

Diocese of Davenport



8th Grade

Reading Diocesan Assessment

2009

Do not write in this test booklet.

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DIRECTIONS:

The following test has multiple choice questions.

Read the story and then on the multiple choice questions please review all of the choices and select the one you think best answers the question.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

1. Which of these would you find growing in a desert?
- A. A maple tree
 - B. A dandelion
 - C. A cactus
 - D. A corn plant

SAMPLE

Please completely fill in the circles that best represent your responses. Fill in marks like this: ● not like this: ⊗

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| 1. | <input type="radio"/> A | <input type="radio"/> B | <input checked="" type="radio"/> C | <input type="radio"/> D | 34. | <input type="radio"/> A | <input type="radio"/> B | <input type="radio"/> C | <input type="radio"/> D | 67. | <input type="radio"/> A | <input type="radio"/> B | <input type="radio"/> C | <input type="radio"/> D |
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CODES:

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| Bettendorf Lourdes | 01 |
| Burlington Notre Dame | 02 |
| Clinton Prince of Peace | 04 |
| Dav. Assumption | 05 |
| Dav. All Saints | 06 |
| Dav. JFK | 07 |
| Dav. St. Paul the Apostle | 08 |
| DeWitt St. Joseph | 09 |
| Holy Trinity | 10 |
| Iowa City Regina | 11 |
| Keokuk Catholic | 12 |
| Muscatine Bish. Hayes | 13 |
| Ottumwa Seton | 14 |
| Washington St. James | 15 |

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This piece comes from the story

The Dinner Party

by Mona Gardner.

...A large dinner party is being given in an up-country station by a colonial official and his wife...

¶2 At one side of the long table a spirited discussion springs up between a young girl and a colonel. The girl insists women have long outgrown the jumping-on-a-chair-at-sight-of-a-mouse era, that they are not as fluttery as their grandmothers. The colonel says they are, explaining that women haven't the actual nerve control of men...

¶3 "A woman's unfailing reaction in any crisis," the colonel says, "is to scream. And while a man may feel like it, yet he has that ounce more of control than a woman has. And that last ounce is what counts!"

¶4 The American scientist does not join in the argument, but sits watching the faces of the other guests. As he looks, he sees a strange expression come over the face of the hostess. She is staring straight ahead, the muscles of her face contracting slightly. With a small gesture she summons the native boy standing behind her chair. She whispers to him. The boy's eyes widen: he turns quickly and leaves the room. No one else sees this, nor the boy when he puts a bowl of milk on the verandah....

¶5 The American comes to with a start. In India, milk in a bowl means only one thing. It is bait for a snake...

¶6 He looks up at the rafters...and sees they are bare. Three corners of the room, which he can see by shifting only slightly, are empty. In the fourth corner a group of servants stand...The American realizes there is only one place left – under the table.

¶7 His first impulse is to jump back and warn the others. But he knows the commotion will frighten the cobra and it will strike. He speaks quickly, the quality of his voice so arresting that it sobers everyone.

¶8 "I want to know just what control everyone at this table has. I will count three hundred...and not one of you is to move a single muscle..."

¶9 The 20 people sit like stone images while he counts...[H]e sees the cobra emerge and make for the bowl of milk. Four or five screams ring out as he jumps to slam shut the verandah doors.

¶10 "You certainly were right, Colonel!" the host says. "A man has just shown us an example of real control."

¶11 "Just a minute," the American says, turning to his hostess, "there's one thing I'd like to know. Mrs. Whyntes, how did you know that cobra was in the room?"

¶12 A faint smile lights up the woman's face as she replies. "Because it was lying across my foot."

