

## LEARN IT: Context Clues

You can often guess the meaning of a word from **context clues**. The context of a word is the sentence or passage in which it appears. Using context clues means looking at the surrounding words, phrases, and sentences to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read these sentences.

Maggie has an amiable personality. Everyone likes her.

**In this sentence, the word amiable means**

- A cruel.
- B friendly.
- C rude.
- D boring.

**Step 1** Read the example sentences carefully and look for context clues that give you hints about the meaning of the underlined word.

*The second sentence says that everyone likes Maggie. This tells me that the word amiable refers to one of Maggie’s good qualities.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices and use the process of elimination to determine the correct answer.

*If I choose A, the sentence becomes: Maggie has a cruel personality. This does not make sense because being cruel is not a good quality. Choices C and D also refer to negative traits. Only B, friendly, refers to a good quality.*

**Step 3** Replace the word *amiable* with your answer choice. Does it make sense?

*If I replace amiable with friendly, the sentences become: Maggie has a friendly personality. Everyone likes her. The first sentence makes sense. Choice B is definitely the answer.*

**Synonyms**, or words with nearly the same meaning, often have different **shades of meaning**. For example, the words *chilly* and *freezing*, which both mean “cold,” convey different sensations. If it is chilly, you might wear a light jacket, but if it is freezing you would need a winter coat. Recognizing shades of meaning can give the reader a clearer understanding of the text.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read these sentences.

Mom got irritated when Joe came home late from school. She got really furious, however, when he did it again.

The words irritated and furious both suggest that Mom was

- A excited.
- B happy.
- C angry.
- D quiet.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. How are the words *irritated* and *furious* connected?

*I know that irritated and furious are both words that suggest strong negative feelings since they describe Mom’s reactions to Joe’s misbehavior. Furious describes a stronger emotion than irritated, but both words are somewhat similar in meaning.*

**Step 2** Which of the listed answer choices has a shade of meaning that is similar to both *irritated* and *furious*?

*If I substitute the word angry for either irritated or furious, the passage still makes sense. None of the other answer choices express strong negative feelings as do irritated or furious. I will choose C because the words irritated and furious give different shades of meaning for angry.*

## PRACTICE IT: Context Clues

Directions: Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Chirp! Chirp! Chirp! Oliver Bloom looked up, squinting in the bright sunlight. A tiny blue jay landed on a nearby branch and tilted its head, as if to study Oliver. Then the bird was suddenly out of sight after it flew swiftly away to the biggest oak tree in the backyard.

It was a lovely afternoon in April, a day Oliver had looked forward to all winter. Today was the day he finally got to plant his summer garden! Oliver's mother, Rosanna, opened the kitchen window and leaned over the ledge. "Oliver, don't forget to plant the strawberries," she called out excitedly. "I want to make strawberry shortcake this summer." Oliver jumped from the tree stump, eagerly picked up his gardening tools, and ran toward the garden plot, whistling. "Oliver is really diligent. He's my hardest working son," Rosanna thought to herself.

**1** As used in paragraph 1, what does the word swiftly mean?

- A quickly
- B slowly
- C gradually
- D sadly

**2** Oliver's mother was excited to make strawberry shortcake in the same way that Oliver was \_\_\_\_\_ to plant his garden.

- A quick
- B reluctant
- C unwilling
- D eager

**3** What is the difference between squinting and gazing?

- A Gazing is done by several people together, and squinting is done alone.
- B Gazing usually takes less time than squinting does.
- C Gazing is done without any thinking, and squinting is done with much thought.
- D Gazing is an intent look, and squinting is a look with the eyes partially closed.

**4** Read these sentences from the passage.

"Oliver is really diligent. He's my hardest working son," Rosanna thought to herself.

What does the word diligent mean?

- A lazy
- B unreliable
- C active
- D playful

## LEARN IT: Features of Informational Materials

**Text features** include headlines, graphics, captions, boldfaced terms, hyperlinks, and footnotes.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read the passage.

#### Summer Roadwork for Evergreen Expressway

March 12, 2007—City officials said yesterday that twelve miles of the Evergreen Expressway will be closed in June because of roadwork.

Officials said that exits 33–40 on the expressway need major repairs. These exits stretch from Lumberton to Twin Peaks. Council member Ed Hurley said that the repairs will begin on June 1, 2007. He did not say when the work would be finished.

In this passage, *Summer Roadwork for Evergreen Expressway* is

- A a footnote.
- B a hyperlink.
- C a headline.
- D a caption.

**Step 1** Look at how the passage is structured.

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Think about the kind of information each type of text feature contains. Which kind of text feature does *Summer Roadwork for Evergreen Expressway* represent?

*A footnote appears at the bottom of a page, so A cannot be the correct answer. A hyperlink is usually underlined, so B would not be the answer. A caption provides information on an image, so D is not the answer. A headline tells the topic of a passage. C must be the correct answer.*

## EXAMPLE

**2** Read the passage.

Maria Tallchief was a talented ballet dancer. She was very famous. Dancers all over the world admired her.

Tallchief was born in 1925 in Fairfax, Oklahoma. Her father was an Osage Indian. Her mother's family had come from Europe. For most of her career, Tallchief danced with the New York City Ballet. She joined this company in 1947. She stayed until 1965.

Tallchief became known for her performance in *The Firebird*, a ballet based on a fiery piece of music. Her dancing was breathtaking.

In 1980, Tallchief founded the Chicago City Ballet. She served as its artistic director for seven years. Many people regard Tallchief as one of the greatest dancers of the twentieth century.

**This passage would most likely be found in**

- A a magazine for ballet dancers.
- B a training manual for ballet teachers.
- C the front page of a local newspaper.
- D a brochure for a ballet school.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. List the important information.

*Maria Tallchief was a talented and famous ballet dancer.  
Tallchief's performances, especially in The Firebird, were breathtaking.  
Tallchief is considered one of the greatest dancers in recent history.*

**Step 2** Read your list. What kind of information does the passage contain?

*The information is of general or global interest, so it may well be found in a magazine. It does not contain instructions, so it is not from a training manual. It does not provide information of local interest or about current events, so it is not from a local newspaper. The article does not contain descriptive advertising for a ballet school, so it is not from a brochure. Answer choice A, a magazine for ballet teachers, must be the correct answer.*







**Online information** is information that you can find and access by using a computer that is connected to the Internet. You can access online information easily by clicking icons or hyperlinks. Online information includes texts, images, sound clips, and video clips.

### EXAMPLE

**3** Read the following information about an organization.

#### “Fresh-Air Foundation”

We are looking for families residing in rural areas to host city children for the summer. If you live in a rural area, please consider becoming a host family. If you are interested, please click on the following:

-  About Us
-  Host Family Requirements
-  Host Family Responsibilities
-  Download Applications
-  Yearly Schedule
-  Watch Host Family Videos

**This information is most likely from a**

- A newspaper.
- B magazine.
- C Web site.
- D brochure.

**Step 1** Read the information carefully. Does it contain any special features?

*This is about an organization looking for host families. I can see that I can click on buttons to get to different kinds of materials, including videos.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. What kind of information is found in each answer choice?

