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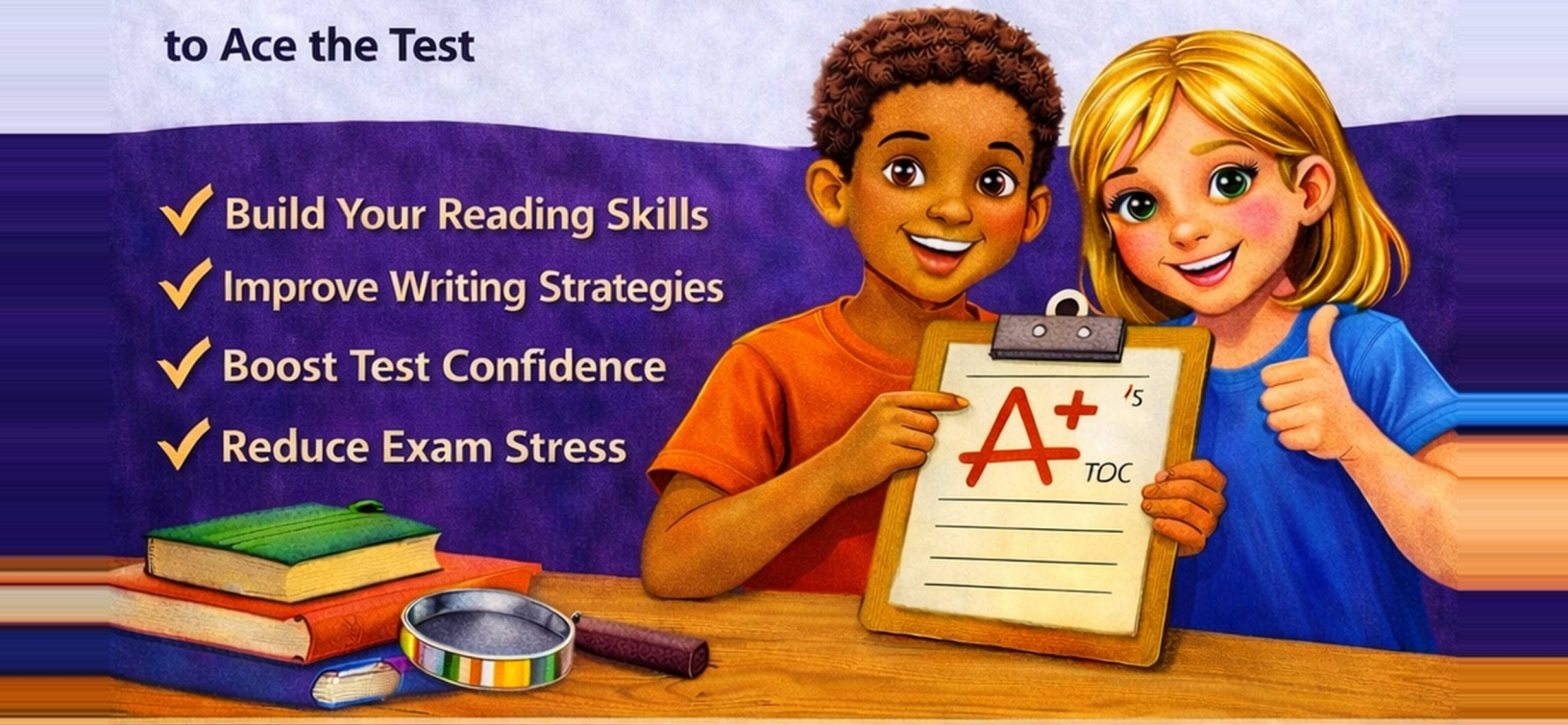
8 Mississippi

Grade 7

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Read the article. Then answer questions 1–8.

How a Compost Lab Changed Lunch

1 The project took shape in the middle school's back courtyard, where students and volunteers turned a compost and soil-testing lab into a workable response to a local problem.

2 To keep the work moving, participants sort fruit scraps, measure moisture, and compare how finished compost changes garden beds. Their notes help them explain both the changes they make and the reasons behind those changes.

3 Not every part of the plan worked smoothly. The first compost pile became soggy and began to smell because it lacked dry material. The setback forced the team to stop, observe, and rethink.

4 The revision came next: the team mixed in shredded leaves and turned the pile on a regular schedule. That revision helped convert lunch scraps into useful compost, because the pile finally had the right mix of dry material and air.

5 As the project moved toward its conclusion, science classes used the soil samples in plant-growth experiments. What had begun as a way to deal with lunch scraps was starting to change how students thought about waste, soil, and growth.

6 The result was useful, but not without trade-offs. Supplies had to be rationed, and not everyone agreed about what should come next. Some members wanted to add more bins beside the cafeteria right away; others argued that another month of notes might reveal problems the group had not yet seen. In the end, the team postponed the expansion until it had gathered more evidence, even though several students were ready to build the next compost station immediately.

1) As it is used in paragraph 4, what does the word *convert* most nearly mean?

(A) to protect an object from sunlight
(B) to store something without ever using it
(C) to change something into a different form or use
(D) to count items one by one

Use the article "How a Compost Lab Changed Lunch" to answer this question.

2) Which statement best expresses the central idea of the article?

