



Teacher Guide

Sample Items

English Language Arts (ELA)

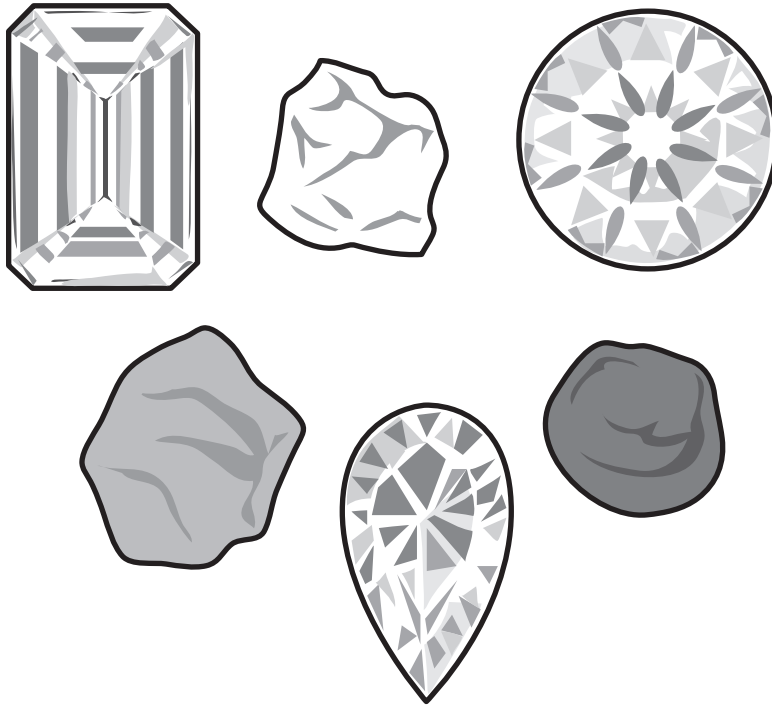
Grades 6 & 7

ELA Grade 6

Directions

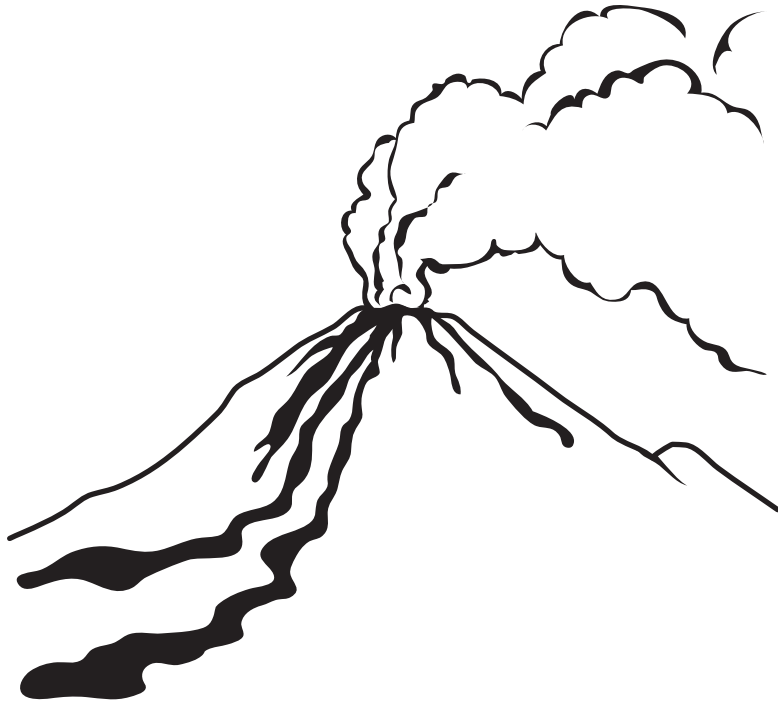
We are going to read an informational text and a timeline about Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas. Let's read the text first.

Mining for Diamonds



State parks offer many fun things to do. Some have lakes for swimming. Some have mountains for hiking. Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas offers something unusual to do. Visitors can dig for diamonds!

The diamonds used to make jewelry are mostly clear, precious stones called **gems**. Diamonds are worth a lot of money. The diamonds that are used in jewelry have sharp edges and flat sides. They sparkle. In nature, diamonds are rounded and do not sparkle. The diamonds found at the Crater of Diamonds are white, brown, or yellow.



Diamonds are formed deep in the earth. Some volcanic eruptions bring the diamonds to the surface. Because of this, diamonds are sometimes found where volcanoes once were.



In 1906, John Wesley Huddleston noticed that some dirt on a road that went through his land looked like it came from a volcano. Huddleston looked more closely. He was correct! Huddleston had found diamonds. He decided to sell his land to a mining company.

For many years, different companies mined the land. This means miners dug up the diamonds and sold them. Starting in 1951, the public was allowed to visit the area. It was named the Diamond Preserve of the United States. In 1972, Arkansas made the area a state park called Crater of Diamonds State Park. It is still a state park.



Today people can go to the park for a picnic. Visitors can also search for any diamonds that may remain. To search for diamonds, visitors need some tools. For example, it is useful for visitors to have a shovel and pail because they will probably need to dig to find a diamond.

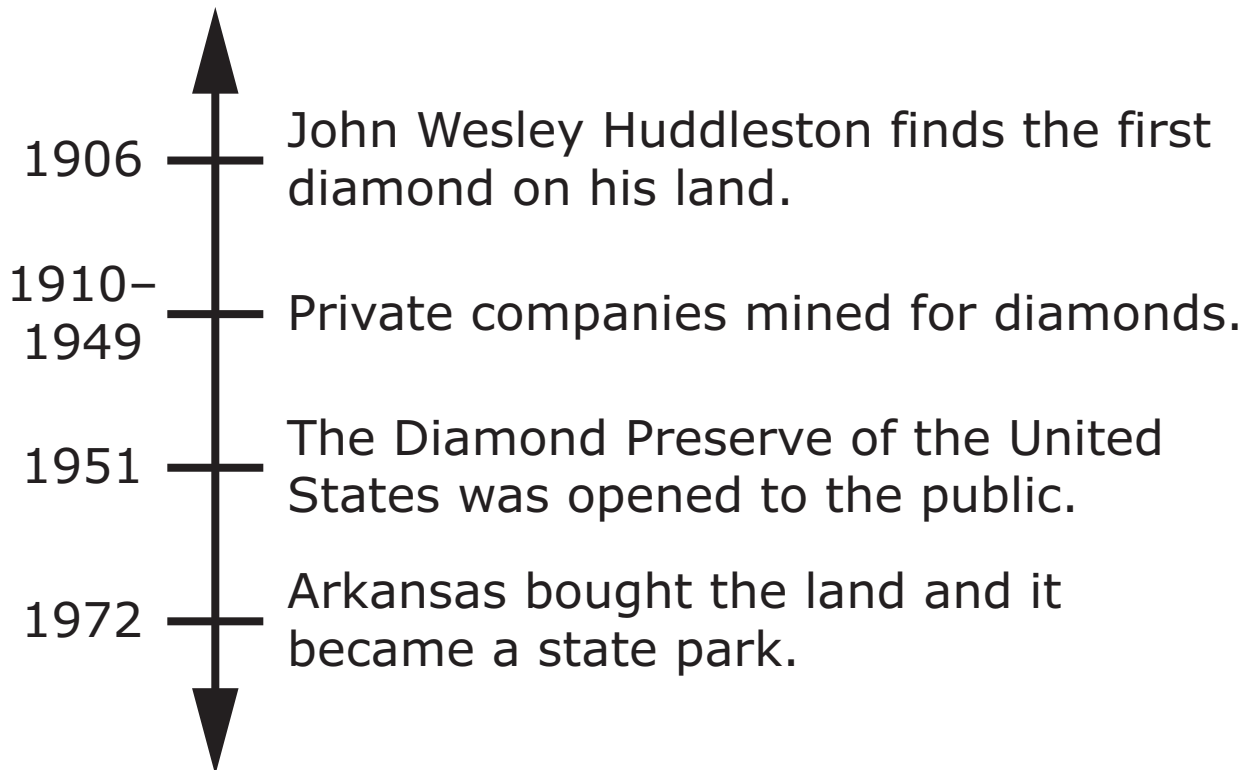
It is also important for visitors to think about the weather. The ground will be wet after a rainstorm. Visitors should wear suitable clothes for getting muddy, such as boots and old clothes. Bringing a hat and sunscreen are a good idea if it is sunny.

Imagine going to a park and finding a diamond! Now, that's an exciting day at the park.

Now let's read a time line about Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas. After we read, you will be asked a question about a summary.

The History of Crater of Diamonds State Park

The History of Crater of Diamonds State Park



Item 1

A summary tells what happens in the text.

Which sentence provides a summary of the text and the time line?

☐



Pearls are used to make earrings.

☐



People enjoy having picnics at Crater of Diamonds State Park.

