

OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/GRADE 9 ENGLISH/HOMEWORK 4**NAME (FIRST AND LAST):** _____

Read the following selections from James Dashner's *The Maze Runner* and answer the questions from page 6 to 8.

SELECTION ONE

followed by a horrible crunching, grinding sound. He stumbled backward, fell to the ground. It felt as if the whole earth shook; he looked around, panicked. The walls were closing. The walls were *really* closing—trapping him inside the Glade. An onrushing sense of claustrophobia stifled him, compressed his lungs, as if water filled their cavities.

“Calm down, Greenie,” Chuck yelled over the noise. “It’s just the walls!”

Thomas barely heard him, too fascinated, too shaken by the closing of the Doors. He scrambled to his feet and took a few trembling steps back for a better view, finding it hard to believe what his eyes were seeing.

The enormous stone wall to the right of them seemed to defy every known law of physics as it slid along the ground, throwing sparks and dust as it moved, rock against rock. The crunching sound rattled his bones. Thomas realized that only *that* wall was moving, heading for its neighbor to the left, ready to seal shut with its protruding rods slipping into the drilled holes across from it. He looked around at the other openings. It felt like his head was spinning faster than his body, and his stomach flipped over with the dizziness. On all four sides of the Glade, only the right walls were moving, toward the left, closing the gap of the Doors.

Impossible, he thought. *How can they do that?* He fought the urge to run out there, slip past the moving slabs of rock before they shut, flee the Glade. Common sense won out—the maze held even more unknowns than his situation inside.

He tried to picture in his mind how the structure of it all worked. Massive stone walls, hundreds of feet high, moving like sliding glass doors—an image from his past life that flashed through his thoughts. He tried to grasp the memory, hold on to it, complete the picture with faces, names, a place, but it faded into obscurity. A pang of sadness pricked through his other swirling emotions.

SELECTION TWO

come from, anyway?” It seemed like they’d taken some other language and melded it with his own.

Chuck flopped back down with a heavy flump. “I don’t know—I’ve only been here a month, remember?”

Thomas wondered about Chuck, whether he knew more than he let on. He was a quirky kid, funny, and he seemed innocent, but who was to say? Really he was just as mysterious as everything else in the Glade.

A few minutes passed, and Thomas felt the long day finally catch up to him, the leaded edge of sleep crossing over his mind. But—like a fist had shoved it in his brain and let go—a thought popped into his head. One that he didn’t expect, and he wasn’t sure from where it came.

Suddenly, the Glade, the walls, the Maze—it all seemed ... familiar. Comfortable. A warmth of calmness spread through his chest, and for the first time since he’d found himself there, he didn’t feel like the Glade was the worst place in the universe. He stilled, felt his eyes widen, his breathing stop for a long moment. *What just happened?* he thought. *What changed?* Ironically, the feeling that things would be okay made him slightly uneasy.

Not quite understanding how, he knew what he needed to do. He didn’t get it. The feeling—the epiphany—was a strange one, foreign and familiar at the same time. But it felt ... right.

“I want to be one of those guys that goes out there,” he said aloud, not knowing if Chuck was still awake. “Inside the Maze.”

“Huh?” was the response from Chuck. Thomas could hear a tinge of annoyance in his voice.

“Runners,” Thomas said, wishing he knew where this was coming from. “Whatever they’re doing out there, I want in.”

“You don’t even know what you’re talking about,” Chuck grumbled, and rolled over. “Go to sleep.”

SELECTION THREE

Thomas did, leaning forward until his nose touched the cool surface of the glass. It took a second for his eyes to focus on the moving object on the other side, to look past the grime and dust and see what Newt wanted him to see. And when he did, he felt his breath catch in his throat, like an icy wind had blown down there and frozen the air solid.

A large, bulbous creature the size of a cow but with no distinct shape twisted and seethed along the ground in the corridor outside. It climbed the opposite wall, then leaped at the thick-glassed window with a loud thump. Thomas shrieked before he could stop himself, jerked away from the window—but the thing bounced backward, leaving the glass undamaged.

Thomas sucked in two huge breaths and leaned in once again. It was too dark to make out clearly, but odd lights flashed from an unknown source, revealing blurs of silver spikes and glistening flesh. Wicked instrument-tipped appendages protruded from its body like arms: a saw blade, a set of shears, long rods whose purpose could only be guessed.

The creature was a horrific mix of animal and machine, and seemed to realize it was being observed, seemed to know what lay inside the walls of the Glade, seemed to want to get inside and feast on human flesh. Thomas felt an icy terror blossom in his chest, expand like a tumor, making it hard to breathe. Even with the memory wipe, he felt sure he'd never seen something so truly awful.

He stepped back, the courage he'd felt the previous evening melting away.

"What is that thing?" he asked. Something shivered in his gut, and he wondered if he'd ever be able to eat again.

"Grievors, we call 'em," Newt answered. "Nasty bugger, eh? Just be glad the Grievors only come *out* at night. Be thankful for these walls."

Thomas swallowed, wondering how he could ever go out there. His desire to become a Runner had taken a major blow. But he had to do it. Somehow he *knew* he had to do it. It was such an odd thing to feel, especially after what he'd just seen.

SELECTION FOUR

skin tight, his brow creased.

“Find our way out, Greenie,” Newt said. “Solve the buggin’ Maze and find our way home.”

A couple of hours later, the doors having reopened, rumbling and grumbling and shaking the ground until they were finished, Thomas sat at a worn, tilted picnic table outside the Homestead. All he could think about was the Griever, what their purpose could be, what they did out there during the night. What it would be like to be attacked by something so terrible.