(A) The article mostly explains the team's daily routines and gives only brief attention to how the project adjusted over time.
(B) The article describes a community effort whose success depended more on a single decisive moment than on the broader pattern of testing and revision.
(C) Careful research and revision helped a compost and soil-testing lab become a useful community project.
(D) The article focuses on the project's final outcome and suggests that earlier setbacks had little effect on what the team eventually achieved.

Use the article "How a Compost Lab Changed Lunch" to answer this question.

3) Which detail best supports the idea that the team improved the project by studying a problem carefully?

(A) The team studied the weakness and then mixed in shredded leaves and turned the pile on a regular schedule.
(B) The project began after students identified a local need in the community.
(C) Students and volunteers worked together throughout the project.
(D) The finished project later provided a useful result for the community.

Use the article "How a Compost Lab Changed Lunch" to answer this question.

4) How does paragraph 3 contribute to the structure of the article?

(A) It summarizes the article's conclusion before any evidence is given.
(B) It introduces the setting of the project for the first time.
(C) It compares two unrelated projects in different locations.
(D) It presents the setback that leads to the revision described later.

Use the article "How a Compost Lab Changed Lunch" to answer this question.

5) Why does the author include details about the team's routines in paragraph 2?

(A) To emphasize how much time and effort the project required
(B) To foreshadow that the project will face a challenge later
(C) To show that the team worked in an orderly way from the beginning
(D) To show that the project depends on repeated steps and collected evidence

Use the article "How a Compost Lab Changed Lunch" to answer this question.

6) Which sentence best explains how the article develops the topic?

(A) It compares two competing approaches to solving the problem and argues that one is clearly better.
(B) It presents the final result first and then goes back to explain how the project originally started.
(C) It introduces a project, explains its process, describes a problem, and shows a revised solution.
(D) It describes two different community problems and explains how each was solved by a different team.

20) Which detail best supports the idea that bison shape the prairie?

(A) Bison were once reduced to fewer than one thousand animals.
(B) Their heavy hoofprints press seeds into soil, and their dust baths create small patches.
(C) Bison live in several national parks.
(D) Some tribal nations manage bison herds.

Use the article "The Bison Come Back" to answer this question.

21) Which sentence from the article best supports the idea that recovery has not been easy?

(A) Many scientists at the time feared the bison would disappear entirely.
(B) Tribal nations, state agencies, and private ranchers spend time each year in meetings that are patient and sometimes tense.
(C) Their return is slow and steady rather than dramatic.
(D) Where bison return, the grass grows in a different way.

Use the article "The Bison Come Back" to answer this question.

22) **This question has two correct answers.** Choose the **two** sentences from the article that **together** best support the idea that bison recovery depends on careful cooperation and produces lasting benefits for the land.

(A) "Before the late eighteen-hundreds, great herds of American bison moved across the plains in numbers that reached into the millions."
(B) "Tribal nations, state agencies, and private ranchers spend time each year in meetings that are patient and sometimes tense."
(C) "In 1905, the American Bison Society formed to bring groups together and publish what they learned."
(D) "Where bison return, the grass grows in a different way."
(E) "What was once a rare sight is now part of many school field trips, and a few tribes have begun to restore hunting traditions that had nearly been lost."

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Use the article "The Bison Come Back" to answer this question.

23) Which sentence would **best** summarize the article?

(A) Bison are common animals, and their survival has never been in question.
(B) After nearly disappearing, bison have slowly returned to the plains through cooperation among ranchers, tribes, and agencies.
(C) The American Bison Society is the only reason bison survive today.
(D) Bison survival is mainly about fencing pastures.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Diego wrote an informational essay about the benefits of learning a musical instrument. Read Diego's essay and look for revisions he needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.

Why Everyone Should Try a Musical Instrument

(1) Learning a musical instrument does more than make music. (2) Studies show that students who play an instrument often develop stronger memory, patience, and focus. (3) Practice teaches the kind of steady attention that also helps with math and reading. (4) My older cousin still keeps the trumpet he played in high school hanging in the living room.

(5) Playing an instrument also builds community. (6) School bands, church choirs, and neighborhood lessons bring together students who might never meet otherwise. (7) Over time, these groups become places where students support each other through the slow work of improvement.

(8) Learning an instrument can be hard at first. (9) Fingers get sore, and songs can sound rough during the first weeks. (10) But students who stick with it describe a steady joy that grows as small pieces of music come together.

24) Which sentence should Diego remove from the **first** paragraph because it does not support the main idea?

(A) Sentence 1
(B) Sentence 2
(C) Sentence 3
(D) Sentence 4

Use the essay "Why Everyone Should Try a Musical Instrument" to answer this question.

25) What is the **best** way to combine sentences 5 and 6?

(A) Playing an instrument also builds community, because school bands, church choirs, and neighborhood lessons bring together students who might never meet otherwise.
(B) Playing an instrument builds community, school bands bring together students.
(C) Bands build community, and instruments are played by students.
(D) Community is built and students meet.

Use the essay "Why Everyone Should Try a Musical Instrument" to answer this question.

26) Diego wants to add a transition at the beginning of paragraph 3. Which sentence would **best** serve this purpose?

(A) As a result, many students decide to keep practicing once they join a group.
(B) Even so, starting an instrument is not always easy.
(C) For example, school bands and choirs often bring students together.
(D) Because of this, music can strengthen memory and focus in other classes.