○



People have found diamonds at Crater of Diamonds State Park since 1906.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 2

A summary includes information from the text. It does not include the reader's opinion.

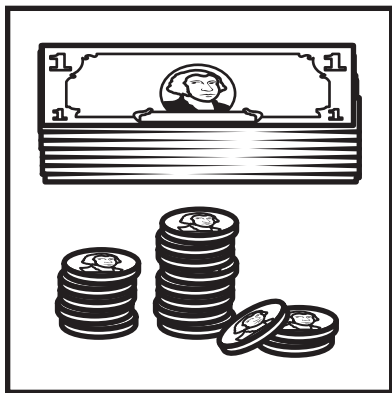
Which sentence belongs in a summary of this text?

O



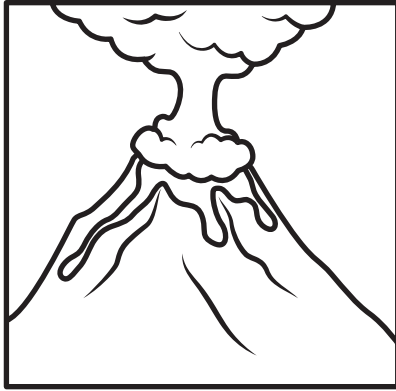
People like to give gifts.

O



Diamonds cost a lot of money.

O



Diamonds can be found near where volcanoes once were.

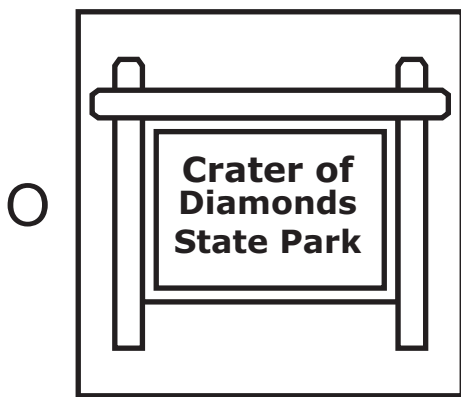
Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 3

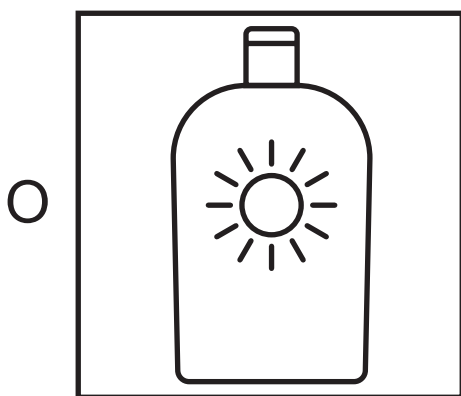
A summary includes information from the text. It does not include the reader's opinion.

One sentence that belongs in a summary of this passage is "Diamonds can be found near where volcanoes once were."

Which sentence also belongs in a summary of this text?

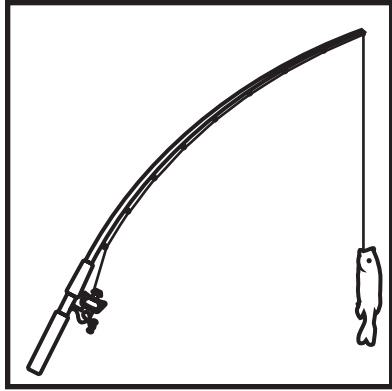


People can visit Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas to dig for diamonds.



You should be sure to wear sunscreen when you dig for diamonds.

O



Many state parks have lakes where people can swim and fish.

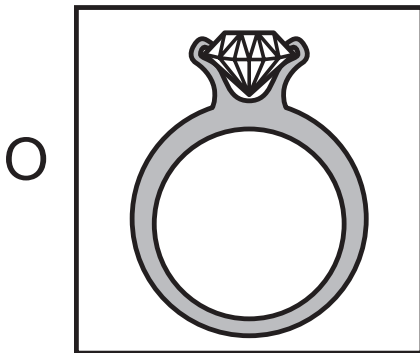
Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 4

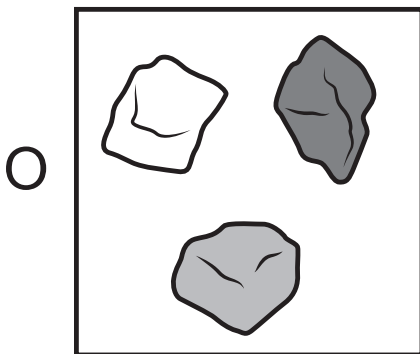
We are going to read part of the text again.

The diamonds used to make jewelry are mostly clear, precious stones called gems. Diamonds are worth a lot of money. The diamonds that are used in jewelry have sharp edges and flat sides. They sparkle. In nature, diamonds are rounded and do not sparkle. The diamonds found at the Crater of Diamonds are white, brown, or yellow.

What fact does the author use to show that diamonds found in nature are not worth as much money as the sharp, sparkly diamonds used in jewelry?

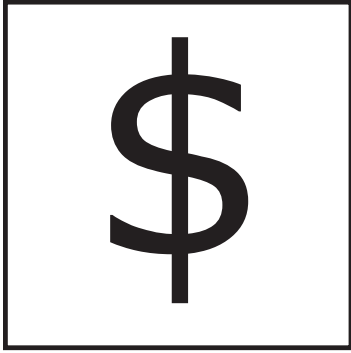


Diamonds used to make jewelry are precious.



Diamonds found in nature are rounded and do not sparkle.

O



Sports cars are expensive to buy.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 5

We are going to read part of the text again. Then you will be asked a question about the author's claim that the park is an exciting place to visit.



Today people can go to the park for a picnic. Visitors can also search for any diamonds that may remain. To search for diamonds, visitors need some tools. For example, it is useful for visitors to have a shovel and pail because they will probably need to dig to find a diamond.

It is also important for visitors to think about the weather. The ground will be wet after a rainstorm. Visitors should wear suitable clothes for getting muddy, such as boots and old clothes. Bringing a hat and sunscreen are a good idea if it is sunny.

Imagine going to a park and finding a diamond! Now, that's an exciting day at the park.

A claim is what the author thinks about the topic.

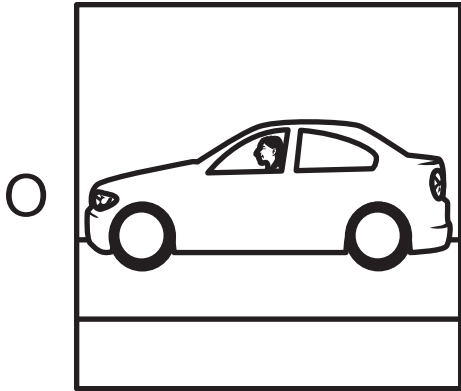
Which fact supports the author's claim that Crater of Diamonds State Park is an exciting place to visit?



You can find a diamond.



You can wear a hat.



You can see a road.

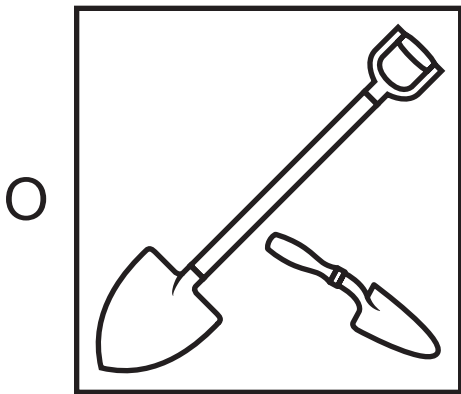
Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 6

We are going to read part of the text again. Listen for clues that tell you what the word **gems** means.

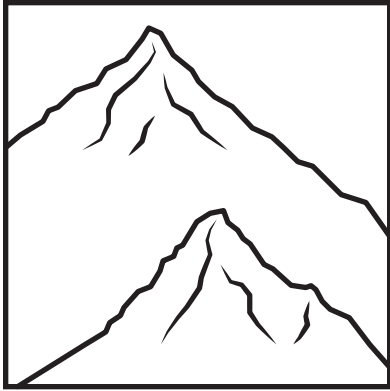
The diamonds used to make jewelry are mostly clear, precious stones called **gems**. Diamonds are worth a lot of money. The diamonds that are used in jewelry have sharp edges and flat sides. They sparkle. In nature, diamonds are rounded and do not sparkle. The diamonds found at the Crater of Diamonds are white, brown, or yellow.

What does the word **gems** mean in this sentence?



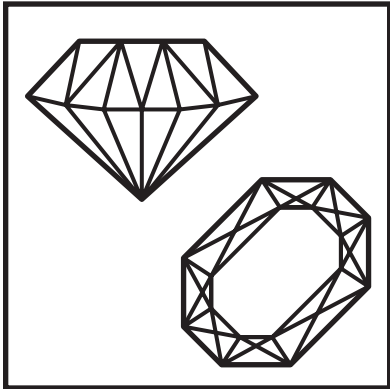
shovels

O



mountains

O





stones

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 7

Story writers include events in the order they happen.