*Newspapers, magazines, and brochures may all contain similar information about host-family organizations, but they provide only printed text. Only Web sites have hyperlinks and video clips. C is the correct answer.*

## PRACTICE IT: Features of Informational Materials

**Directions:** Read the documents and answer the questions that follow.

### Document A

One of the most popular food crops in the world is the potato. Some potatoes are cultivated for their starch. Starch is used to make fabric stiff. It also makes some foods thicker. However, most potatoes are grown to be eaten. Because much of the potato is made of water, it is easy to digest. In addition, potatoes are rich in vitamins and minerals. Potatoes have vitamin C and potassium.

The potato that most of us know best is the white potato, or Irish potato. The part of the potato plant we eat is called the tuber. It is the swollen end of the plant's underground stem. These tubers grow buds, or "eyes," that become new plants if conditions are right. The potato plant itself bears white or purplish flowers. The skin of a potato can be a variety of colors, from light tan to deep purple. Inside, its flesh ranges from white to yellow, but in some cases it may be purple. Over five hundred varieties of potatoes are grown across the world.

Botanists believe the potato first grew in the Andes Mountains of Peru and Bolivia. In the 1500s, the Spanish reached this area. They saw the native Incas eating potatoes. The Spaniards called the potato *batata*, after the sweet potato plants grown in the West Indies. Later, the English explorers changed the word *batata* to *potato*.

Today Idaho and Washington produce most of the potatoes grown in the United States. From potato chips and mashed potatoes to hash browns and French fries, the potato has become a major part of the American diet. Indeed, all of these interesting facts about the potato are enough to make your mouth water!

### Document B

August 14, 2007—The Nemis Ballet Company will perform in Hampden on August 20, 2007. The show will be at 8:00 p.m.

The ballet company will present *Sleeping Beauty*. Jasmine Darcy will play the part of Sleeping Beauty. Tristan Dunstan will play Prince Charming.

Adrian Nemis is the founder and artistic director of the Nemis Ballet Company. He says, "People should watch out. I gave a fresh twist to the old fairy tale."

Nemis adds he's pleased to return to Hampden. "Hampden is my hometown. I grew up here. My first performance was in Bailey's Auditorium." Noting the renovations made to Bailey's Auditorium, he said, "It's like the original auditorium, but with modern equipment."

Darwin Blade, mayor of Hampden, said he is pleased to have a homegrown talent back in town.

- 1** Passage A comes from a Web site. The underlined terms on a Web page are known as
- A hyperlinks
  - B buttons
  - C graphics
  - D captions
- 2** Passage B would most likely be found
- A on a school poster.
  - B in an encyclopedia.
  - C in a local newspaper.
  - D in a magazine for mayors.
- 3** Which is the *best* title for Passage B?
- A Nemis Ballet in Hampden
  - B Blade is Mayor
  - C Bailey’s Auditorium Renovated
  - D Sleeping Beauty
- 4** Which is the *best* title for Passage A?
- A The Healthiest Snack
  - B King Louis XVI’s Potato Campaign
  - C Who Produces the Most Potatoes?
  - D The Story of the Potato



## LEARN IT: Compare and Contrast

An **organizational pattern** refers to how information is arranged in a text. A **compare-and-contrast** organizational pattern compares ideas that are similar or contrasts ideas that are different.

### Compare

When a text uses a **comparing organizational pattern**, the information is arranged according to how two or more things, people, or ideas are similar. Signal words and phrases often used for comparisons include *similarly*, *alike*, *like*, *in the same way*, *too*, *both*, and *also*.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read this passage.

Lily and Rose are best friends who have many things in common. Both girls like to write poetry. Lily writes poems about Rose, describing her strength, charm, and intelligence. Rose writes poems about Lily; she also writes about Lily's snake, Spike. When Rose feels sad, Lily lets her play with Spike, knowing that his slithering ways will bring a smile to both their faces.

Last fall, Lily and Rose both entered an essay contest at their school. They had to compose essays that answered the question "Whom do you admire most?" Lily wrote about Rose, to no one's surprise; in the same way, Rose wrote about Lily.

#### The passage is comparing

- A people.
- B essays.
- C schools.
- D contests.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. Which signal words or phrases are used to show a comparison? What do these words and phrases compare?

*The signal words both and also and the phrase in the same way are used to compare Lily and Rose.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which answer choice describes Lily and Rose?

*Lily and Rose are people, so the correct answer is A.*

## Contrast

When a text uses a **contrasting organizational pattern**, the information is arranged according to how two or more things, people, or ideas are different. This pattern includes signal words or phrases such as *although*, *on the other hand*, *but*, *yet*, *however*, *instead*, *even though*, and *unlike*.

### EXAMPLE

**2** Read this passage.

Over the years, the expertise and technology for building roller coasters have improved. The first roller coasters were little more than sleds that traveled on tracks. Roller coasters today, on the other hand, are much faster and bigger. They travel at speeds up to one hundred miles per hour and soar higher than three hundred feet in the air.

**The passage shows a contrast between**

- A types of roller coasters.
- B safety features of roller coasters.
- C building materials for roller coasters.
- D roller coasters of the past and present.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. Which signal word or phrase is used to show contrast?

*The phrase on the other hand is used to signal a contrast.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which item do you think is referred to by the signal words? Why?

*I think the signal words refer to modern roller coasters, which are different from roller coasters of long ago. The correct answer must be D.*

## PRACTICE IT: Compare and Contrast

**Directions:** Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

### Best Friends

Ryan and Fernando are best friends. They have known each other since they were in grade school, and they live in the same town. However, the two disagree about several things. On weekends, Ryan likes to explore parks, but Fernando enjoys watching movies. When it comes to clothes, Ryan prefers white shirts and jeans, while Fernando is comfortable with dark-colored shirts and slacks. In restaurants, Ryan always orders roasted chicken, while Fernando asks for steaks and vegetables. Both love to read, but Ryan likes novels, and Fernando prefers magazines. Although the two differ in many ways, they also find ways to enjoy each other's company.

**1** How are Ryan and Fernando similar?

- A They love to read.
- B They prefer chicken.
- C They wear dark shirts.
- D They like to watch movies.

**2** In the passage, which signal word is used to show comparison?

- A however
- B but
- C both
- D although

**3** The passage allows for the comparison and contrast of

- A friends.
- B jeans.
- C parks.
- D magazines.

**4** In the passage, which signal word is not used to show a contrast?

- A but
- B also
- C however
- D although

## LEARN IT: Connect and Clarify Main Ideas

Each text—and usually each paragraph within the text—has a **main idea**. It answers the question “What is this passage about?” The main idea of a paragraph is often found in the **topic sentence**. All the details in a passage or paragraph should support its main idea.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read this passage.

Long ago, painters had to make their own paints. Painters used objects from nature, such as rocks and plants, to create colored powders called pigments. Pigments came from a variety of sources. Lapis lazuli, a bright blue rock, was a popular choice for creating blue pigments. Another source for blue pigments was the indigo plant. Yellow and red pigments came from rocks that had iron oxide in them, while crushed bird bones produced white pigments. Lead white, a type of white pigment, came from scrapings of the white crust that formed on pieces of lead.