He tried to get the image out of his head, move on to something else. The Runners. They’d just left without saying a word to anybody, bolting into the Maze at full speed and disappearing around corners. He pictured them in his mind as he picked at his eggs and bacon with a fork, speaking to no one, not even Chuck, who ate silently next to him. The poor guy had exhausted himself trying to start a conversation with Thomas, who’d refused to respond. All he wanted was to be left alone.

He just didn’t get it; his brain was on overload trying to compute the sheer impossibility of the situation. How could a maze, with walls so massive and tall, be so big that dozens of kids hadn’t been able to solve it after who knew how long trying? How could such a structure exist? And more importantly, *why*? What could possibly be the purpose of such a thing? Why were they all there? How *long* had they been there?

Try as he might to avoid it, his mind still kept wandering back to the image of the vicious Griever. Its phantom brother seemed to leap at him every time he blinked or rubbed his eyes.

Thomas knew he was a smart kid—he somehow felt it in his bones. But nothing about this place made any sense. Except for one thing. He was

SELECTION FIVE

into another grave—one that had the dusty remnants of a rotting body.

Completely creeped out, Thomas leaned closer to get a better look anyway, curious. The tomb was smaller than usual—only the top *half of* the deceased person lay inside. He remembered Chuck's story about the boy who'd tried to rappel down the dark hole of the Box after it had descended, only to be cut in two by something slicing through the air. Words were etched on the glass; Thomas could barely read them:

**Let this half-shank be a warning to all:
You can't escape through the Box Hole.**

Thomas felt the odd urge to snicker—it seemed too ridiculous to be true. But he was also disgusted with himself for being so shallow and glib. Shaking his head, he had stepped aside to read more names of the dead when another twig broke, this time straight in front of him, right behind the trees on the other side of the graveyard.

Then another snap. Then another. Coming closer. And the darkness was thick.

"Who's out there?" he called, his voice shaky and hollow—it sounded as if he were speaking inside an insulated tunnel. "Seriously, this is stupid." He hated to admit to himself just how terrified he was.

Instead of answering, the person gave up all pretense of stealth and started running, crashing through the forest line around the clearing of the graveyard, circling toward the spot where Thomas stood. He froze, panic overtaking him. Now only a few feet away, the visitor grew louder and louder until Thomas caught a shadowed glimpse of a skinny boy limping along in a strange, lilting run.

"Who the he—"

The boy burst through the trees before Thomas could finish. He saw only

Refer back to the selections in the previous pages to help you answer the questions below. Feel free to use evidence/examples from other parts of the novel. Try to fill up all the lines provided. Try to sound as coherent and analytical as you can. Structure your responses whenever possible, beginning with a point (topic sentence), followed by a discussion of evidence/examples/details that support your point, and then ending with a clincher sentence.

Selection 1

Why does Thomas feel “a pang of sadness” that “pricked through his other swirling emotions”?

Selection 2

What is the epiphany that Thomas experiences? What has caused him to experience this epiphany? Respond to both questions, please.

Selection 3

The narrator describes the Griever as a “horrific mix of animal and machine.” Why is the creature horrific?

Selection 4

How does the novelist portray Thomas? How do the questions, fired in rapid succession (“How could a maze...How long had they been there?”), deepen our understanding of Thomas’s character?

Selection 5

a) What seems ridiculous to Thomas?

b) Why is Thomas disgusted with himself? What is he being shallow and glib about?

Write down three good questions that you have about *The Maze Runner*, based on your reading so far. Each question should have more than 7 words! 😊

GRAMMAR

COMPOUND SUBJECTS

- A **compound subject** is made up of two or more simple subjects.
EXAMPLE: **Hiroshi** and **Gina** are excellent athletes.

A. Draw a line between the complete subject and the complete predicate in each sentence. Write SS for a simple subject. Write CS for a compound subject.

- ___ 1. Omar left the package on the crowded subway.
- ___ 2. She and I will travel to Canmore, Alberta, after Christmas.
- ___ 3. St. John's and Halifax were two cities visited by the tourists.
- ___ 4. The disease spread rapidly to other people in the country.
- ___ 5. Basketball, soccer, and tennis were our favourite sports.
- ___ 6. Tokyo and Osaka are important Japanese cities.
- ___ 7. The Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean are connected by the Panama Canal.
- ___ 8. The Conservatives, the Liberals, and the New Democrats are competing for this riding.
- ___ 9. The crowd waved to us from the station platform.
- ___ 10. Money and power motivate many people.
- ___ 11. Dad washed the dishes left from the party.
- ___ 12. Daffodils and tulips bloom in the spring.
- ___ 13. Our class is studying the anatomy of a frog.

B. Write two sentences containing compound subjects.

1. _____

2. _____

COMPOUND PREDICATES

- A **compound predicate** is made up of two or more simple predicates.
EXAMPLE: Massoud **smiled** and **nodded**.

A. Draw a line between the complete subject and the complete predicate in each sentence. Write SP for each simple predicate. Write CP for each compound predicate.

- ____ 1. People need oxygen to breathe.
- ____ 2. The dealer buys and sells old furniture.
- ____ 3. A flock of geese hissed and honked in the farmyard.
- ____ 4. Mr. Santorini designs and makes amber jewellery.
- ____ 5. *Star Wars* is one of my favourite movies.
- ____ 6. Madhi and Brian were lost in the wilderness.
- ____ 7. Carola participated in the Special Olympics in Calgary.
- ____ 8. They gathered up tin cans for the recycling centre.
- ____ 9. Geraldine's friends are visiting in Yukon and the Northwest Territories.
- ____ 10. The Ecksteins live in that duplex on Avenue Road.
- ____ 11. The groceries were picked up and delivered last night.
- ____ 12. The performers chatted and joked before the play.
- ____ 13. The student has completed six essays this term.

B. Write two sentences containing compound predicates.

1. _____

2. _____

THE END