We are going to read two events from a story. Choose the event that happens in the middle.

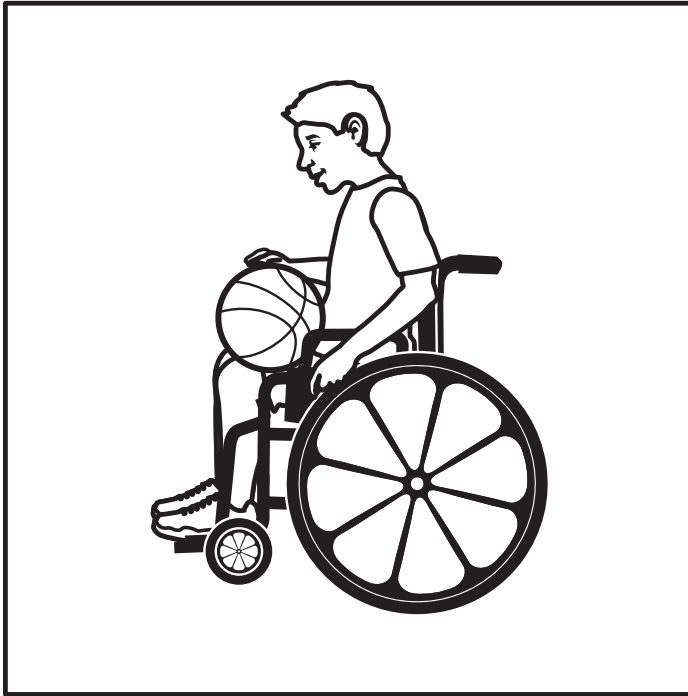
 <p>Paul went to the library.</p>		 <p>Paul read his book at the library.</p>
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Which event happened in the middle of the story?



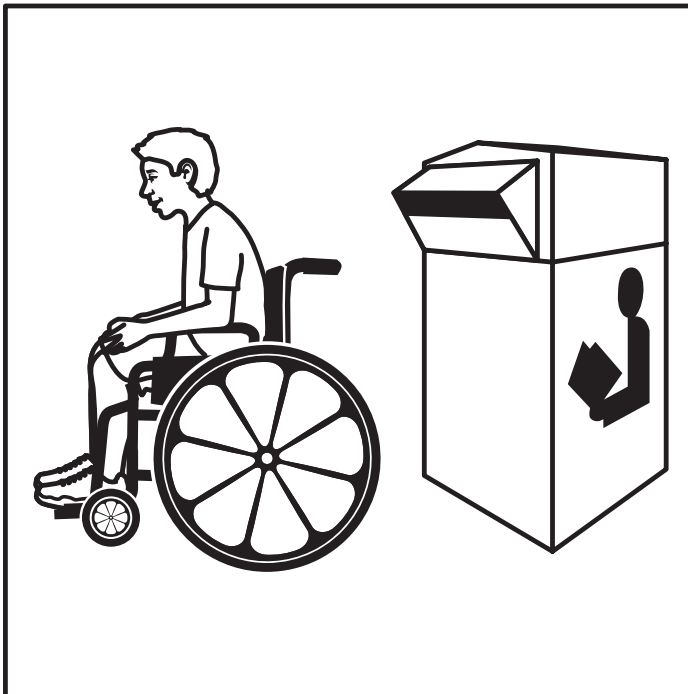
Paul found a book that he wanted to read.

O



Paul went to basketball practice.

O



Paul left the library.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 8

This is part of a story.

One day, Mark heard a chirping noise in a bush. He bent down and looked into the bush. Then Mark saw a bird's nest.

Which sentence tells what happened next in this story?

- ☐ Instead, a bird flew out of the nest right by his head!
- ☐ Suddenly, a bird flew out of the nest right by his head!
- ☐ First, a bird flew out of the nest right by his head!

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 9

You are going to write an essay that compares and contrasts two things. Remember, when we compare, we describe how two things are alike.

For example, a tree



is like a flower



because they are both plants that grow in the ground.

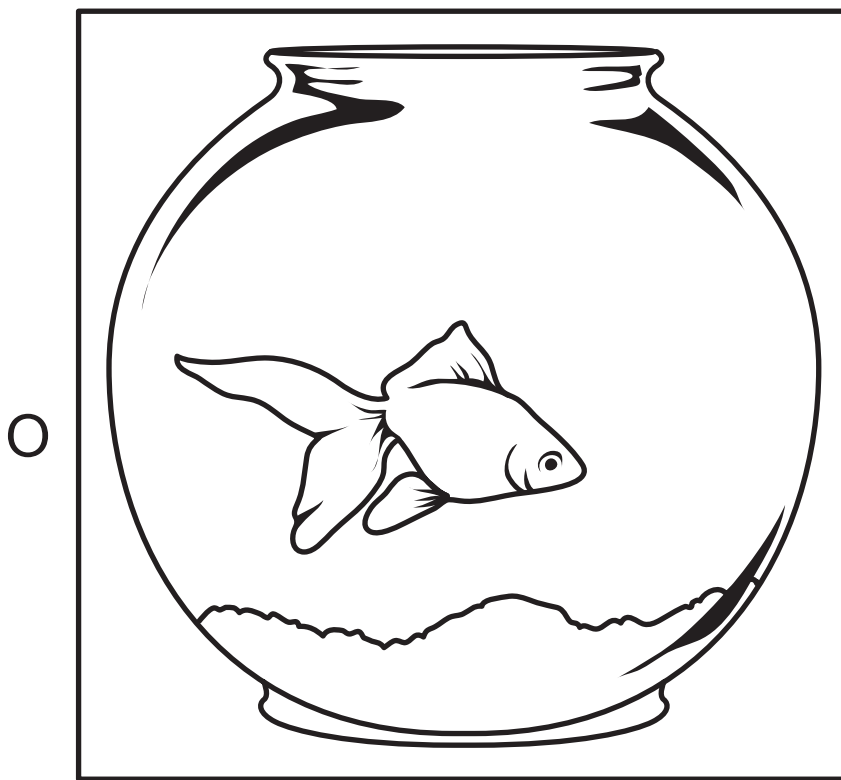
When we contrast, we describe how two things are different. For example, a tree is different from a flower because a tree



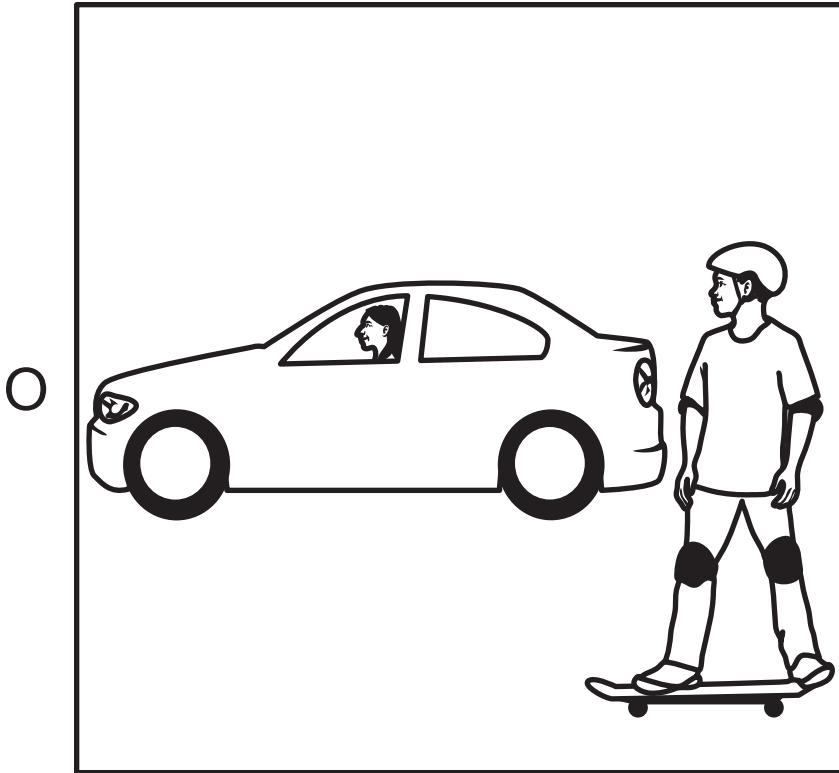
is larger than a flower.



Which of these compares and contrasts two things?



My favorite animal is a fish



Cars are like skateboards because people can ride in cars and on skateboards. Cars are different from skateboards because cars are large and skateboards are small.

