



GRADE 7
Reading

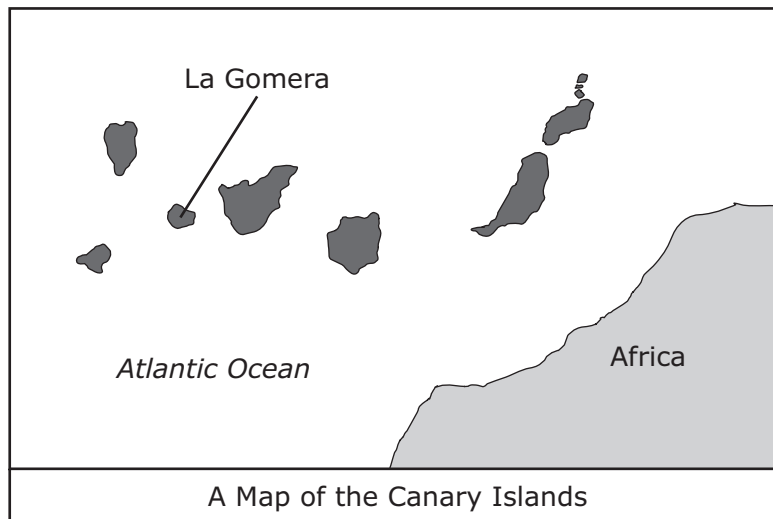
Administered May 2021

RELEASED

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

More Than a Whistle

- 1 Just off the coast of Africa lies a small group of islands known as the Canary Islands. The second smallest of these islands is La Gomera. If you were to visit La Gomera, you might expect to hear the whistles of birds, such as canaries, in the air. Although you may indeed hear tweets drifting through the deep valleys and ravines, you would also hear a unique whistle not heard anywhere else in the world—and one that has nothing to do with birds. This whistle is called *Silbo Gomero*, or just *el Silbo* (the whistle) by the islanders. It's far more than an ordinary whistle. It's a spoken language.



- 2 *El Silbo* has a history that reaches back for many generations. No one is certain of its origin. Some speculate that it began as a northern African language. Historians do know that the whistled language was used by the original inhabitants of the island. When the Spanish explorers arrived during the 1500s and 1600s, they adopted the language and *el Silbo* was widely spoken for centuries after.
- 3 *El Silbo* translates a dialect of Spanish by assigning whistles of different pitch and length to each vowel or consonant sound. The whistle language contains up to four vowels and up to ten consonants used to compose words. One of the advantages to *el Silbo* is that the sounds can travel up to two miles. Without using much energy, it can be heard much farther away than a shout. While there are a few other whistling languages in the world, *el Silbo* is spoken by the largest group of people and is the only one that contains every vowel and consonant in the local spoken language.



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A Ravine on La Gomera

- 4 One older islander explains that when he first learned the language, it was a vital skill. Houses were far apart in those days, so learning to whistle was more a matter of necessity than pleasure. Whistling allowed islanders to deliver messages across the ravines without having to walk great distances around them. The whistles were often used to make public announcements or to send invitations to events. But as times and transportation methods changed, so did the habits of the people of La Gomera. By the 1980s *el Silbo* began fading away. Before long only a few people could still whistle this unique language. The people of La Gomera realized that they were in danger of losing something that was precious to them. They recognized that *el Silbo* was an important and unique part of their heritage. To preserve the language, the government took action and required that *el Silbo* be taught in the schools. Today every elementary-school student in La Gomera takes classes in *el Silbo*. Even though the islanders all learn the language, it is still not spoken as widely as some would like.
- 5 Juan Carlos Hernández Marrero, a researcher at the Archaeological Museum of La Gomera, says that some islanders think that the language is not modern enough. They consider it an antique part of their culture. *El Silbo* is heard mostly in schools and in restaurants where tourists come to hear whistling demonstrations. Most adults who whistle do so to entertain crowds of curious tourists. It is far from being the common language that it used to be.
- 6 Although some islanders consider the language to be a novelty, others embrace *el Silbo*. A young islander named Cyro is one of the few whistlers who learned the language directly from his parents instead of in school. His family eventually left the island to find jobs and lead new lives in a more modern place. Cyro left too but made his way back home to La Gomera. "After being away for eight years, I decided to come back," Cyro explains. "I like being in nature. I like my animals and my whistle. And here I will stay, because the island needs me." Cyro loves whistling to communicate. He whistles with his friends and with his animals, a flock of playful goats. He is especially proud that his goats recognize his whistle. Cyro is helping to keep the tradition of *el Silbo* alive.