#### This passage is mainly about

- A lapis lazuli used for blue coloring.
- B painters from the past.
- C sources of pigments.
- D colored powders.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully and ask yourself, “What is this passage about?” Most, if not all, of the sentences in the passage will guide you to the correct answer by giving details about the main idea.

*Most of the sentences in the passage discuss where pigments come from. Each sentence describes a different color pigment and its source.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices carefully. Which item states what the passage is about?

*Choice A is only one source of pigment, so it cannot be the correct answer. Although the passage begins by discussing painters from the past, it soon moves on to describe the sources of their pigments, so choice B is not the correct answer. Choice D is a definition of pigment, not the main idea of the passage. Choice C gives the main idea, which relates to the sources of the pigments used by painters long ago.*

Identifying the main ideas of different passages and connecting them to each other can help you make sense of what you read. To connect ideas from **multiple sources**, look for the main topics and think about how they support or strengthen each other. Ask yourself whether each source builds on the information in the other sources or contrasts and contradicts it.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read this passage.

Ozone is a thin layer of gas in Earth's atmosphere that shields us from the sun's harmful rays. Scientists have known since the 1970s that a hole sometimes appears in the ozone layer. In the mid-1980s, scientists learned that the hole was getting larger. Through tests and experiments, they showed that chemical compounds called chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) were causing problems in the ozone layer. CFCs rise up into the atmosphere through evaporation. There, the strong rays of the sun cause the CFCs to change into ozone-eating particles.

In the 1980s, CFCs were used to cool the air in air conditioners and refrigerators. They were also used in plastic foam boxes for food products and in aerosol cans containing hairsprays, deodorants, cleaning fluids, and shaving creams.

**Which of the following sources would provide the *best* evidence to support the main idea in the second paragraph?**

- A an editorial arguing why products containing CFCs should not be used
- B an article in a scientific journal listing the amount of CFCs in products
- C a diagram showing the different parts of air conditioners and refrigerators
- D a fictional story about scientists who studied the ozone layer during the 1980s

**Step 1** Carefully read the second paragraph and identify its main idea.

*The sentences in the second paragraph all describe the kinds of products that used CFCs during the 1980s.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices. Which source would be most likely to give you evidence that supports the paragraph's main idea?

*An editorial would mention the writer's opinions about why products that contain CFCs should not be used, but opinions must be supported by facts in order to be used as evidence. A diagram of air conditioners and refrigerators might not contain information about how CFCs are used in those appliances, and a fictional story about scientists who studied the ozone layer probably would not mention products that use CFCs either. Only an article in a scientific journal listing the amount of CFCs used in products would provide factual evidence about the different products that used CFCs in the 1980s. B is the correct answer.*

# PRACTICE IT: Connect and Clarify Main Ideas

**Directions:** Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

## A Visit to Hamburg

- 1 Hamburg is one of the largest and most important cities in Germany. It is located on the Elbe River and is the largest port in Germany. Hamburg handles half of all Germany's imports. Each year, more than 15,000 ships visit Hamburg's harbor. The city is the country's key business center, with a rich history of publishing and broadcasting.
- 2 The city of Hamburg dates back to the ninth century. During this time, the castle Hammaburg was built between the Alster and Elbe rivers. During the next several centuries, the village became an important religious center in northern Europe. Over the past 1,100 years, the city has been destroyed and rebuilt several times. Hamburg today is a modern city. However, it has managed to keep its cultural heritage.
- 3 Hamburg has long been a center of music. Composers such as Felix Mendelssohn and Johannes Brahms were born there. The Hamburg Staatsoper is one of the great opera houses in the world. In the early 1960s, the Beatles performed at Hamburg's nightclubs. Not long after, this rock group achieved worldwide fame.

**1** Where would this passage most likely be found?

- A in a nightclub advertisement
- B in an architecture textbook
- C in a tourism brochure of Hamburg
- D in an encyclopedia entry on composers

**2** Which of the following sources would provide the *best* evidence to support the main idea in paragraph 1?

- A an editorial arguing why travelers should visit Hamburg
- B an encyclopedia entry detailing Hamburg's size and major businesses
- C a map showing Hamburg's location along the Elbe River
- D a story about a sailor's adventures while visiting Hamburg's harbor

**3** Paragraph 2 is mainly about Hamburg's

- A castles.
- B religions.
- C history.
- D culture.

**4** Read this sentence from paragraph 3.

Hamburg has long been a center of music.

Which of the following sources would *best* support this idea?

- A a book about Hamburg's musical history
- B a diary of a tourist in Hamburg
- C a review of a concert in Hamburg
- D a magazine about current German singers

## LEARN IT: Clarify Text by Creating Outlines, Notes, Summaries, and Reports

**Outlines, notes, and summaries** are compact versions of a text. They contain only the most important details. They are useful for recording information you might want to remember later. That way, if you need the information for a test or a paper, you don't have to reread the entire text.

### Outlines

An **outline** is the skeleton of a text. It arranges the most important information in a way that shows how the details are related to each other. Headings are usually the main ideas. Subheadings include details to support the main ideas. Subheadings are always related to the headings they fall under.

To create an outline from a text, look for the main idea of each paragraph. Then, look for the details that support this main idea. Arrange this information in a format that is easy to read and reference.

#### I. Main Idea of Paragraph 1

- A. Detail
- B. Detail
- C. Detail

#### II. Main Idea of Paragraph 2

- A. Detail
- B. Detail
- C. Detail

#### III. Main Idea of Paragraph 3

- A. Detail
- B. Detail
- C. Detail

## MODEL EXAMPLE

**1** Read the following passage and outline.**The Three Types of Rocks**

In geology, there are three basic rock classifications. The first type of rock is igneous rock. Igneous rocks are formed when hot liquid magma cools and hardens. Granite, basalt, and obsidian are all igneous rocks.

The second type of rock is sedimentary rock. Sedimentary rocks are made up of small pieces of other rocks that are compressed over time to form a larger rock. Chalk, quartz, and limestone are all sedimentary rocks.

The third type of rock is metamorphic rock. Metamorphic rocks are rocks that have been changed by intense heat and pressure. Marble, shale, and slate are all metamorphic rocks.