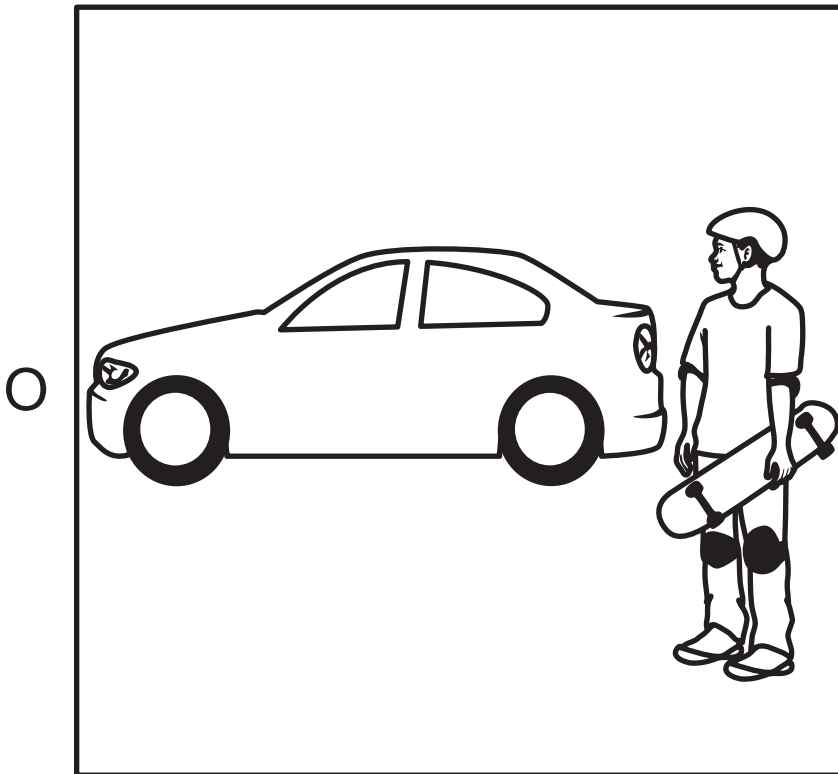
Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 10

Two sentences that compare and contrast two things are “Cars are like skateboards because people can ride in cars and on skateboards. Cars are different from skateboards because cars are large and skateboards are small.”

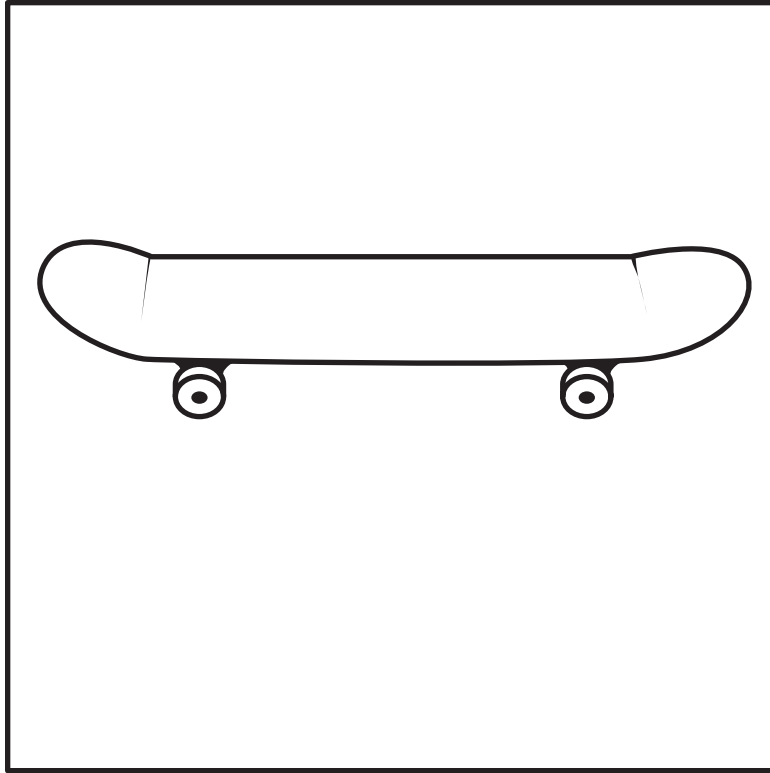
Choose the best sentence for the beginning of your essay. This will be your introduction. Remember, your introduction should describe what you will compare and contrast.

Which sentence describes what you will compare and contrast?



In this essay, I will describe how cars and skateboards are alike and how they are different.

O



In this essay, I will describe details about skateboards.

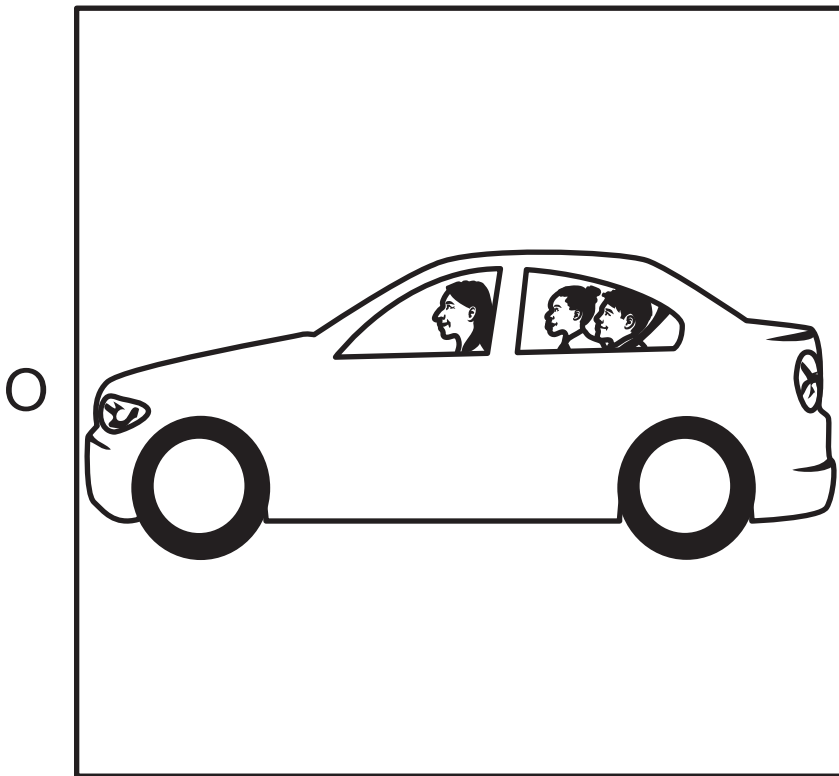
Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 11

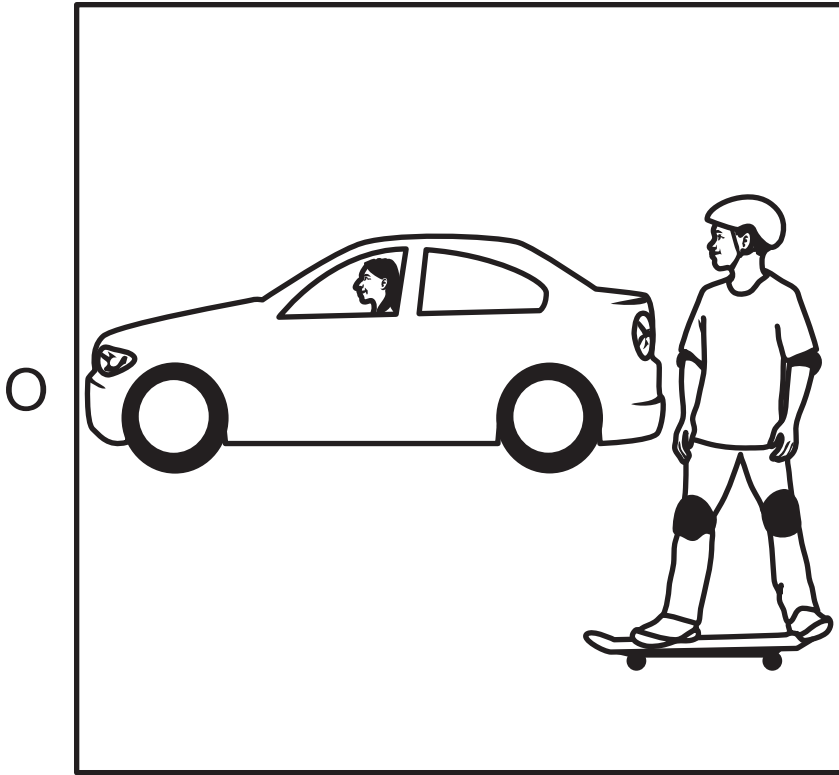
Your introduction is “In this essay, I will describe how cars and skateboards are alike and how they are different.”

Now you will write a sentence for the body of your essay.

Which sentence should be used in the body of your essay to describe how cars and skateboards are ALIKE?



Several people can fit in a car.



Both cars and skateboards have wheels.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 12

The sentence that describes how cars and skateboards are alike is “Both cars and skateboards have wheels.”

This is a sentence for the body of your essay that describes how cars and skateboards are DIFFERENT.