- 1 Based on the selection, why is the title "More Than a Whistle" appropriate?
- A *El Silbo* is a whistled language produced with specialized sounds.
 - B *El Silbo* is a whistled language, but it also represents a traditional way of life in La Gomera.
 - C *El Silbo* is a language that uses whistles of different pitches, but it is used less often than it once was.
 - D *El Silbo* is a whistled language that can be heard over long distances.
-

- 2 Which inference about Cyro is supported by the information in paragraph 6?
- F He is using the language of his ancestors in new ways.
 - G Islanders see him as a role model for young people.
 - H He uses the language of his ancestors to entertain tourists.
 - J He thinks preserving his heritage is more important than living in a modern place.
-

- 3 Which key idea is best supported by information in paragraphs 4 through 6?
- A Tourism is the major industry in La Gomera.
 - B *El Silbo* is more difficult to learn than most other languages.
 - C The people of La Gomera have differing ideas about the value of *el Silbo*.
 - D Earning a living is easier now than in the past for the people of La Gomera.
-

- 4 Which phrase from paragraph 2 helps the reader understand the meaning of speculate?
- F *El Silbo has a history*
 - G *for many generations*
 - H *No one is certain*
 - J *the original inhabitants*

5 Read these sentences from paragraph 4.

Before long only a few people could still whistle this unique language.

To preserve the language, the government took action and required that el Silbo be taught in the schools.

Which central idea do these sentences help the reader understand?

- A** People can adapt a language to their changing needs.
 - B** People can understand a language without needing to speak it.
 - C** A language can help connect people in different places with different ways of life.
 - D** A language can disappear over time if people no longer use it.
-

6 The author includes the photograph of the ravine most likely to support which idea?

- F** The people of La Gomera needed a language that could travel long distances.
- G** *El Silbo* is spoken only by the people on the island of La Gomera.
- H** You can hear the whistles of canaries and other birds on the island of La Gomera.
- J** The landscape of La Gomera is different from the other islands that make up the Canary Islands.

7 Which sentence best supports the idea that more than one language is spoken in La Gomera?

- A** *Whistling allowed islanders to deliver messages across the ravines without having to walk great distances around them. (paragraph 4)*
 - B** *The whistles were often used to make public announcements or to send invitations to events. (paragraph 4)*
 - C** *It is far from being the common language that it used to be. (paragraph 5)*
 - D** *Cyro loves whistling to communicate. (paragraph 6)*
-

8 The author includes the map most likely to help the reader understand —

- F** why younger people of La Gomera often move to the mainland
- G** where the Canary Islands are located and where La Gomera is among them
- H** which route sailors took to reach the Canary Islands from Spain in the 1500s
- J** where in northern Africa *el Silbo* may have originated

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

Noi and her sister, Ting, live with their family in Thailand. Their grandmother, Kun Ya, paints umbrellas to sell at the market. Sometimes Kun Ya asks Noi and Ting to help.

from **Silk Umbrellas**

by Carolyn Marsden

- 1 "Your elephant looks so alive, Kun Ya," Noi said, leaning close.
- 2 Her grandmother painted an elephant lumbering across a yellow silk umbrella. As she worked, her small body rocked with the thick, bold brush strokes.
- 3 "The eyes even sparkle," added Noi's older sister, Ting.
- 4 Noi loved to be with Kun Ya and Ting in the jungle clearing, the three of them sitting on the bamboo mat, surrounded by pots of color.
- 5 Noi dipped her fingertip into the gray, then rubbed the slick paint slowly between her thumb and forefinger.
- 6 Usually Kun Ya asked Noi and Ting to mix the paints. As Noi blended colors to create new ones, she enjoyed the way the smooth texture slipped back and forth with her brush.
- 7 Ting was content to mix paint and wash brushes, but Noi always longed to paint. Sometimes Kun Ya let her paint simple things like leaves. Noi's whole body came alive with the shades of green. Her hands felt magical when she guided the brush.
- 8 "The elephant is coming right toward us," Noi remarked. Even though she was eleven years old, she liked to pretend that Kun Ya's creatures were real.
- 9 Kun Ya laughed softly, and a breeze broke through the canopy of trees to let the sunshine in.
- 10 All morning, Noi and Ting had opened the umbrellas, getting them ready for Kun Ya's brush. They pushed the fretwork of bamboo slivers up the bamboo pole until the silk bloomed into translucent flowers of pinks, greens, purples.
- 11 Just before handing a new umbrella to Kun Ya, Noi liked to hold it up to the light, enjoying the weightless cascade of color on her face.
- 12 As Kun Ya finished, Noi carried each umbrella to the sunshine and hung it to dry. The forest floor felt soft under her bare feet. When breezes came up, the umbrellas floated back and forth like big soft bells.