**The Three Types of Rocks****I. Igneous rocks**

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Granite, basalt, and obsidian are examples

**II. Sedimentary rocks**

A. Made up of compressed pieces of rock

B. Chalk, quartz, and limestone are examples

**III. Metamorphic rocks**

A. Made up of rocks changed by heat and pressure

B. Marble, shale, and slate are examples

**Which detail should be used to complete the outline?**

- A There are three basic rock types      C The rocks are compressed over time  
 B Made up of hardened liquid magma      D The first type of rock is igneous rock

**Step 1** Look at the passage and outline. What is missing?

*The first subheading under “Igneous rocks” is missing. The main idea of the first paragraph is igneous rocks. Letter A in sections II and III of the outline describes what the rocks are made up of. I probably need a detail that describes igneous rocks.*

**Step 2** Look at the answer choices. Which answer choice gives the correct detail about igneous rocks?

*Answer A is the main idea of all three paragraphs, so it does not belong in the blank. Answer B is a description of igneous rocks. Answer C describes how sedimentary rocks are formed. Answer D is a heading in the outline. The best answer is answer choice B.*



## Notes

When you read it, you may want to record the most important information so you can reference later. Writing down the most important parts of a text is called taking **notes**. When you take notes, you don't want to write everything down. Only write down the key points and facts from the text. You also don't have to worry about using complete sentences when taking notes. Because your notes should only include the bare bones of a text, you may only need to write key words. Here is a list of some of the things you should look for when taking notes:

- the main idea of the text
- names of people
- the title of the text
- names of places
- dates when events occurred
- key descriptions
- special terms or vocabulary
- titles

## MODEL EXAMPLE

### 2 Read the following passage.

Many people contributed to the design of the modern zipper. The first was Elias Howe, who patented the “Automatic, Continuous Clothing Closure” in 1851. His device relied on a series of clasps that ran the length of the closure and a string that kept the teeth evenly spaced apart. It did not have the slider the modern zipper uses to lock the two sides of the closure together. This early version of the zipper was unreliable. The teeth unlocked and opened if the end of the closure was pulled in the other direction. The zipper still had a long way to go until it was ready for everyday use.

**Imagine that you are taking notes on this passage. Which detail should not be included in your notes?**

- A many people helped design the zipper
- B first version patented in 1851 by Elias Howe
- C Howe's version was unreliable
- D long way to go until it was ready to use every day

**Step 1** Read the passage. What are the most important points in the passage?

*The passage focuses on one of the people who contributed to the modern zipper. One version of the zipper was patented by Elias Howe in 1851. This version was unreliable because it came apart too easily.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which of the answer choices is not an important detail?

*Choice A is the main idea of the passage. Choice B is the name of the inventor and the date he patented his invention. Choice C is an important detail about Howe's invention. Choice D doesn't really provide any information at all. This is not an important detail and should not be included in my notes. The answer is D.*

## Summaries

**Summaries** are short recaps of a text. Like outlines and notes, they include only the most important details. Unlike outlines and notes, summaries are written in paragraph form and are made up of complete sentences. A summary should include the main idea and any significant names, places, or dates that are mentioned in the text. Summaries should also retell the most important details and descriptions from the text. Just be sure the summary is written in your own words.

### MODEL EXAMPLE

**3** Read the following passage.

On December 26, 2004, an earthquake occurred off the coast of Indonesia in the Indian Ocean. It was one of the largest earthquakes ever recorded and would turn out to be one of the most devastating natural disasters in history. The earthquake led to the formation of a tsunami, or giant wave, in the Indian Ocean. The tsunami was hard to detect before it reached the shore, so many people had no warning that the tsunami was about to hit. Almost 230,000 people died as a result of the earthquake and the tsunami. The countries that suffered the most damage and loss of life were Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, and Thailand. The tsunami was so big that it reached the east coast of Africa.

#### Which paragraph *best* summarizes the passage?

- A On December 26, 2004, one of the largest earthquakes in history triggered a tsunami off the coast of Indonesia in the Indian Ocean.
- B On December 26, 2004, one of the largest earthquakes ever recorded triggered a tsunami off the coast of Indonesia in the Indian Ocean. The massive tsunami devastated several countries, killed almost 230,000 people, and traveled very long distances.
- C In 2004, an earthquake triggered a tsunami off the coast of Indonesia in the Indian Ocean. The tsunami devastated Sri Lanka and Thailand and took the lives of many people.
- D On December 26, 2004, a very large earthquake was recorded off the coast of Indonesia in the Indian Ocean. This caused a tsunami that was hard to detect until it reached the shore and took the lives of many people—almost 230,000.

**Step 1** Read the passage. What information is most important?

*The date and location of the earthquake and the tsunami are important and should be included in a summary with important details such as the number of people who died.*

**Step 2** Look at the answer choices. Which answer choice includes all the important details?

*Answers A and C do not include the number of people who died. Answer D includes the unimportant detail of the tsunami being hard to detect and leaves out important effects of the tsunami. Answer B includes all the important details and no unimportant information. Answer B is the best summary of the passage.*

## PRACTICE IT: Clarify Text by Creating Outlines, Notes, Summaries, and Reports

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

### Braces for Your Teeth

*From the U.S. Food and Drug Administration*

- 1 Do you like the way your teeth look? No one has perfect teeth. Some people's teeth are crowded together. Other people have too much space between their teeth. Sometimes the upper teeth don't match the lower teeth when a person bites down. For some people the problem isn't so bad. But others may need braces to make their teeth straighter.
- 2 Braces are not just to make your smile look good. It's hard to brush crowded or crooked teeth. If your teeth don't get clean, they can get cavities and other problems.
- 3 There are special dentists who can tell if you need braces and can fit you with them if you do. They are called orthodontists.

### How Do Braces Work?

- 4 Braces put pressure against the teeth. Most of the pressure comes from a metal wire that goes across the outside of the teeth. Very slowly this pressure makes the teeth move and become straight.
- 5 The orthodontist adjusts the wire just a little bit every few weeks. The small changes in the wire allow the braces to move the teeth slowly. This is important. If the braces make the teeth move too fast, it can cause the teeth to become loose.
- 6 Because the teeth only can be moved slowly, you'll need to wear braces for about two years. After that you'll need to wear a plastic retainer over your teeth. This will keep them in their new position until bones grow around the teeth to hold them in place permanently.

### What Do Braces Look Like?

- 7 One wire goes across all of your top teeth and another goes across your bottom teeth. It is held in place by small pieces of metal or ceramic that are put on each tooth. These pieces can be clear or tooth-colored. But then the fun begins. The elastic ties that hold the wire to the pieces come in colors. You can get them to show your school spirit, support your favorite sports team, or celebrate an upcoming holiday. The ties can be changed when the orthodontist adjusts the wire.

### How to Take Care of Your Teeth with Braces

- 8 When you have braces, you'll have to be very good about following the brushing and flossing instructions your orthodontist gives you.
- 9 You can't eat hard, sticky or gooey foods such as jawbreakers, peanuts, ice cubes, caramel, or taffy. Those kinds of foods can break or bend the wires or brackets or get caught in the braces and cause cavities.
- 10 If you think you need braces, talk to your mom and dad.

**1** Which of these details should be included as a heading in an outline of the passage “Braces for Your Teeth”?

- A How braces work
- B Teeth can only move slowly
- C Avoid certain foods
- D Braces make teeth straighter

**2** Which of these details should be included in an outline as a subheading under the heading “What braces look like”?

- A Braces use pressure to slowly move your teeth
- B Talk to your parents if you think you need braces
- C Taking care of your teeth while wearing braces
- D You can choose the color of the elastic ties that hold the wire

**3** Which special term from paragraphs 1–3 should you include in your notes on the passage?

- A perfect teeth
- B problem
- C special dentists
- D orthodontists

**4** Read this summary of the passage.

Crowded or crooked teeth can cause dental problems, but they can be fixed using braces. Braces work by applying pressure and slowly moving the teeth. It takes about two years for braces to realign the teeth. Braces look like a wire across the top and bottom teeth. Elastic ties hold the wire, and you can choose the color of the ties. While wearing braces, you should follow the orthodontist’s instructions and avoid foods that can harm the braces or your teeth.