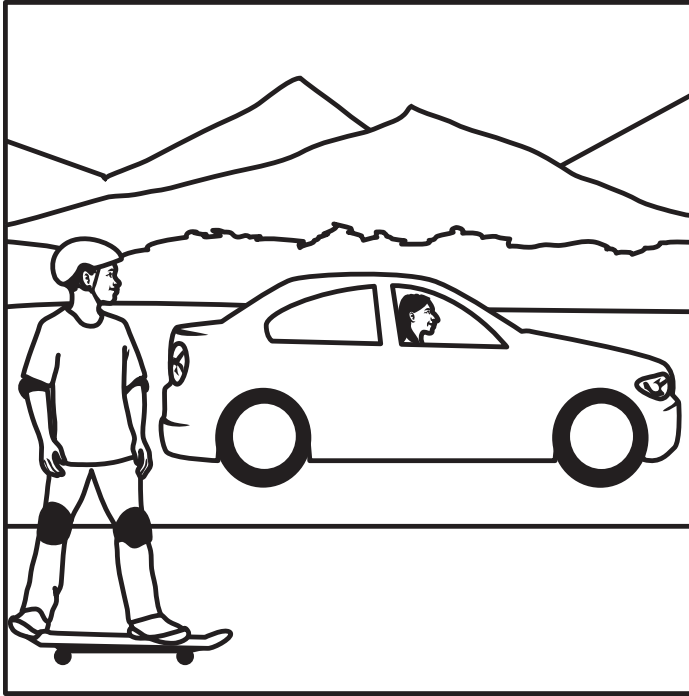
People sit in cars, but people stand on skateboards.

The sentence that describes how cars and skateboards are different is “People sit in cars, but people stand on skateboards.”

Precise words and details help readers imagine the words in their minds. For example, “the tall green grass” has more precise words and details than “the grass.”

Which sentence uses precise words and details to help readers imagine the words in their minds?

○



Cars and skateboards are both ways to get around.

○



Cars and skateboards are both forms of transportation that can be used in cities or neighborhoods.

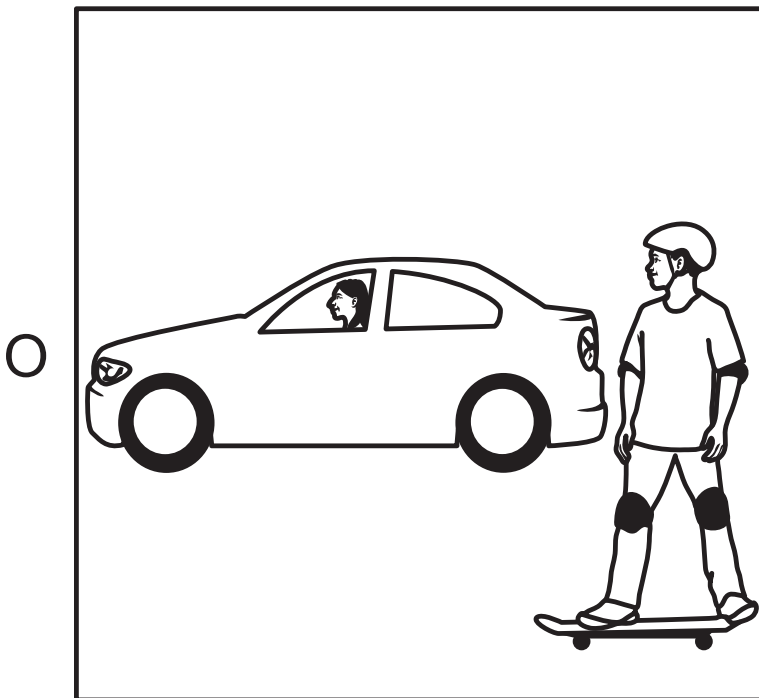
Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 13

The sentence that uses precise words and details to help readers imagine how cars and skateboards are used and where they can be used is “Cars and skateboards are both forms of transportation that can be used in cities or neighborhoods.”

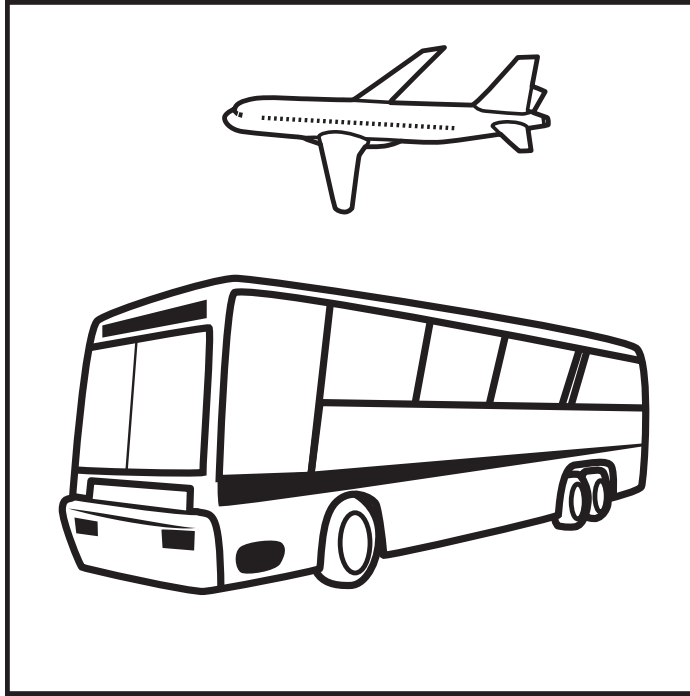
You will choose a sentence for the conclusion. Remember, a conclusion tells what the essay was about.

Which sentence is the best conclusion for your essay?



In conclusion, cars and skateboards are alike in some ways but are different in other ways.

O



In conclusion, some people love to travel.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Now I will read your essay to you.

In this essay, I will describe how cars and skateboards are alike and how they are different. Both cars and skateboards have wheels. People sit in cars, but people stand on skateboards. Cars and skateboards are both forms of transportation that can be used in cities or neighborhoods. In conclusion, cars and skateboards are alike in some ways but are different in other ways.

Up next: Writing Prompts

There are two types of sample writing prompts. The first prompt includes support materials including sentence starters and guidance from the TA, and the second requires the student to provide a response with less support. Review all writing prompt materials and select the **one** that is most appropriate for your student(s).

To administer the Writing Prompt, please ensure the Writing Stimulus Materials from the DTA are in front of you. Complete all preparation of the Stimulus Materials before starting the writing prompt administration. You will be reading all directions associated with the writing prompt to your student. All prewriting activities will be completed using the Stimulus Materials.

Writing Prompt 1

Grade 6 Stimulus Materials List for Topic: Activities Students Can Do When They Are at School with Activities They Can Do When They Are at Home

Card 1a: Graphic Organizer Compare/Contrast

Card 2a: talk to a teacher

Card 3a: go to class

Card 4a: clean their bedroom

Card 5a: enjoy a show

Card 6a: talk with friends

Card 7a: draw a picture

Card 8a: I like to play in my big backyard.

Card 9a: capital letters, end punctuation, complete sentences

Cards 10a and 11a: Response Template

Item 15

Writing Prompt 2

Topic: Activities students can do when they are at school or at home.

Grade 6 Stimulus Materials List for Topic: Activities Students Can Do When They Are at School with Activities They Can Do When They Are at Home

Card 1b: Graphic Organizer Compare/Contrast

Card 2b: talk with friends

Card 3b: draw a picture

Card 4b: read a book

Card 5b: talk to a teacher

Card 6b: go to class

Card 7b: play ball in the gym

Card 8b: clean their bedroom

Card 9b: enjoy a show

Card 10b: sleep in bed

Card 11b: I like to play in my big backyard on sunny days.

Card 12b: Capital letters, end punctuation, complete sentences

Card 13b: Response Template

ELA Grade 7

Directions

We are going to read a story about a boy who meets a new mentor. A mentor is a trusted person who acts as a guide in another person's life.

Mentoring Program



Jason and his big sister Lexi did everything together. When Jason was little, Lexi taught him how to ride a bike. When he was in elementary school, she taught him how to shoot a basketball. Lexi brought him to the zoo and the museum. She even helped him with his math homework.



This year, Lexi left for college. Every day Jason walked by her empty bedroom and sighed. Jason called Lexi every week, but it wasn't the same as having her at home.

Jason's math teacher, Mr. Myers, knew Jason missed having someone he could look up to, like his sister. He suggested Jason sign up for the Community Connections Program. As part of the program, Jason would spend time with a mentor from his community.