- 13 Kun Ya handed Ting the elephant umbrella. Ting stood up and twirled the umbrella overhead as she skipped around the clearing, her movements light and strong. "Look, Noi, the elephant is dancing!"
- 14 Noi laughed.
- 15 Kun Ya took up a small child's umbrella. She sketched in a pink hibiscus so quickly that it seemed as though her arm became part of the paintbrush.
- 16 Noi crouched close to watch.
- 17 Suddenly, Kun Ya held the umbrella out to Noi. "Paint a butterfly landing on the flower."
- 18 "Me?" Noi asked, staring at the green silk. A butterfly was much more complicated than simple leaves.
- 19 Kun Ya still challenged her, offering the umbrella.
- 20 "But, Kun Ya, I don't know how."
- 21 "You've watched me for years, Noi. Now try yourself."
- 22 Noi dipped the brush into the yellow. Her hand trembled as she brought the brush near the silk stretched across the bamboo frame. She glanced at the butterflies dancing close by, then began to paint yellow wings above Kun Ya's jungle flower.
- 23 "Your trembling is good, Noi," said Kun Ya. "That's the way the butterfly moves. Let the movement spread to your whole body, not just your fingers. Paint with all of you. Become the butterfly."
- 24 In an instant, Noi understood what Kun Ya meant. She sensed the butterflies hovering in the thick shade of the banana leaves then fluttering out into the sunshine. The flit of the butterflies moved into her, then out into the brush, so the paint seemed to lay itself down.
- 25 Noi held the umbrella away from her. "I did it!"
- 26 "It's pretty," said Ting.
- 27 Kun Ya smiled and began to collect the brushes, dropping them one by one into a jar of water.
- 28 Noi and Ting laid their heads down in Kun Ya's lap to wait while the umbrellas dried. Kun Ya stroked their hair and sang, "The yellow bird flies away," while Noi gazed at the flowers and creatures that Kun Ya had created. The shadows of the trees crisscrossed Kun Ya's face as she sang.
- 29 When the umbrellas were dry, Ting and Noi closed them up, the way that flowers close themselves up for the night.
- 30 "We worked hard today," said Kun Ya.

31 Kun Ya had done the real work, Noi thought. But then she recalled her butterfly umbrella, which lay in the basket with Kun Ya's umbrellas. *She* had worked too.

Silk Umbrellas. Copyright © 2004 Carolyn Marsden. Reproduced by permission of the publisher, Candlewick Press, Somerville, MA.

9 In paragraph 23, how do Kun Ya’s comments influence Noi?

- A** Kun Ya’s comments cause Noi to lose focus and start to daydream.
 - B** Kun Ya’s comments give Noi confidence and guidance as she paints.
 - C** Kun Ya’s comments make Noi think about how Kun Ya paints butterflies.
 - D** Kun Ya’s comments urge Noi to use a technique that she finds uncomfortable.
-

10 What is the best summary of the excerpt?

- F** Kun Ya, Noi, and Ting work together in the jungle to create painted silk umbrellas. Kun Ya paints plants and animals on the umbrellas, and Noi and Ting help mix the paints. At the end of the day, Kun Ya asks Noi to paint a butterfly, and though Noi is anxious about the task, she does it successfully.
- G** Kun Ya paints designs on silk umbrellas in the jungle, and her granddaughters, Noi and Ting, assist her. Kun Ya has painted an elephant on an umbrella, and Noi pretends the elephant is alive. After the umbrellas are dry, Noi and Ting close them up.
- H** Kun Ya, Noi, and Ting spend all day painting silk umbrellas in a jungle clearing. Both girls usually mix the paints, and Noi sometimes paints leaves. Ting takes an umbrella featuring an elephant to hang it up to dry but then she starts to play with it, causing Noi to laugh.
- J** Ting and her sister, Noi, often help their grandmother, Kun Ya, paint silk umbrellas. Noi watches Kun Ya paint the umbrellas and sometimes helps by painting leaves on them, and she enjoys the feeling of slick paint between her fingers. At the end of the day, Noi looks at the umbrellas in a basket and admires them.