Which of the following details from the passage should be added to improve the summary *most*?

- A It is fun to choose the colors of the elastic ties for your braces.
- B An orthodontist is a special dentist who fits and adjusts braces.
- C I only had to wear braces for one and one-half years.
- D You shouldn’t eat caramel or taffy while you are wearing braces.

## LEARN IT: Follow Multiple-Step Instructions

Instructions are arranged in a sequence of steps. They are often numbered to make them easier for the reader to follow. Sometimes, key words such as *before*, *after*, *afterward*, and *then* are used to make the sequence clearer.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read the passage.

When you want to cross a street, you should look for a crosswalk first. After you find one, you shouldn't cross right away. Instead, pause and look both ways to make sure there is no oncoming traffic. If there are no approaching vehicles, you can cross the street safely.

**What is the *first* thing you should do if you want to cross the street?**

- A Cross right away.
- B Look left and right.
- C Pause for a moment.
- D Try to find a crosswalk.

**Step 1** Read the instructions carefully. List the steps and number them. Which step is the first one?

1. *Look for a crosswalk.*
2. *Pause.*
3. *Look both ways.*
4. *If there are no cars, cross the street.*

*According to my list, the first thing to do is look for a crosswalk.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices carefully and see which one matches the first step on your list.

*Choice D matches the first step on my list. All of the other choices are steps that come after the first one, so D is the correct answer.*

## Numbered Steps

Numbered steps make it easier to follow multiple instructions.

### EXAMPLE

**2** Read the following set of steps.

#### How to Use a Public Pay Phone

1. Pick up the phone from the cradle.
2. Insert the correct change into the coin slot.
3. Listen for the dial tone. Dial the area code and the phone number of the person you want to call.
4. Wait until someone answers and then identify yourself.
5. If you want to extend the time, insert more coins.
6. Hang up the phone after you are finished talking.

**If you have finished your call, which of the following should you do next?**

- A Hang up the phone.
- B Insert coins in the coin slot.
- C Dial the number.
- D Talk into the phone.

**Step 1** Read the steps carefully. When would a person have finished a call?

*I know a person is done using a pay phone when he or she has finished talking.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Based on the numbered steps, what should you do when your call is over?

*Choices B, C, and D all happen before I have finished my call. I hang up the phone after I have finished my call, so A is the correct answer.*

## PRACTICE IT: Follow Multiple-Step Instructions

**Directions:** Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

### How to Put Your New Ant Town Together

Congratulations on being the new owner of the famous Ant Town! This kit comes complete with base, front and back windows, lid, soil, and one queen ant. Please follow the instructions carefully.

1. Place the large window labeled “front” into the front slot of the base. Place the back window into the rear slot of the base. Make sure that you attach the windows properly.
2. Fill the Ant Town with the soil provided. The soil should come up to the line marked on the back window. Gently shake the Ant Town until the soil is level.
3. Snap the lid hinges into place on the side.
4. Attach the lid to the lid hinges using the enclosed screws. You will need a screwdriver to do this. Make sure the lid closes tightly to prevent your ants from escaping.
5. Open the plastic cup containing the queen ant. Carefully place the queen ant into the Ant Town and immediately close the lid afterwards.

You will be able to watch the queen ant dig herself a tunnel and begin laying eggs. Within two to three weeks, you should be able to see several dozen small ants busily and tirelessly digging tunnels and caves for their new nest.

You will be able to watch all the activity through the front and back windows of your Ant Town.

- 1** What is the *first* action that should be taken by someone who wants to assemble this product?
- A Place the queen ant into the Ant Town.
  - B Insert the front window into the front slot of the base.
  - C Insert the back window into the rear slot of the base.
  - D Fill the Ant Town with soil.
- 2** Which action should be done immediately after filling the Ant Town with soil?
- A Attach the lid to the hinges using a screwdriver and screws.
  - B Snap the lid hinges into place on the sides.
  - C Carefully place the queen ant into the Ant Town.
  - D Gently shake the Ant Town to spread the soil evenly.
- 3** According to the passage, you should quickly shut the lid
- A before placing the queen ant into the Ant Town.
  - B before attaching it to the lid hinges.
  - C after placing the queen ant into the Ant Town.
  - D after attaching it to the lid hinges.
- 4** The main purpose of this passage is
- A to persuade readers to buy an Ant Town.
  - B to teach readers how to assemble an Ant Town.
  - C to inform readers about ants.
  - D to show readers how ant communities work.



# LEARN IT: Author's Conclusions

## Author's Conclusions

The **author's conclusion** states the author's main point or central idea. This is also known as the author's **perspective**. It could include the author's opinion about an idea, a position on an issue, or a viewpoint on a topic.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read this passage.

Ever since the administration changed the dress code, I have felt more like I'm at a shopping mall than in a school. Students are concerned about their appearance more than their grades. They spend more time poring over magazines and looking at the latest fashions than reading their textbooks. The hallways are filled with "fashion models" who parade in their trendy outfits for everyone to admire. If things stay this way, parents will not be happy to see their children's report cards.

#### Why does the author think the school's new dress code is a bad policy?

- A The parents are unhappy to see their children's report cards.
- B The administration didn't explain why the dress code was changed.
- C The students care more about their clothes than their schoolwork.
- D The author dislikes the latest fashion trends modeled at school.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. What are some of the points the author makes about the new dress code?

*The author says, "Students are concerned about their appearance more than their grades." The author also says that students spend more time reading fashion magazines than their textbooks. The author concludes by suggesting that students are going to end up with bad grades.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices. Which reason for disliking the dress code matches each of the points the author makes?

*The author does not say that parents are unhappy with their children's grades, only that they will be unhappy "if things stay this way." The author never actually says the administration did not explain why the dress code was changed. The author also never complains about the specific fashion trends modeled by students—the author disapproves of modeling any clothes at school. Only choice C matches all of the author's points about the dress code. C is correct.*

## Analyze Evidence

The author's conclusions should be supported by **evidence**. Strong evidence includes factual details that relate to the topic. This evidence provides one or more reasons for what the author believes. Looking for evidence in the text will help direct you to the author's conclusions.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read this passage.

It's better to live in the countryside than in the city. For most of my life, I lived in the countryside with my parents, practically growing up among plants and animals. I loved the fresh air and the warm sunshine. One day, however, I decided to look for a job in the city, so I packed my bags and rode the bus out of town and into the big city. As soon as I stepped off the bus, the filthy air made me feel nauseous. Garbage littered the streets, and tall buildings loomed over you, darkening the once-blue sky. The people hurried about, without so much as sharing a friendly glance.