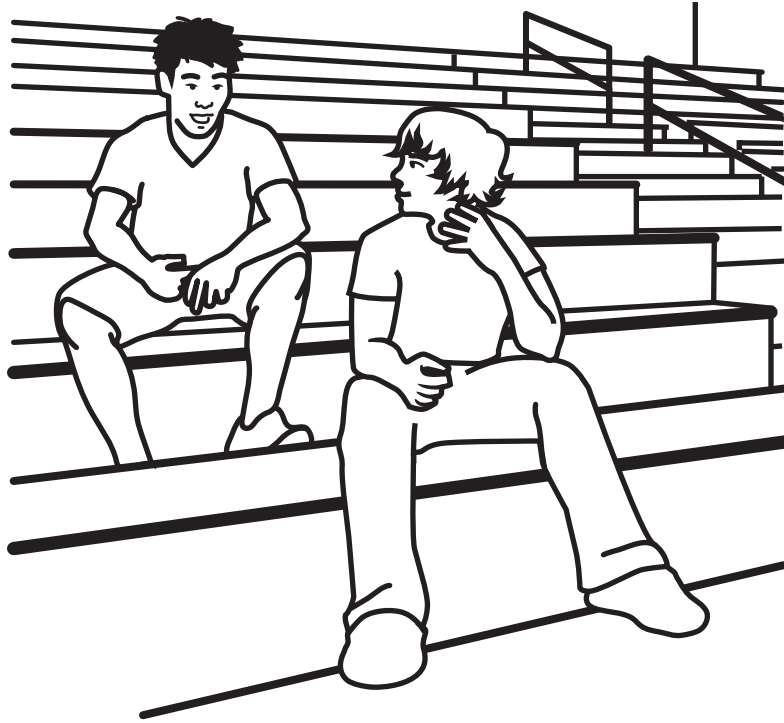
Jason wasn't sure if he wanted to participate. He didn't think a stranger could replace time spent with his sister. Jason was worried, but after much encouragement from Mr. Myers, Jason signed up for the program. Today, he would meet with Bryan, the community member who had become his mentor.



After school, Jason dragged his feet slowly to the school gym where Bryan was waiting for him. Jason nervously **peered** inside and saw Bryan bouncing a basketball. Jason went into the gym. Bryan passed the ball to Jason and introduced himself.

“I heard you like basketball,” Bryan said.

Jason smiled and shot the ball into the hoop. Bryan seemed friendly. They played basketball for a little while and then sat on the bleachers.



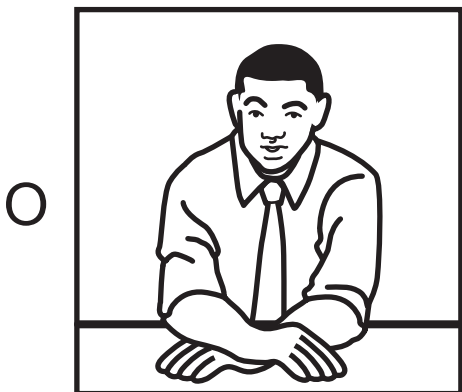
Bryan asked Jason a lot of questions. At first, Jason was shy and hesitated to answer, but Bryan was so kind that Jason started to like him.

Jason and Bryan made plans to go to the science museum over the weekend. Jason was excited because there was a new robot exhibit there. He remembered Lexi wasn't interested in robots at all, but Bryan was very excited to go. Jason was happy that he and Bryan had things in common. He knew Bryan couldn't replace Lexi, but he could be a great new friend.

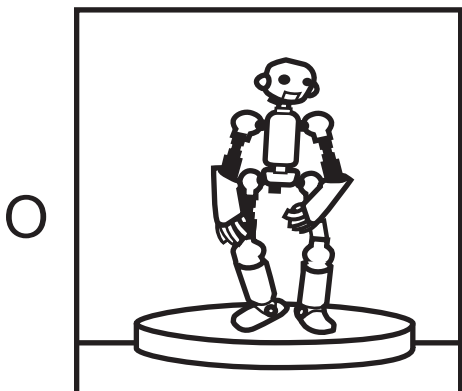
Item 1

The theme is the message of the story. The theme of this story is to give new opportunities a chance.

Which sentence supports the message to give new opportunities a chance?



The school counselor helped Rudy when he felt lonely.



Lexi was not interested in the robot exhibit at the museum.

O



Bryan did not replace Lexi, but he was a great new friend.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 2

We are going to read part of the story again. Listen for how Lexi and Jason spent a lot of time together.

Mentoring Program



Jason and his big sister Lexi did everything together. When Jason was little, Lexi taught him how to ride a bike. When he was in elementary school, she taught him how to shoot a basketball. Lexi brought him to the zoo and the museum. She even helped him with his math homework.

Evidence is information that gives proof of something.

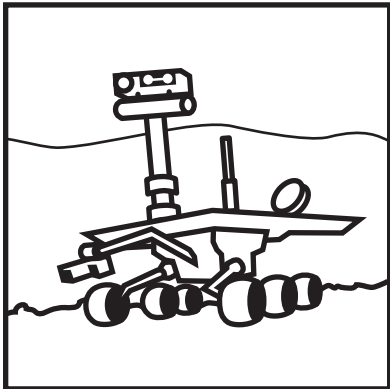
Which sentence shows evidence that Lexi and Jason spent a lot of time together?

☐



Lexi taught Jason how to ride a bike.

☐



Robots help scientists explore planets.

☐



Jason played basketball in elementary school.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 3

We are going to read part of the story again. Listen for how Lexi and Jason spent a lot of time together.

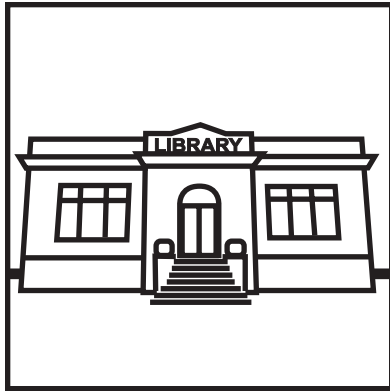
Mentoring Program



Jason and his big sister Lexi did everything together. When Jason was little, Lexi taught him how to ride a bike. When he was in elementary school, she taught him how to shoot a basketball. Lexi brought him to the zoo and the museum. She even helped him with his math homework.

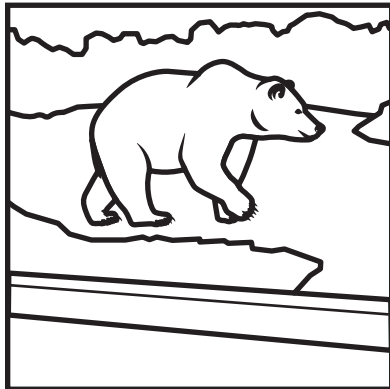
Which of these is another sentence that shows Jason and Lexi spent a lot of time together?

☐



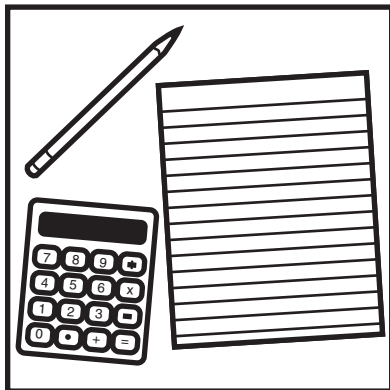
Lexi reads at the library.

☐



Lexi took Jason to the zoo.

☐



Use a calculator to do math problems.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 4

We are going to read part of the story again. Listen for how Jason misses his sister Lexi.



This year, Lexi left for college. Every day Jason walked by her empty bedroom and sighed. Jason called Lexi every week, but it wasn't the same as having her at home.

Evidence is information that gives proof of something.

Which sentence shows that Jason misses his sister Lexi?

O



Jason visited with his math teacher.

O



Jason felt sad when he looked into Lexi's empty bedroom.

O



Nina sang along with her favorite song on the radio.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 5

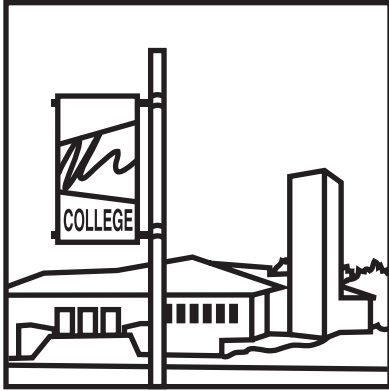
We are going to read part of the story again. Listen for how Jason misses his sister Lexi.



This year, Lexi left for college. Every day Jason walked by her empty bedroom and sighed. Jason called Lexi every week, but it wasn't the same as having her at home.

Which of these sentences shows that Jason misses his sister Lexi?

☐



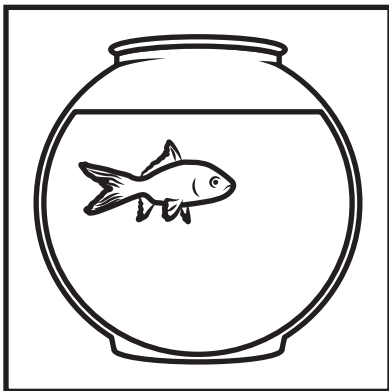
Jason went to visit Lexi in college.