- 11** Read this information about the roots of the word translucent.

from Latin *trans*, meaning “through” + *lucere*, meaning “to shine”

Based on this information, what does the word translucent mean in paragraph 10?

- A** Providing shade from the light
 - B** Supplying a steady source of light
 - C** Becoming fragile in the light
 - D** Allowing light to enter
-

- 12** Read this sentence from paragraph 24.

The flit of the butterflies moved into her, then out into the brush, so the paint seemed to lay itself down.

Why does the author use figurative language in this sentence?

- F** To show the way Noi captures the motions of a butterfly in her painting
- G** To explain why Noi is able to paint a butterfly without looking at her brush
- H** To suggest that Noi allows a butterfly to land on her as she paints its image
- J** To emphasize how Noi uses simple strokes to paint an image of a butterfly

13 Which sentence best identifies Noi's central conflict?

- A** *Even though she was eleven years old, she liked to pretend that Kun Ya's creatures were real.* (paragraph 8)
 - B** *All morning, Noi and Ting had opened the umbrellas, getting them ready for Kun Ya's brush.* (paragraph 10)
 - C** *"But, Kun Ya, I don't know how."* (paragraph 20)
 - D** *"Your trembling is good, Noi," said Kun Ya.* (paragraph 23)
-

14 Which sentence best shows the relationship between the characters?

- F** *"Your elephant looks so alive, Kun Ya," Noi said, leaning close.* (paragraph 1)
- G** *Usually Kun Ya asked Noi and Ting to mix the paints.* (paragraph 6)
- H** *She glanced at the butterflies dancing close by, then began to paint yellow wings above Kun Ya's jungle flower.* (paragraph 22)
- J** *Kun Ya stroked their hair and sang, "The yellow bird flies away," while Noi gazed at the flowers and creatures that Kun Ya had created.* (paragraph 28)

15 How does the setting influence the plot of the excerpt?

- A** It provides Noi a private place in which to practice painting umbrellas.
 - B** It gives Noi an opportunity to learn about how elephants live in the wild.
 - C** It makes it difficult for Noi to stay calm while she paints the umbrella.
 - D** It allows Noi to see butterflies in nature before she paints an image of one.
-

16 What is the most likely reason the author includes the interaction between Noi and Ting in paragraphs 13 and 14?

- F** To show that the sisters are becoming bored with their individual tasks
- G** To emphasize that Kun Ya made a mistake when painting the elephant
- H** To reveal the playful bond that the sisters share with each other
- J** To suggest that Ting wants to paint an elephant on an umbrella

Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to each question.

A Legacy of Stone

- 1 Art can come in many forms and from many places. Sometimes it can be created quickly, and other times its creation requires a prolonged effort. Over a century ago, a mail carrier named Ferdinand Cheval began a masterpiece that took over 33 years to complete.

Inspiration

- 2 Cheval walked many miles each day along his route in Hauterives, France, delivering mail. The route, which was once below sea level, was carpeted with fossils and loose rocks. One day in 1879, as Cheval trudged across the steep terrain, he stumbled over a stone. Admiring its sculptural shape, he dropped it into his pocket.
- 3 Cheval was so enthralled by the beautiful stone that he began collecting more. The stones reminded him of a dream he once had of building a fantasy-like palace made from stones. Cheval chose to fulfill the dream. He said to himself: "Since nature wants to make the sculpture, I will make the stonework and the architecture."
- 4 Forty-three-year-old Cheval continued collecting stones along his route for almost 20 years. He carried them in his pockets or in baskets—and eventually in a wheelbarrow. Then he began building what would become known as the Ideal Palace. When he retired from the postal service at age 60, his hobby became a vocation to which he would devote his life.