#### Read this sentence from the passage.

It's better to live in the countryside than in the city.

#### This statement would be made stronger by adding which of these sentences?

- A The city has many parks, museums, and attractions.
- B Terrible storms sometimes batter the countryside.
- C Schools in the country are not as well-equipped as are those in the city.
- D It is cleaner and more relaxed, and the people are friendlier.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. What can you say about the author's conclusion?

*The author does not think the city is a very nice place to live. The author states, "It's better to live in the countryside than in the city."*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices. Which one provides one or more reasons for the author's beliefs?

*Choices A, B, and C provide evidence that supports an opinion opposite to the author's. Choice D states reasons for why living in the countryside is better than living in the city. Choice D is the correct answer.*

## PRACTICE IT: Author's Conclusions

**Directions:** Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

My big brother Bruce is the coolest guy around. He can effortlessly juggle four balls while walking down the street, chatting with me, and chewing gum. He has a pet parrot that squawks the words to pop songs, and he has a pen pal in New Delhi, India. He can even finish reading a thick book, such as *Pride and Prejudice*, within a week. He plays the harp and hops to school on a pogo stick. He truly is unlike any person I've ever met!

**1** There is enough evidence in this passage to show that the author believes Bruce is

- A just like everyone else.
- B a caring big brother.
- C an interesting person.
- D a really boring guy.

**2** Why is it appropriate for the author to discuss Bruce's pet parrot in the passage?

- A It is evidence that Bruce is a unique person.
- B It is evidence that Bruce is a bird lover.
- C It is evidence that Bruce has many skills.
- D It is evidence that Bruce has many pets.

**3** Read this sentence from the passage.

He truly is unlike any person I've ever met!

This statement would be made stronger by adding which of these sentences?

- A In fact, he is as common as they come.
- B As he says, he would rather be different than boring.
- C As a result, everybody loves him.
- D After all, he is just like my best friend.

**4** The author supports the argument that Bruce is a cool guy by relating how Bruce is

- A nice.
- B popular.
- C determined.
- D multitalented.

## LEARN IT: Make Assertions

When we make **assertions**, we state or declare positively. As a speaker or writer, it is important to support assertions with evidence.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read this passage.

In Arizona, you might be out one afternoon and get caught in a huge thunderstorm. However, within five minutes the storm could pass over. The temperatures at night and during the day vary greatly throughout this state. In the dry months, the difference in temperature can even reach as much as 50 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit!

**Information in the passage supports the idea that Arizona’s weather is usually**

- A unpredictable.
- B wet.
- C hot.
- D constant.

**Step 1** Read the passage carefully. What does it tell you about the weather in Arizona?

*The passage says that, in Arizona, a storm might start and stop in five minutes. The temperature at night can be very different from that during the day, and the difference varies depending on the time of year and your location in the state.*

**Step 2** Study the answer choices. Which answer choice is supported by the information in the passage?

*Although the passage suggests that parts of Arizona can sometimes be wet or hot, the passage also states that the weather can change very quickly. This is the opposite of constant. Therefore, the best answer is A, unpredictable.*

Assertions should always be supported by details in the text. **Unsupported inferences**, or claims that are not supported by details, make assertions weak and ineffective.

**EXAMPLE****2** Read the following passage.

Edgar Degas was a French artist. He was born in Paris on July 19, 1834. His father was a banker. Young Edgar could afford to pursue a career in painting, so he studied under Louis Lamothe and traveled to Italy to study the works of the old masters. As a result of his studies, Degas's paintings and sculptures look like they are real.

The passage supports all of the following inferences about Degas *except* that he was

- A hardworking.
- B wealthy.
- C handsome.
- D artistic.

**Step 1** Read the passage very carefully. What is it about? What details does it provide?

*The passage talks about Edgar Degas, a French artist. His father was a banker, so Edgar could afford to study under Louis Lamothe. He went to Italy to study the works of the old masters.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices. Based on the details in the passage, which description of Degas is *not* supported?

*According to the details in the passage, Degas was a French artist. He was also wealthy. His father's banking career gave him the money to study painting and to travel. He studied the works of the old masters and used their techniques in his works. There are no details in the passage that support the inference that Degas was handsome. The answer is C.*

## PRACTICE IT: Make Assertions

**Directions:** Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

**The following is an advertisement for a new brand of soap.**

- 1 Do you always want to feel clean? Do you always want to smell good? Do you want to be pampered right in your own home? Then use Bubbles Liquid Soap!
- 2 Research proves that Bubbles Liquid Soap kills 99 percent of germs that can be found on your skin. The leading brand removes only 95 percent of these germs that cause diseases. That's because Bubbles Liquid Soap contains a new secret ingredient that kills germs instantly! Although Bubbles Liquid Soap is tough on germs, it is gentle on your skin. You can even use it as a facial wash! Bubbles Liquid Soap also smells soft and fresh. Its scent is infused with white tea and lavender extracts. It even provides vitamins that are readily absorbed by the skin, making it soft and supple. Studies show that nine out of ten shoppers who try Bubbles Liquid Soap prefer it to all other brands.
- 3 With Bubbles Liquid Soap, you can never go wrong. So buy now and experience the care that only Bubbles Liquid Soap can offer!

**1 Which sentence(s) from the passage emphasize(s) that Bubbles is a good brand of liquid soap?**

- A Research proves that Bubbles Liquid Soap kills 99 percent of germs that can be found on your skin.
- B Bubbles Liquid Soap also smells soft and fresh.
- C It even provides vitamins that are readily absorbed by the skin, making it soft and supple.
- D All of the above.

**2 The advertisement implies that Bubbles Liquid Soap is**

- A better than the leading brand of liquid soap.
- B the least expensive brand of soap.
- C the most expensive brand of soap.
- D a good product with some flaws.

**3 What evidence from the passage supports the claim that Bubbles Liquid Soap is good for the skin?**

- A It has vitamins.
- B It is inexpensive.
- C It smells like tea and lavender.
- D It is used by professional models.

**4 Which assertion is *not* supported with evidence from the passage?**

- A Bubbles Liquid Soap is effective against germs.
- B Bubbles Liquid Soap smells good.
- C Bubbles Liquid Soap costs less than the leading brand.
- D Bubbles Liquid Soap is popular with many shoppers who have tried it.

## LEARN IT: Forms of Fiction

In literature, **fiction** is any written work that is a product of the author's imagination. There are several different **forms of fiction**. These forms all have different structures, purposes, and characteristics.

### Forms of Fiction

Major forms of fiction are the **novel, short story, folktale, myth, and legend**. The following chart shows characteristics of each of these forms.