☐



Jason talked to Lexi on her cell phone each week.

☐



Jason got a pet to keep him company.

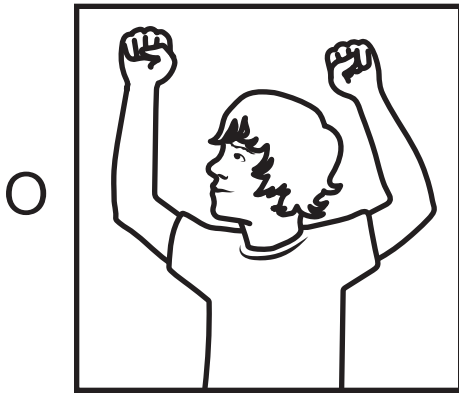
Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 6

We are going to read part of the story again. Listen for clues that tell what the word **peered** means.

“After school, Jason dragged his feet slowly to the school gym where Bryan was waiting for him. Jason nervously **peered** inside and saw Bryan bouncing a basketball.”

What does the word **peered** mean in this sentence?

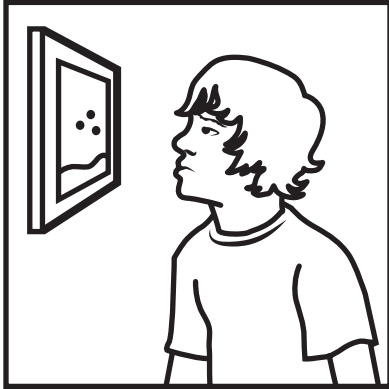


excited



talked

O



looked

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

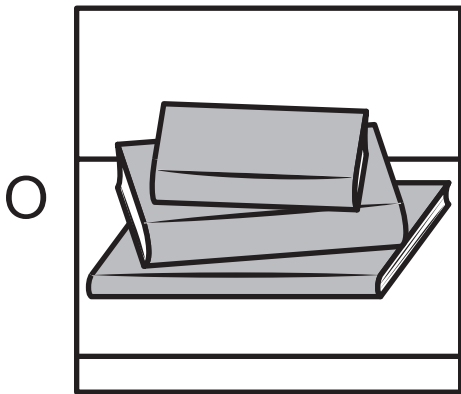
Item 7

Writers use details to help readers imagine what they are reading.

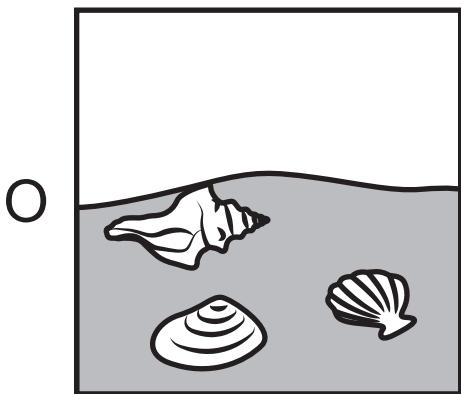
We are going to read a paragraph about Penny's day at a beach. After we read, you will choose the sentence that has a detail about the beach.

It was a hot day at the beach. Penny felt a warm breeze. She put her feet in the soft sand. The sand was cool on her feet.

Which sentence has a detail that **best** fits in this paragraph?



Penny liked to read books.



Seashells sparkled in the sand.

O



Fall is a fun time to have a picnic.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 8

We are going to read a story about a boy named Sam. After we read, you will choose the best conclusion for the story.

One day, Sam went to the zoo with his grandmother. First, they saw the lions and the bears. Next, Sam and his grandmother watched the zookeepers feed the seals. Then Sam and his grandmother had lunch at the picnic area. After lunch, they visited the elephants and giraffes.

Which sentence is the best conclusion for this story?

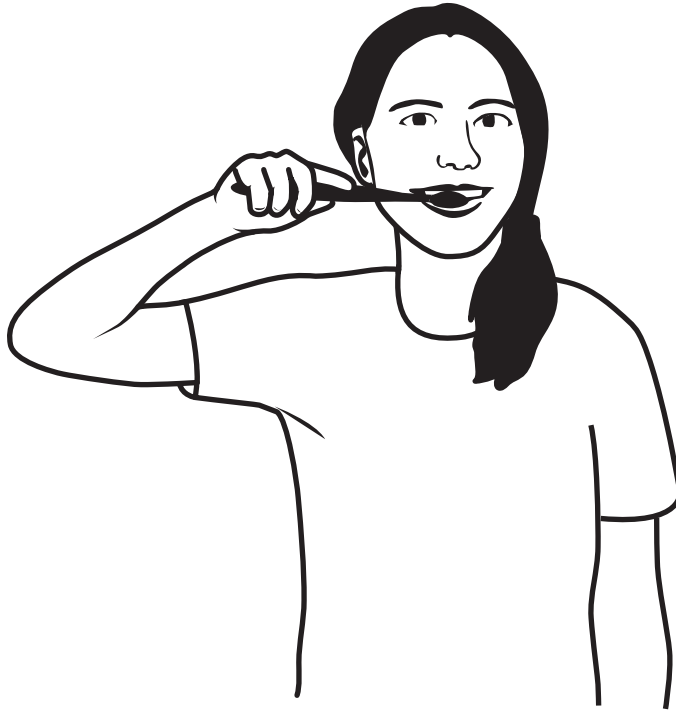
- ☐ Finally, Sam walked to the zoo.
- ☐ Finally, Sam ate a sandwich for lunch.
- ☐ Finally, Sam went home after a fun day at the zoo.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 9

You are going to write an essay about a cause and its effect. One example of a cause and its effect is when you brush your teeth, they become clean.

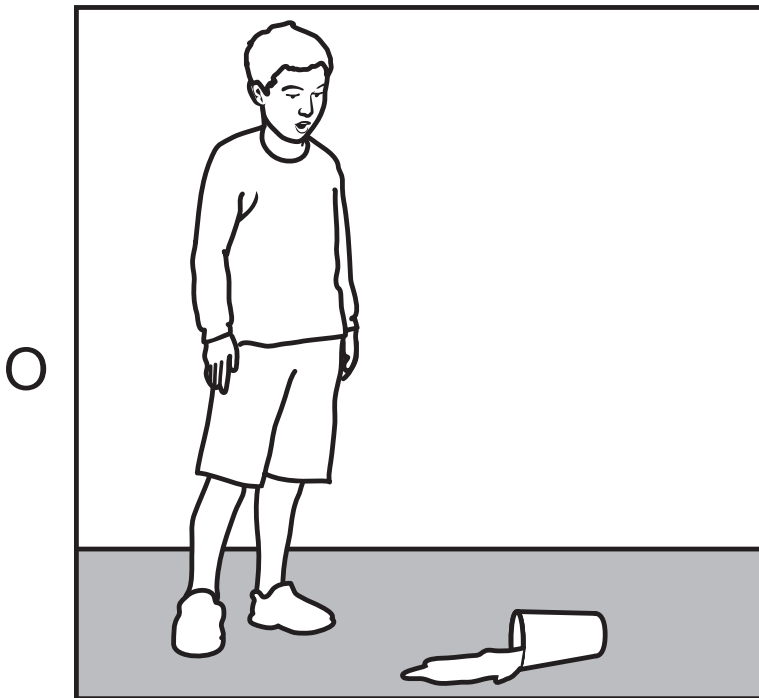
Brushing your teeth is the cause.



The effect is they become clean.



Which sentence is about cause and effect?



Spilling something causes a mess.

O



Dogs make good pets.

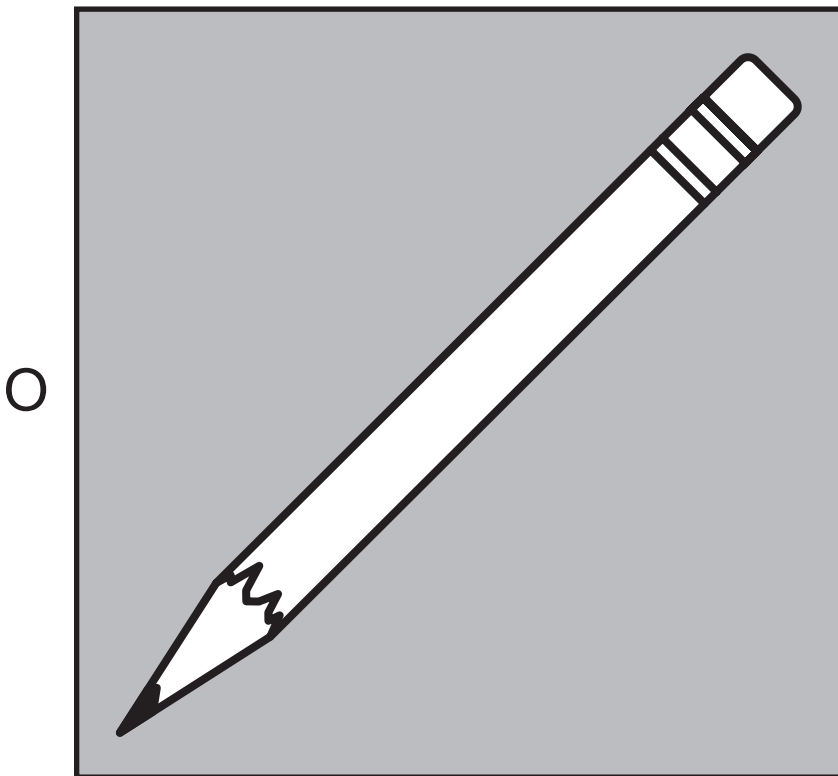
Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 10

The sentence “Spilling something causes a mess” is about a cause and an effect. An action, spilling something, causes a mess. Now you will write an essay about how spilling something causes a mess.