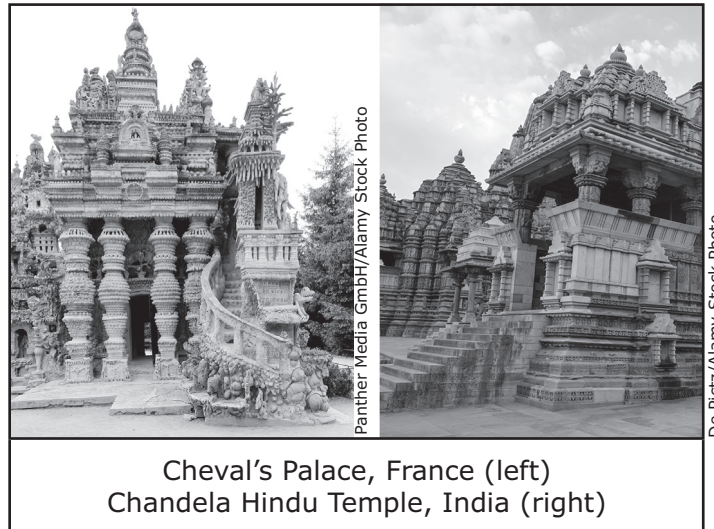
The Ideal Palace

- 5 Cheval used concrete, lime, and wire to cement the stones in place. At night he labored by the light of an oil lamp. He followed no design rules and mixed cultures from around the world. His jumbled creation has global and distinctive inspiration—including handsome Hindu architecture and a medieval castle with stones that look like fur.
- 6 When Cheval began he said that people laughed at his idea. Cheval said he was called "an old fool who fills his garden with stones." But as his palace took shape, people's criticisms were replaced by awed respect.
- 7 Cheval spent 33 years building his palace. He was in his seventies when he finished. The final structure was 75 feet long, 35 feet tall, and 40 feet wide. He completed it in 1912.

Cheval's Gift

- 8 Up to 120,000 tourists visit the Ideal Palace annually. It is considered a historical monument and once appeared on a French postage stamp. The Ideal Palace has inspired artists and writers the world over, and its likeness has been displayed at New York City's Museum of Modern Art.

- 9 Cheval's uniqueness helped him single-handedly create a marvel beyond duplication. Untrained in architecture or construction, he nonetheless had a vision. Cheval once said, "Whatever your age, whatever you wish to achieve, if you are courageous, persistent, and hardworking, you are sure to succeed."



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Trees Rise in the Desert

- 1 The villagers laughed as they watched their neighbor, farmer Yacouba Sawadogo, digging dozens of holes in the rock-hard soil of his field. Each pit (or *zaï*, as Sawadogo called them) was about a foot wide and eight inches deep. The people laughed even harder when he began filling each hole with a mixture of cattle manure, leaves, and any other organic material he could find. Finally, he carefully buried seeds in each compost bed. "Do you actually expect those seeds to grow without water?" someone called.
- 2 It was 1980, and Burkina Faso was suffering a ten-year drought. Here in this semiarid region between the Sahara Desert and the rain forests of West Africa, water was always scarce. Now it was almost nonexistent. Like other neighboring countries, Burkina Faso was suffering from desertification. This involves a drying, hardening, and eroding of the soil that is overfarmed, overgrazed, and overpopulated.



Yacouba Sawadogo Planting a Tree

Andrea Borgarello for The World Bank Group/
TerraAfrica

- 3 Sawadogo patiently explained that rain would come eventually. When it did, most of it would run off of the ground's surface, which was baked hard as concrete. But in his field, the *zaïs* would catch and hold much more of the precious water than the dry ground could alone. Moisture would linger longer underground through the dry season. The damp, rich compost would continue to nourish his sprouting crops and the small trees he planted. Sawadogo said that in 20 years' time, he could visualize a lush, green field and forest taking place of the rocky, barren desert. *Zaï* farming was really an old method that Africans had used long ago, Sawadogo said. It had worked once; perhaps it was time to try it again.
- 4 But his neighbors still scoffed. What did Sawadogo know?
- 5 To the amazement of many, Sawadogo was right. Today his patch of green forest grows in the midst of a desert. Slowly over the years, many of those who laughed at their neighbor have now joined him. More and more fields in West Africa are being rescued from desertification using Sawadogo's *zaï* and other water harvesting processes. Sawadogo travels all over the region and spreads the message of how *zaï* farming can transform the landscape and save lives. He knows there is hope for a brighter future.