1. The American scientist appears to be the type of person who likes to
 - A. relax
 - B. investigate
 - C. take orders
 - D. take risks
2. In paragraph 7, what does the phrase "so arresting that it sobers everyone" mean?
 - A. so serious-sounding that it makes every one laugh
 - B. So beautiful-sounding that it makes everyone melancholy
 - C. So legal-sounding that everyone gets frightened
 - D. So important-sounding that everyone pays attention

3. What is the effect of putting the argument about self-control at the beginning of the story?
 - A. It provides ideas for the reader to consider while reading the rest of the story
 - B. It causes surprise when it is revealed that a woman had such self-control.
 - C. It created more sympathy for the American, who is not allowed to participate.
 - D. I distracts everyone in the story so that the cobra may sneak into the room.
4. Why does the hostess call to the boy waiting behind her chair?
 - A. There is a cobra on her foot.
 - B. The next course of the meal is ready.
 - C. She wants another bowl of milk for her guests.
 - D. She wants him to check on the American.
5. How does the American know the milk is for a cobra when he has not yet seen the snake?
 - A. There are no other pests in the house.
 - B. He could smell the poison cobras have.
 - C. Milk is used as cobra bait in India.
 - D. He asks the serving boy.
6. What is the author's view of the American scientist?
 - A. He has more respect for women than most men.
 - B. He has more self-control than most men.
 - C. His great heroism saves everyone at the party.
 - D. His training as a scientist makes him a valuable guest.
7. Which character is the story is named Whynees?
 - A. The American.
 - B. The hostess.
 - C. The serving boy.
 - D. The young girl.
8. In paragraph 9, what does "sit like stone images" mean?
 - A. Pose for pictures.
 - B. Remain very still.
 - C. Sit very straight.
 - D. Wait for dessert.
9. What point of view is this story told in?
 - A. First person.
 - B. Third person.
 - C. Omniscient.
 - D. Second person.

Identity

Let them be as flowers,
always watered fed, guarded, and admired.
but harnessed to a pot of dirt.

I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed,
clinging on cliffs, like an eagle
wind-wavering above high, jagged rocks.

To have broken through the surface of stone,
to live, to feel exposed to the madness
of the vast, eternal sky.
To be swayed by the breezes of an ancient sea,
carrying my soul, my seed, beyond the
mountains of time
or into the abyss of the bizarre.

I'd rather be unseen, and if
then shunned by everyone,
than to be a pleasant-smelling flower,
growing in clusters in the fertile valley
where they're praised, handled, and plucked
by greedy, human hands.

I'd rather smell of musty, green stench
than of sweet, fragrant lilac.
If I could stand alone, strong and free,
I'd rather be a tall, ugly weed.

—*Julio Noboa Poanco*

10. What point is the author of this poem attempting to make?
 - A. To be beautiful is to be admired.
 - B. Beauty and comfort are nothing without freedom.
 - C. Breaking free from the everyday can make one crazy.
 - D. To stand up for something sets a person free.
11. With which statement about the importance of friends would the author most likely agree?
 - A. Real friends allow a person to be an individual.
 - B. Good friends will join a person who stands alone.
 - C. The best friends like the same things their friends do.
 - D. True friends admire a friend who acts as they do.
12. The tone of this poem is one of
 - A. bitterness.
 - B. revolution.
 - C. hope.
 - D. defiance.
13. What does breaking through stone prove about the author?
 - A. That he is destructive.
 - B. That he is stubborn.
 - C. That he is admired.
 - D. That he is strong.
14. If the weed hanging on the cliff were a person, it would be
 - A. noble.
 - B. intelligent.
 - C. independent.
 - D. friendly.

Something From the Sixties

By Garrison Keilor

About five o'clock last Sunday evening, my son burst into the kitchen and said, "I didn't know it was so late!" He was due at a party immediately – a sixties party, he said – and he needed something from the sixties to wear...

I asked, "What sort of stuff you want to wear?"

He said, "I don't know. Whatever they wore then."