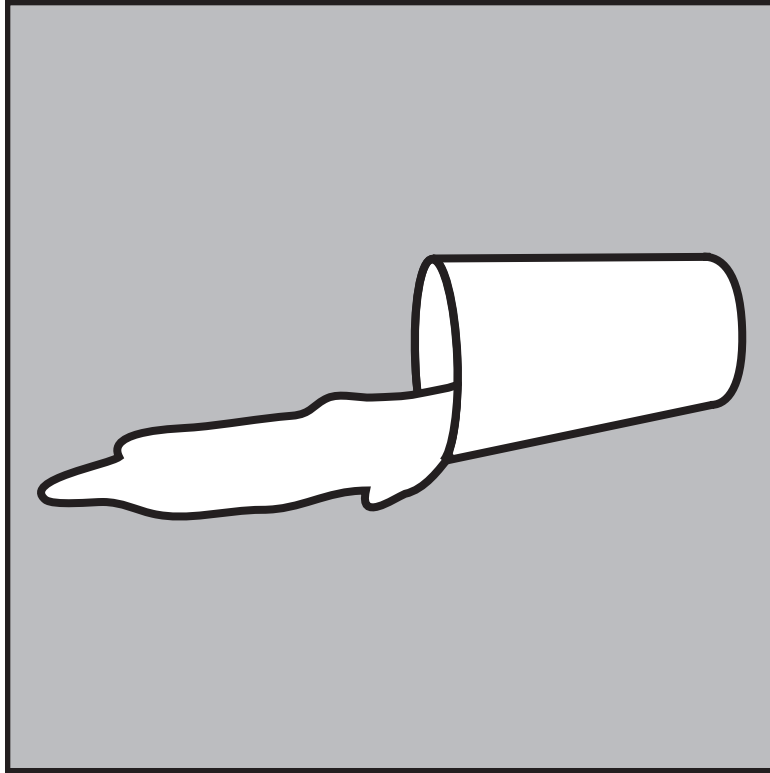
Choose a sentence to begin your essay. This will be your introduction. Remember, your introduction should explain to readers what cause and effect they will be reading about.

Which sentence explains to readers what cause and effect they are going to read about?



I will describe a pencil.

O



I will describe how spilling something causes a mess.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 11

Your introduction is “I will describe how spilling something causes a mess.”

Which sentence describes how spilling something causes a mess?



Some students enjoy being outside.

O



Spilling milk on the floor makes the floor dirty.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 12

“Spilling milk on the floor makes the floor dirty” tells more about how spilling something causes a mess.

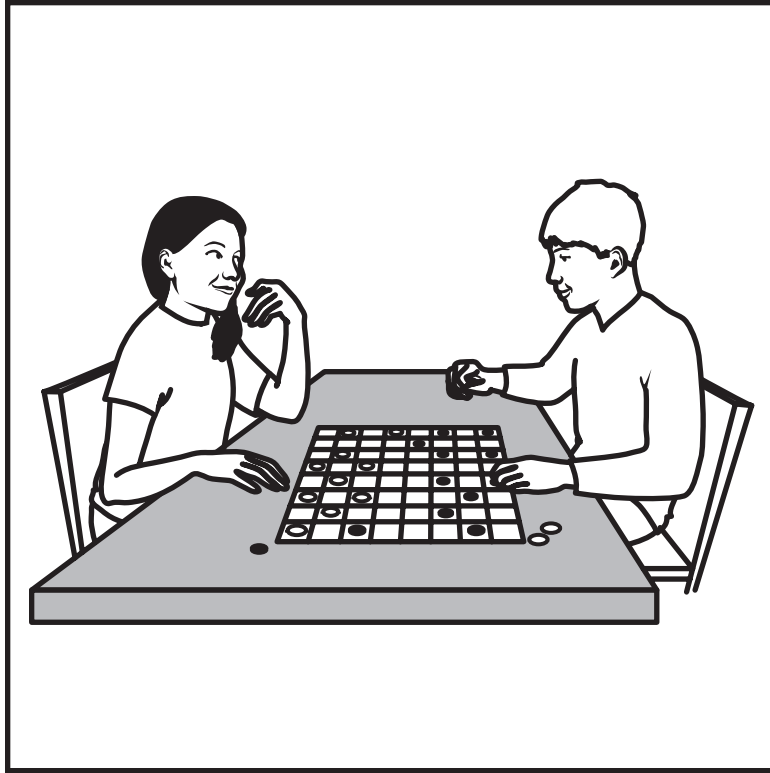
Precise words and details help readers imagine the words in their minds. For example, “the shiny, red car” has more precise words and details than “the car.”

Which sentence uses precise words and details to help readers imagine the words in their minds?



Spilled milk can make the floor wet and slippery.

O



Games are fun.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 13

The sentence “Spilled milk can make the floor wet and slippery” uses precise words and details to help readers imagine how spilling something causes a mess.

There are certain words that help readers understand the connection between a cause and its effect. For example, “if” and “then” are two words that can help connect a cause and its effect.

Listen to these two sentences.

Which sentence uses the transition words “if” and “then”?

- ☐ If you spill something on the floor, then you need to clean it up.
- ☐ You spill something on the floor, however, you need to clean it up.

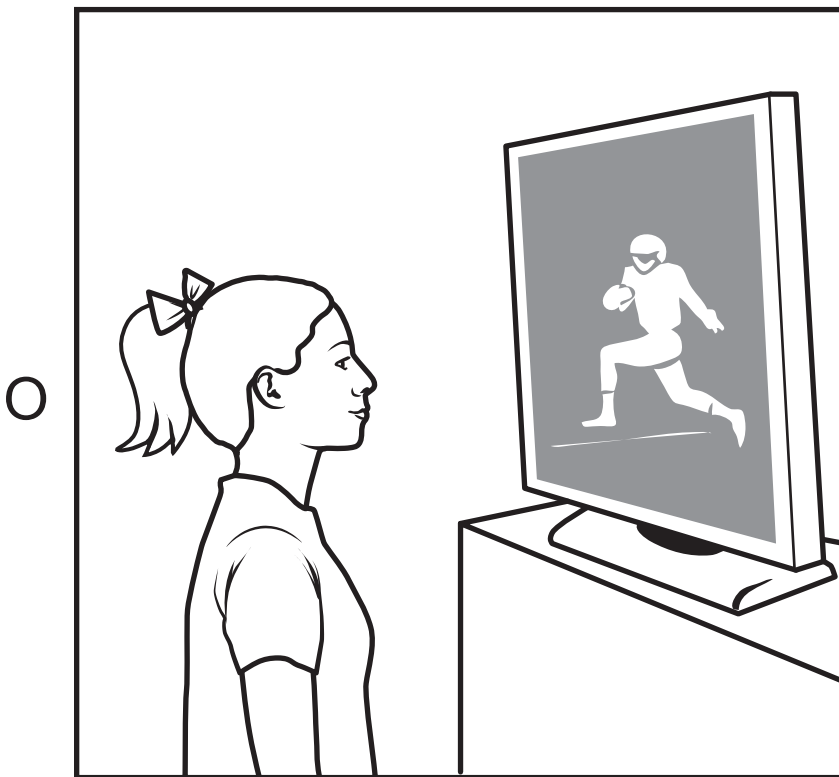
Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Item 14

The sentence “If you spill something on the floor, then you need to clean it up” uses the words “if” and “then” to help readers understand the connection between a cause and its effect.

Now you will choose a sentence for the conclusion of your essay. Remember, a conclusion tells what the essay was about.

Which conclusion best ends your essay that tells about the effects of spilling something?



In conclusion, I like to watch television.



In conclusion, spilling something on the floor can make the floor dirty and messy.

Would you like to read this question again, yes or no?

Now I will read your essay to you.

I will describe how spilling something causes a mess. Spilling milk on the floor makes the floor dirty. Spilled milk can make the floor wet and slippery. If you spill something on the floor, then you need to clean it up. In conclusion, spilling something on the floor can make the floor dirty and messy.