Use “A Legacy of Stone” (pp. 16–17) to answer questions 17–22. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

17 What is the best summary of the selection “A Legacy of Stone”?

- A** Ferdinand Cheval spent many years collecting stones. He used these stones to build a structure, which he named the Ideal Palace. People doubted his abilities, but in time he completed the project. Today it is considered a masterpiece.
- B** Ferdinand Cheval noticed some stones when he worked for the postal service in France. He thought he could use the stones to build a palace. He used concrete, lime, and wire to cement the stones in place. The structure became known as the Ideal Palace.
- C** The Ideal Palace was built by Ferdinand Cheval. It is a historical monument that people from around the world travel to see. Cheval showed the world how an artist can succeed by working hard.
- D** The Ideal Palace is an inspiring masterpiece. The structure is 35 feet tall and took Ferdinand Cheval 33 years to complete. The Ideal Palace is so popular that it has even appeared on a postage stamp.

18 Read these sentences from the selection “A Legacy of Stone.”

He followed no design rules and mixed cultures from around the world. (paragraph 5)

Untrained in architecture or construction, he nonetheless had a vision. (paragraph 9)

What do these sentences help the reader understand about Cheval?

- F** He wanted to invent a new design that would impress professional builders.
- G** He experienced many challenges during the several years he spent building the palace.
- H** He thought that using unfamiliar materials could inspire his creativity.
- J** He did not let inexperience prevent him from creating an elaborate structure.

19 In the selection "A Legacy of Stone," what does the organizational structure of the section "Inspiration" help the author emphasize?

- A** How Cheval's route differed from other mail carrier routes
 - B** How Cheval took steps to fulfill his dream of creating a palace
 - C** The causes and effects of Cheval's retirement
 - D** A problem that Cheval solved by learning building skills
-

20 What is the most likely reason the author wrote the selection "A Legacy of Stone"?

- F** To describe the unusual life of Ferdinand Cheval
- G** To show why so many people visit the Ideal Palace
- H** To explain the history of the creation of the Ideal Palace
- J** To highlight important facts about Ferdinand Cheval

21 What does the word prolonged mean in paragraph 1 of the selection "A Legacy of Stone"?

- A** Working with inspiration
 - B** Continuing for an extended time
 - C** Presenting a large problem
 - D** Moving a great distance
-

22 Read this quotation from paragraph 9 of the selection "A Legacy of Stone."

"Whatever your age, whatever you wish to achieve, if you are courageous, persistent, and hardworking, you are sure to succeed."

What can the reader infer from this quotation?

- F** Cheval did not realize it would take him 33 years to complete his project.
- G** Cheval is surprised that his interest in rocks led him to create a masterpiece.
- H** Cheval had specific traits that helped him achieve his goal.
- J** Cheval is an independent artist and did not want others to help him.

Use “Trees Rise in the Desert” (p. 18) to answer questions 23–26. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

23 Information in the selection “Trees Rise in the Desert” suggests that Sawadogo values —

- A** advice from others
 - B** spreading knowledge
 - C** personal wealth
 - D** exploring new places
-

24 Which conclusion is supported by the information in paragraph 3 of the selection “Trees Rise in the Desert”?

- F** People are eager to try new ways to farm.
 - G** The desert landscape naturally encourages plant growth.
 - H** *Zaï* farming is the only successful way to prevent desertification.
 - J** It can be helpful to look to the past for answers.
-

25 What is the author’s purpose in the selection “Trees Rise in the Desert”?

- A** To highlight the desert lifestyle of Sawadogo and his people
- B** To show people how to plant forests using *zaï* farming
- C** To explain the different steps involved in *zaï* farming
- D** To describe how Sawadogo found a way to improve desert land

26 What is the best summary of the selection “Trees Rise in the Desert”?

- F** Burkina Faso is a dry area located between the Sahara Desert and West Africa. A man named Yacouba Sawadogo dug many holes in the ground to try a method called *zai* farming. When the rain finally came, the seeds sprouted. Now the area is a forest in the middle of the desert.
- G** During a ten-year desert drought, Yacouba Sawadogo, a farmer in Burkina Faso, used an old method called *zai* farming. Many doubted that his method would work. However, after years passed, the seeds Sawadogo planted produced a forest. Today Sawadogo shares his method with others.
- H** Yacouba Sawadogo dug several holes in the ground and filled them with organic materials such as cattle manure and leaves. The villagers thought Sawadogo was foolish for planting seeds in pits when there was no water to help them grow. However, the seeds grew and the *zai* farming method proved successful.
- J** Farmers in Burkina Faso were having trouble growing crops because of the ten-year drought. Yacouba Sawadogo dug holes and waited for the rain. His neighbors laughed at him, but he explained that the rain would eventually come. Now Sawadogo travels around the entire region.

