from the old man. His wife and son ran toward him.

"It moved," he cried, with a glance of disgust at the object as it lay on the floor.

"As I wished, it twisted in my hand like a snake."

"Well, I don't see the money," said his son as he picked it up and placed it on the table, "and I bet I never shall."

Figurative Language: " _____

_____ " ()

Explanation: _____

"The Monkey's Paw"

Close Reading Assignment – Mood

Close Reading Focus

- **Mood** – In a literary work, the mood is the feeling that the reader experiences while reading literature.
- Author's will use imagery and descriptive words to create a mood.
- Specific word choice and sensory details help create a mood.

Directions – Closely read and annotate the passages from W. W. Jacobs' short story, "The Monkey's Paw." As you read, analyze the text for clues that reveal the story's mood. In the spaces provided, write a quote that conveys the mood, and then identify the mood and explain how W.W. Jacobs creates it.

Passage 1 - Mood

Without, the night was cold and wet, but in the small parlor of Laburnum Villa the blinds were drawn and the fire burned brightly. Father and son were at chess; the former, who possessed ideas about the game involving radical chances, putting his king into such sharp and unnecessary perils that it even provoked comment from the white-haired old lady knitting placidly by the fire.

Mood: " _____"

_____ " ()

Explanation: _____

Passage 2 - Mood

"That's the worst of living so far out," bawled Mr. White, with sudden and unlooked-for violence; "of all the beastly, slushy, out-of-the-way places to live in, this is the worst. Pathway's a bog, and the road's a torrent. I don't know what people are thinking about. I suppose because only two houses in the road are let, they think it doesn't matter."

"Never mind, dear," said his wife, soothingly; "perhaps you'll win the next one."

Mr. White looked up sharply, just in time to intercept a knowing glance between mother and son. The words died away on his lips, and he hid a guilty grin in his thin grey beard.

Mood: " _____"

_____ " ()

Explanation: _____

Passage 3 - Mood

In the huge new cemetery, some two miles distant, the old people buried their dead, and came back to a house steeped in shadow and silence. It was all over so quickly that at first they could hardly realize it, and remained in a state of expectation as though of something else to happen — something else which was to lighten this load, too heavy for old hearts to bear.

But the days passed, and expectation gave place to resignation—the hopeless resignation of the old, sometimes miscalled, apathy. Sometimes they hardly exchanged a word, for now they had nothing to talk about, and their days were long to weariness.

It was about a week after that the old man, waking suddenly in the night, stretched out his hand and found himself alone. The room was in darkness, and the sound of subdued weeping came from the window. He raised himself in bed and listened.

Mood: " _____"
_____ " ().

Explanation: _____

Passage 4 - Mood

He went down in the darkness, and felt his way to the parlor, and then to the mantelpiece. The talisman was in its place, and a horrible fear that the unspoken wish might bring his mutilated son before him ere he could escape from the room seized upon him, and he caught his breath as he found that he had lost the direction of the door. His brow cold with sweat, he felt his way round the table, and groped along the wall until he found himself in the small passage with the unwholesome thing in his hand.

Even his wife's face seemed changed as he entered the room. It was white and expectant, and to his fears seemed to have an unnatural look upon it. He was afraid of her.

Mood: " _____"
_____ " ().

Explanation: _____

Passage 2 - Mood

The knocking ceased suddenly, although the echoes of it were still in the house. He heard the chair drawn back, and the door opened. A cold wind rushed up the staircase, and a long loud wail of disappointment and misery from his wife gave him the courage to run down to her side, and then to the gate beyond. The streetlamp flickering opposite shone on a quiet and deserted road.

Mood: " _____

Explanation: _____

-Write an explanatory paragraph that identifies and states the mood of W. W. Jacobs' short story, "The Monkey's Paw." Pay close attention to the details Jacobs uses to create the mood. Be sure to include a topic sentence, quotations, and explanations in your paragraph.