We went up to the attic, into a long, low room under the eaves where I've squirreled away some boxes of old stuff; I dug into one box, and the first thing I hauled out was the very thing he wanted. A thigh-length leather vest covered with fringe and studded with silver, it dates from around 1967, a fanciful time in college-boy fashions. Like many boys, I grew up in nice clothes my mother bought, but was meanwhile admiring Roy Rogers, Sergeant Rock, and Cisco Kid, and other sharp dressers, so when I left home I was ready to step out and be somebody. Military Surplus was the basic style then — olive drab, and navy-blue pea jackets — with a touch of Common Man in the work boots and blue work shirts, but if you showed up in Riverboat Gambler or Spanish Peasant or Rodeo King nobody blinked, nobody laughed. I haven't worn the vest in ten years, but a few weeks ago, seeing a picture of Michael Jackson wearing a fancy band jacket like the ones the Beatles wore on the cover of "Sgt. Pepper," I missed the fun I used to have getting dressed in the morning. Pull on the jeans, a shirt with brilliant-red roses, a pair of Red Wing boots. A denim jacket. Rose-tinted glasses. A cowboy hat. Or an engineer's cap. Or, instead of jeans, bib overalls. Or white trousers with blue strips. Take off the denim jacket, take off the rose shirt, try the neon-green bowling shirt with "Moose" stitched on the pocket, the black dinner jacket. Now the dark-green Chinese Army cap. And an orange tie with hula dancers and palm trees.

Then — presto! — I pulled the rose shirt out. He put it on, and the vest, which weighs about fifteen pounds, and by then I had found him

a hat — a broad-brimmed panama that ought to make you think of cotton planter enjoying a Sazerac on a veranda in New Orleans. I

followed him down to his bedroom, where he admired himself in a full-length mirror.

"Who wore this?" he asked.

I said that I did.

"Did you really? This? You?"

Yes, I really did. After he was born, in 1969, I wore it less and less, finally settling down with what I think of as the Dad look, and now I would no sooner wear my old fringed vest in public than walk around in a taffeta tutu. I loved the fact that it fitted him so well, though, and his pleasure at the heft and extravagance of the thing, the poses he struck in front of the mirror. Later, when he got home and reported that his costume was a big hit and that all his friends had tried on the vest, it made me happy again. You squirrel away old stuff on the principle of its being useful and interesting someday; it's wonderful when the day finally arrives. That vest was waiting for a boy to come along — a boy who has a flair for the dramatic, who bursts into rooms — and to jump right into the part. I'm happy to be the audience.

15. How does the narrator feel when he sees his son wearing the clothes from the sixties?
- A. Worried
 - B. Depressed
 - C. Pleased
 - D. Relieved
16. In the future, the narrator will most likely____
- A. share his past with his son.
 - B. attend parties with his son.
 - C. clean out the attic.
 - D. wear the vest more often.
17. Which is the best summary of this passage?
- A. The narrator's son needs help getting ready for a party, so the narrator helps him.
 - B. The narrator remembers what fashions were like when he was in college.
 - C. While looking for a costume, the narrator remembers why it is that people keep old things.
 - D. While helping his son get ready for a costume party, the narrator remembers a fun time in his life.
18. Which of these is a FACT in this passage?
- A. The vest is extravagant.
 - B. The narrator's son has a flair for the dramatic.
 - C. The narrator's son was born in 1969.
 - D. The narrator grew up in nice clothes.
19. In this passage, the word flair means__
- A. talent
 - B. dislike
 - C. patience
 - D. unconcern
20. Which of the following events happens first in the passage?
- A. The narrator finds an old fringed vest he used to wear.
 - B. The narrator's son wears the narrator's old clothes to a party.
 - C. The narrator helps his son look for a costume for a party.
 - D. The narrator's son poses in front a mirror.
21. The narrator and his son would probably agree that_____
- A. they should begin wearing sixties fashions daily.
 - B. wearing unusual clothes can be great fun.
 - C. getting ready for a party is a lot of trouble.
 - D. current fashions are superior to sixties fashions.
22. Information in the passage suggests that_____
- A. the narrator was often laughed at in the sixties
 - B. the narrator still wears his college clothes
 - C. the son's costume offends the narrator.
 - D. the son's costume is popular at the party.

from Shooting Stars

by Hal Borland

Most clear, dark nights you can see a shooting star, as we call it, if you keep looking. Those shooting stars are meteors. They are points of light that suddenly appear in the sky, like distant stars, race across the darkness, usually toward the horizon, and disappear.