Form of Fiction	Description	Examples
Novel	A long, book-length story that may have many different characters, settings, and conflicts.	<i>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone</i> , <i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland</i> , <i>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</i>
Short Story	A story that is shorter and simpler than a novel. Short stories usually have one setting, one conflict, and few characters.	"Rikki-tikki-tavi," "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," "The Pit and the Pendulum"
Folktale	A story passed down orally before being written down. Fairy tales, tall tales, and fables are different types of folktales. A fable teaches a moral, or lesson, often through animal characters that act like humans.	"Hansel and Gretel," "John Henry," "The Tortoise and the Hare"
Myth	A story that explains the origin of the world, the creation of its creatures, or the reason for natural events. Gods and heroes are usually the main characters.	"Icarus and Daedulus," "The 12 Labors of Hercules," "Anansi the Spider"
Legend	A story about an event that is believed to have happened a very long time ago. Legends change over time as they are retold again and again. Sometimes fantasy and magic even become part of the story.	"Robin Hood," "The Trojan War," "King Arthur"

**EXAMPLE****1** Read the passage.**The Crow and the Pitcher**

A Crow, half-dead with thirst, came upon a Pitcher which had once been full of water; but when the Crow put its beak into the mouth of the Pitcher he found that only very little water was left in it, and that he could not reach far enough down to get at it. He tried, and he tried, but at last had to give up in despair. Then a thought came to him, and he took a pebble and dropped it into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped it into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the Pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the Pitcher. At last, at last, he saw the water mount up near him, and after casting in a few more pebbles he was able to quench his thirst and save his life.

Little by little does the trick.

**This passage is *most* likely which form of fiction?**

- A myth
- B novel
- C legend
- D folktale

**Step 1** Read the passage. What characteristics do you recognize?

*The passage is a fictional story about a crow. It is short, and there is only one character and one conflict. The passage tells how the crow patiently added stones to a pitcher to raise the level of the water so the crow can drink it. There is a moral at the end of the passage.*

**Step 2** Look at the answer choices. Which answer choice is correct?

*Choice A is not correct because the story is not about the creation or origin of anything. Choice B is not correct because the passage is not long or complex like a novel. Choice C is not correct because the passage is not based on a person or event that is believed to have actually existed. The passage has an animal character that thinks like a person, and there is a lesson at the end about patience. A fable, a type of folktale, has all of these features. The correct answer is D.*



## Genres of Fiction

Fiction can be grouped not only by form, but also by **genre**. There are many fictional genres, including mysteries, horror stories, adventure stories and romance novels. Three other genres that you often will see are historical fiction, science fiction, and fantasy.

**Historical fiction** is a genre in which real people, places, and events in history are used to tell a made-up story. When you read a work of historical fiction, you learn what it was like to live during a certain time period or experience an important historical event.

**Science fiction** explores the impact of real or imagined scientific developments. Science fiction stories often take place in the future but can also take place in the present.

**Fantasy** is a genre that includes magical elements. Fairies, wizards, and goblins are often found in fantasy stories. Fantasy stories often take place in the distant past or in magical lands far away from our own.

## EXAMPLE

### 2 Read the passage.

“Ingrid, there is a letter for you today,” Ingrid heard her mother call to her from the kitchen. Ingrid bolted out of her bedroom and down the hallway to the kitchen. She eagerly snatched the small envelope from her mother’s hand and ripped it open. Inside was a letter from her pen pal in Montana.

March 3, 1942

Dear Ingrid,

I apologize that it took me so long to respond to your last letter. I’m sorry to hear about your cousin. I’m certain he’ll be fine. Lots of young men that we know have been drafted, and we haven’t heard any bad news about any of them yet. We discovered on Thursday that our neighbor Timothy enlisted in the navy to go fight in the war in the Pacific. His parents are so proud that their son is going to be fighting for his country. I understand how they feel, but I would be terrified if I had to go!

My class started a tin drive last week. We are going to call ourselves the “Tin Can Colonels,” and we are going to collect tin for the war effort. If we reach our goal by the end of the month, our teacher is going to take us on a field trip to see a movie. What an exciting incentive!

I’ll write to you again soon!

Your friend,

Penelope

**This passage is an example of historical fiction because it**

- A is set in a specific time from the past.
- B is from the author's imagination.
- C retells a folktale about imaginary people.
- D includes multiple characters and settings.

**Step 1** Read the passage. What elements of historical fiction can you find in the passage?

*The passage contains a letter from one girl to another. The date on the letter is 1942, so the events in the story took place in the past. The letter mentions the war in the Pacific, which was part of World War II, a well-known historical event. The passage has several fictional characters, including Ingrid, Penelope, and Ingrid's mother.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which of the answers shows a characteristic of historical fiction?

*Choice B is not correct because a story that is from the author's imagination may be a work of fiction, but it is not necessarily historical fiction. Choice C is not true because the passage is not a folktale. There is no moral or lesson in the passage. Choice D is also not correct, because multiple characters and settings are features of a novel, and this passage is not a novel. Choice A makes the most sense because the passage mentions World War II, a real event from the past. This is a characteristic of historical fiction. The correct answer is A.*

## PRACTICE IT: Forms of Fiction

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

### The Mysterious Mirror

- 1 It was a beautiful, bright, and sunny Saturday morning. Jen glanced longingly out the tiny attic window at the cloudless summer sky and sighed. *If I work fast enough, I can get the attic cleaned and still have time to shoot a few free throws before dinner,* she thought to herself.
- 2 Jen surveyed the musty attic. Tattered old boxes covered the wood floor. For her allowance this week, she was supposed to clean up the attic, throw away any junk, and put away her family's winter clothes and gear.
- 3 Jen knelt down and opened the box closest to the attic door. As she sorted through the dusty Halloween decorations inside, a glimmer of light on the other side of the room caught her eye. She looked up and peered around a rack of hanging garments into a large, oval mirror that was propped against the wall.
- 4 Standing up, Jen realized the mirror was very old: it was so tarnished that she could barely recognize her reflection as she walked toward it. It was framed by an intricate design carved into scuffed mahogany.
- 5 Jen used the hem of her shirt to wipe some of the grime off the glass surface. After she had wiped enough to see her eyes looking back at her, she glanced down at the bottom of her shirt.
- 6 *Oh no,* she thought. *I forgot that I was wearing my basketball jersey. I hope this dirt comes out in the wash.* Jen stood up, making her way to the door so she could dart downstairs to change her shirt. As she maneuvered around the boxes toward the door, she noticed something odd. The dirt on her shirt was gone. She checked the inside, outside, and backside of her shirt, but she couldn't find the patch of dirt that had been there seconds before.
- 7 *That's funny,* Jen thought. *It must not have been that much dirt if it came off on its own. Weird . . .*
- 8 Jen resumed organizing the messy attic. An hour later, she was moving some sports equipment into a large bin when she brushed up against the mirror.
- 9 Casually tossing a football into the bin, she said out loud, "I wish this dumb attic was clean already. I don't want to waste my whole Saturday up here." Then she reached over to retrieve a waffle ball that had rolled into the corner.