Name _____ "The Monkey's Paw" Quiz

1. The story begins with the setting, "in the parlor of Lakesnam Villa." Outside, it is cold and rainy, but inside, "the fire burned brightly." The description of these two environments is an example of _____.
 a. comparison b. contrast c. personification d. alliteration
2. Mr. White and his son Herbert are playing chess, and the father realizes he has put his king in imminent danger. Trying to divert his son's attention away from the game in an attempt to conceal his mistake, Mr. White comments on the _____.
 a. stock market b. cat c. upcoming election d. wind and weather
3. The family welcomes a visitor, Sergeant-Major Morris, who warms himself by the fire and becomes more conversational after he _____.
 a. drinks whiskey b. eats dinner c. sits in the rocker d. pets the dog
4. Morris has been in the service for 21 years and has spent time in _____.
 a. India b. China c. Indonesia d. Africa
5. Mr. White presses Morris to tell them about a monkey's paw that has a spell on it, but the sergeant-major is initially reluctant to talk about the talisman. He takes the dried and shriveled paw for his pocket, and Mrs. White shrinks back from it, but Herbert examines it. Morris tells the family that the spell was put on the paw by a fakir, "a very holy man. He wanted to show that _____ ruled people's lives and those who interfered with it did so to their sorrow."
 a. love b. fate c. curiosity d. luck
6. The fakir's spell allows for three people to each have three wishes. The family is curious and skeptical, and Herbert jokingly asks why Morris hasn't taken his three wishes. Morris quietly replies that he already has; Morris' face drains of color as he remembers his three previous requests and how they were granted, but he does not share the specifics. Morris is the second person to have the monkey's paw. The first man also has had his three wishes granted, and his third and final wish was for _____.
 a. money b. fame c. more wishes d. death
7. Sergeant-Major Morris is hesitant and cautious about the paw. Suddenly and without warning, he throws it _____.
 a. out the door b. on the floor c. on the fire d. back in his pocket
8. Mr. White picks it up and takes it, and Morris reminds him it was taken and not given. Morris warns Mr. White, "If you must wish, wish for something sensible." Mr. White confesses that he does not know what to wish for; "I've got all I want." Finally, he wishes for the exact sum of money to pay off his _____.
 a. mortgage b. medical bills c. betting debts d. business expenses
9. To make a wish, one must hold the paw in the right hand and say the wish _____.
 a. out loud b. silently c. in rhyme d. with one's eyes closed
10. Mr. White emits a "shuddering cry" when he says the wish because "it twisted in my hands like a _____."
 a. mini tornado b. coiled rope c. snake d. bolt screw
11. The simile in the previous quotation is also a _____ allusion.
 a. mythological b. classical c. literary d. biblical

12. After his father makes the wish, Herbert lightheartedly states, "I don't see the money, and I bet I never shall." This quotation is an example of _____.
a. comparison b. contrast c. foreshadow d. flashback
13. The weather seems to be getting even worse, and the mood of the family becomes solemn. To lighten the atmosphere, Herbert jokes, "I expect you'll find the money tied up in a big bag in the middle of your _____."
a. bed b. garage c. sofa d. table
14. The next morning is sunny when Herbert goes off to work, and the mood of the family is also brighter. Mrs. White scoffs at Sergeant-Major Morris' story as a tall tale told as the result of too much drinking, "bibulous habits," and she remembers Herbert's comical remarks regarding the monkey's paw. Mr. White thoughtfully recalls, "Morris said the things happen so naturally that you might attribute it to _____."
a. circumstance b. coincidence c. chance d. misdirection
15. Outside, Mrs. White notices a _____ walking up and down the street in front of their house.
a. policeman b. serviceman c. homeless man d. well dressed man
16. The man finally comes to the door, and he has some tragic news; Herbert has been accidentally killed at work in the _____.
a. machinery b. loading dock c. furnace room d. equipment packaging
17. The messenger from Maw and Meggins states the company disclaims all legal responsibility but wishes to offer monetary compensation for their loss, a sum of _____ pounds.
a. 100 b. 200 c. 500 d. 1,000
18. A week after Herbert's death Mrs. White remembers there are two wishes left on the monkey's paw. She is wild with excitement when she thinks they could "wish" Herbert back. Mr. White _____ his wife's idea.
a. agrees with b. disagrees with c. is ecstatic about d. won't listen to
19. Mr. White makes the third and final wish just in the nick of time, as they hear insistent knocking at their bolted door. Mr. White fears "the thing" outside and is relieved when he "frantically breathed his third and final wish." The door is opened; his wife emits "a loud wail of disappointment," and the walkway is _____.
a. deserted b. covered in mist c. brightly lit d. shaded with clouds
20. The main idea of this story is _____.
a. Greed will ruin your life. b. Friendships can be renewed after long absences.
c. Love transcends the grave. d. Tampering with fate can lead to sorrow.