For a long time nobody knew what a meteor was. But finally those who study stars and the sky decided that a meteor is a piece of a comet that exploded long ago. Those pieces are still wandering about the universe in huge, looping paths that follow the original comet's orbit. There are uncounted pieces of such comets out there in the depths of space. Periodically clusters of them come close to the earth's orbit, or path around the sun. Most meteors are small, probably only a few inches in a diameter, but when they enter the earth's atmosphere the friction makes them white-hot. Then they look big as stars streaking across the darkness.

There are half a dozen meteor showers each year. Each is named after the constellation from which it appears to come. The biggest of all, the Perseids, named for the constellation of Perseus, occurs on the 10th, 11th, and 12th of August. The next largest, the Leonids, named for the constellation of Leo, comes on the nights of November 14, 15, and 16. Another, the Andromedids, which is not quite as big, comes from November 17 through 24. There are other meteor showers in December, January, April, May, and July, but none of them is as big as those in August and November.

Most people watching meteors will be satisfied if they see ten or twenty in an hour of watching. On special occasions, however, the meteors seem to come in droves. The most remarkable meteor shower I ever heard of was seen by a distinguished astronomer, Professor Denison Olmstead, of New Haven, Connecticut, on the night of November 12, 1833. He was watching the Leonids, which seem to come from directly overhead and race downward toward the horizon in all directions. He reported that meteors fell "like flakes of snow." He estimated

that he saw 240,000 meteors in nine hours that night. He said they ranged in size from mere streaks of light to "globes of the moon's diameter." If he had not been a notable astronomer whose accuracy was beyond question, such statements would seem ridiculous. But there is no reason to doubt what he reported. He had seen one of the most unusual meteor showers ever reported. What he watched should be called a meteor storm rather than a shower.

I once watched the August Perseids with an astronomer on a hilltop in open country, and in two hours we counted almost a thousand meteors. That was the most I ever saw at one time. And we were bitten by one mosquito for every meteor we saw. After that I tried watching for meteors in November, when there were no mosquitoes. But the most I ever saw in November was about one hundred meteors in two hours of watching.

The amazing thing about these meteor showers is that they come year after year. Professor Olmstead saw all those Leonids in November of 1833, but if you watch for meteors this year you almost certainly will see them on the same nights he saw them. They will come next year, the year after that, and for countless years more. Your grandfather saw them, and your grandchildren will see them if they look for them.

23. People in the future will be able to see the Leonids because _____
- A. they last for a long time
 - B. Professor Olmstead carefully reported on them
 - C. they come every year
 - D. They are not as big as the meteor shower that comes in August
24. Information in the passage suggests that _____
- A. Professor Olmstead was exaggerating
 - B. most meteors are larger than they seem
 - C. mosquitoes prefer cooler weather
 - D. meteor showers are very predictable
25. According to the passage, how many months of the year are there meteor showers?
- A. Twelve
 - B. Two
 - C. Five
 - D. Seven
26. According to the passage, which come first?
- A. The author observed the November Leonids.
 - B. Professor Olmstead watched the November Leonids.
 - C. The author observed the August Perseids.
 - D. Professor Olmstead was bitten by mosquitoes.
27. The author's purpose was to _____
- A. inform.
 - B. persuade.
 - C. describe.
 - D. entertain.
28. You can infer from the passage that _____
- A. around two hundred years ago there were no meteor showers.
 - B. around two hundred years from now there will be another large meteor shower.
 - C. around two hundred years from now there will still be meteor showers.
 - D. around two hundred years ago there were more frequent meteor showers.
29. What is the main idea of the passage?
- A. Professor Olmstead saw over 200,000 meteors in nine hours one November night.
 - B. The author recommends watching meteors in November in order to avoid mosquitoes.
 - C. Meteors are interesting to watch and they appear during the same months year after year.
 - D. It was only fairly recently that people realized that meteors are pieces of exploded comets.
30. In the future, the author will most likely _____
- A. watch November meteor showers.
 - B. visit Professor Olmstead again.
 - C. observe meteors with his telescope.
 - D. watch February meteor showers.