- 10 When she stood up again, Jen gasped. The entire attic was neat, clean, and organized. The only thing in the attic that remained dirty was the old mirror. Jen turned toward the mirror. *That's twice something weird has happened after I rubbed this mirror,* she thought. *I wonder . . .*
- 11 Jen knelt down and looked in the mirror. "I wish I had a glass of water," she said. She really did want some water; it was getting warm up in the attic. Jen looked down at the floor by the mirror. It was bare.
- 12 *Of course, it was silly of me to think that this mirror was granting my wishes,* Jen laughed to herself. She stood up and grabbed the mirror. It was a pretty mirror; she decided to move it into her room.
- 13 Jen turned around and carried the bulky mirror out of the attic. As she descended the stairs, she flipped off the light switch. Everything in the attic fell into darkness, including the glass of water that sat on the floor near the wall, just behind the space where the mirror had been standing.

**1** This passage is an example of fantasy because it includes

- A one character.
- B a historic event.
- C elements of magic.
- D scientific details.

**2** This passage is fantasy. How could the author change the story to make it science fiction?

- A add more characters and settings
- B have the main character learn a lesson
- C describe a new technology that grants wishes
- D explain the origin of the world

**3** One element that makes this short story different from a myth is that it

- A portrays a historical figure or event.
- B is set in the faraway past.
- C has multiple characters and conflicts.
- D includes no gods or heroes.

**4** If it included animals with human qualities as characters, this passage would have one of the characteristics of

- A historical fiction.
- B a legend.
- C a novel.
- D a folktale.

## LEARN IT: Analyze Character, Setting, and Plot

**Characters**, or the people in a work of literature, help make a story come alive. To understand a story, the reader must first analyze the characters and how their qualities affect the plot. This means examining their personalities, actions, and **motivations**, or reasons for acting. By analyzing the characters, the reader will better understand how and why the events in a story unfold as they do.

### EXAMPLE

**1** Read this passage.

While walking in the garden, Keira heard a pitiful whine coming from the bushes nearby. She walked toward the sound, careful to make no noise. When she parted the leaves, she saw a tiny puppy, shivering in the cold. It trembled and whimpered when it saw her. Without hesitation, Keira untied the scarf around her neck and gently wrapped the puppy in it. She lifted him up and cradled him to her chest, all the while cooing to him. Walking toward the house, Keira thought that a warm bath and a saucer of milk would be just what he needed.

What is the *best* description of Keira's character?

- A honest
- B industrious
- C kindhearted
- D uncaring

**Step 1** Read the example passage again. What did Keira do when she discovered the puppy?

*Keira took care of the puppy. She wrapped him in her scarf and took him back to the house for a bath and warm milk.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice carefully. Which description *best* shows Keira's character based on her actions?

*Keira's reaction to the puppy reveals that she is a kindhearted character. None of the other answer choices fit what the passage shows about Keira, so the correct answer is C.*

The **setting** is the time and place in which the events of a short story, novel, or drama occur. The setting may influence the characters' actions and may contribute to the conflicts in the story and their resolutions. The setting often helps create the atmosphere or mood of the story.

### EXAMPLE

#### 2 Read this passage.

On a sunny Sunday morning, Ronald Simmons and his dad were hiking in the woods. They wanted to go fishing in the river. All week, Ronald had looked forward to their fishing adventure. But as they were making their way down the steep riverbank, Mr. Simmons suddenly slipped and fell, twisting his ankle. Ronald rushed to his dad.

“Dad! What happened? Are you okay? Does it hurt?” Ronald asked worriedly.

“My ankle hurts. I think it’s broken,” Mr. Simmons said in pain.

“Here, let me help you up. Let’s walk to the car,” Ronald suggested.

Mr. Simmons, limping and groaning, leaned against Ronald.

“Are you sure you can help me to the car? It’s parked a long way off,” Mr. Simmons said.

#### How does the setting affect the plot of this story?

- A The setting enables Ronald to find help for his father easily.
- B The setting makes it challenging for Ronald to help his father.
- C The setting makes Mr. Simmons angry.
- D The setting helps Ronald enjoy the fishing adventure.

**Step 1** Read the passage again. How does Mr. Simmons get injured? What was he worried about when Ronald tried to help him walk to the car?

*Mr. Simmons slips and injures his ankle while descending the steep riverbank. He was worried that Ronald would not be able to help him walk to the car because it was parked far from where they were hiking.*

**Step 2** Read the answer choices carefully. What aspects of the setting made the characters' situation more difficult?

*The uneven ground and the absence of people made the characters' situation more difficult. Both Ronald and Mr. Simmons were more worried about the broken ankle than angry about the spoiled fishing trip. Therefore, the only possible answer is choice B.*

The **plot** is the sequence of events in narrative works, such as short stories, novels, plays, and some nonfiction. The plot is a series of related events in which a problem is explored and then resolved. Plot is created through conflict—a struggle between characters, ideas, or other forces.

**EXAMPLE****3 Read this passage.**

Zena was walking her dog, Pudge, in the park when suddenly the clouds turned gray and rain started falling heavily. Everybody ran to the gazebo in the center of the park to avoid getting wet and catching cold. While the people huddled in the gazebo were exclaiming about the sudden downpour, Pudge suddenly started barking and tugging angrily at his leash. Zena could barely hold him back and was puzzled at his behavior. Then somebody pointed out the cause: a fat, gray cat that had run away from its owner was hissing at Pudge! “Who owns that cat?” Zena desperately asked the crowd.

**Zena’s conflict is brought about by the**

- A crowded gazebo.
- B loud people.
- C hissing cat.
- D wet ground.

**Step 1** Review what happened in the passage. What made Pudge angry?

*Pudge got angry when a cat started hissing at him in the gazebo.*

**Step 2** Read each answer choice. Which answer triggers the conflict shown in the passage?

*Everything was going well for Zena and Pudge until the sudden heavy downpour made them seek shelter in the gazebo. It was then that the hissing cat made Pudge angry and caused him to bark and tug at his leash. The noisy crowd in the gazebo and the wet ground did not affect Pudge. Therefore, the correct answer is C.*

## PRACTICE IT: Analyze Character, Setting, and Plot

**Directions:** Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

As Yuka walked home from school on Friday, she stopped in the park to pick a pretty red tulip. Bending over the flower, she noticed a small brown object nestled among the plants. It was someone's wallet! Surprised by her discovery, Yuka looked around, her eyes searching in every direction for the owner. No one else was around though. She wasn't sure what to do with the wallet. She didn't want to leave it among the plants. She knew its owner would want to have it back. Still uncertain, Yuka thought that maybe she could take it home and ask her parents for help. There might be a driver's license inside, and her parents could call its owner. She picked up the wallet and headed for home, hoping her parents could help her find the missing owner.

- 1** After seeing the wallet in the bushes, Yuka decided to
- A try to find the owner of the wallet.
  - B keep the wallet for herself.
  - C leave the wallet among the plants.
  - D toss the wallet in the trash can.
- 2** What is the *best* description of Yuka's character?
- A kind
  - B lazy
  - C shy
  - D honest
- 3** Yuka brought the wallet home so that
- A she could keep it in a good hiding place.
  - B she could ask her parents to help her find the owner.
  - C she could discard the driver's license.
  - D her parents could keep it for her.
- 4** Yuka couldn't find the owner by herself because
- A the park was empty.
  - B the park was crowded.
  - C the park was cold.
  - D the park was gloomy.