Use “A Legacy of Stone” and “Trees Rise in the Desert” to answer questions 27–31. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 27** What is one way that Cheval in the selection “A Legacy of Stone” and Sawadogo in the selection “Trees Rise in the Desert” are **different**?
- A** Cheval created a new design, but Sawadogo applied an old method.
 - B** Cheval was not always interested in architecture, but Sawadogo was always interested in farming.
 - C** Cheval has inspired other artists, but Sawadogo’s work has gone unnoticed.
 - D** Cheval was not sure if he could finish his project, but Sawadogo knew that his experiment would be successful.
-
- 28** Which idea is presented in **both** the selection “A Legacy of Stone” and the selection “Trees Rise in the Desert”?
- F** It takes talent to create a masterpiece.
 - G** People slowly learn to appreciate the world around them.
 - H** Landscapes naturally change over time.
 - J** Accomplishing a task can take years of dedication.
-
- 29** How does Sawadogo in the selection “Trees Rise in the Desert” **differ** from Cheval in the selection “A Legacy of Stone”?
- A** Sawadogo is committed to his ideas.
 - B** Sawadogo has a deep respect for nature.
 - C** Sawadogo believes his method should be used by others.
 - D** Sawadogo is willing to work hard.

30 **Both** the author of the selection "A Legacy of Stone" and the author of the selection "Trees Rise in the Desert" would most likely agree with which statement?

- F** The work of one person can have far-reaching effects.
 - G** People must protect the world surrounding them.
 - H** Old traditions may offer surprising wisdom.
 - J** People can use their talents to invent something new.
-

31 Read this sentence from paragraph 5 of the selection "Trees Rise in the Desert."

Slowly over the years, many of those who laughed at their neighbor have now joined him.

Which sentence from the selection "A Legacy of Stone" illustrates a **similar** idea?

- A** *Forty-three-year-old Cheval continued collecting stones along his route for almost 20 years. (paragraph 4)*
- B** *At night he labored by the light of an oil lamp. (paragraph 5)*
- C** *But as his palace took shape, people's criticisms were replaced by awed respect. (paragraph 6)*
- D** *Cheval's uniqueness helped him single-handedly create a marvel beyond duplication. (paragraph 9)*

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

Lake's Promise

by Joyce Sidman

I am the lake. I wait for you
with cool, blue arms and silver face.

My wavelets lap, my pebbles gleam
where once you left your barefoot trace.

5 Out in the world, you grow, you change;
you lead your busy life apart

while here, the stillness folds and sinks
around my deep, unchanging heart.

Return to me and I will wash
10 your cares from you, O restless one.

Return from hurry, clash, and noise
to drink the air and taste the sun.

Floating free in dizzy rings
of clouds and sky, of fir and moss,

15 with mystery beneath your back,
you'll find whatever you have lost.

"Lake's Promise" from *What The Heart Knows: Chants, Charms & Blessings* by Joyce Sidman. Text copyright © 2013 by Joyce Sidman. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

32 Read line 8.

around my deep, unchanging heart.

What does this line suggest about the lake?

- F** The lake has lost something it dearly loved.
 - G** The lake will continue to care for its visitors.
 - H** The lake feels a sense of loneliness.
 - J** The lake is angry at the world.
-

33 What is the most likely reason the poet repeats the word "Return" in lines 9 and 11?

- A** To show that the listener has forgotten the lake
 - B** To emphasize that the lake has unrealistic expectations
 - C** To suggest that the lake will always be there for the listener
 - D** To explain the listener's relationship with the lake
-

34 Read lines 5 and 6.

Out in the world, you grow, you change;
you lead your busy life apart

What do these lines reveal about the lake?

- F** The lake is proud of how mature the listener has become.
- G** The lake understands that the listener has other priorities.
- H** The lake cannot relate to the listener as time passes.
- J** The lake is upset about having missed parts of the listener's life.

35 What does the poet’s use of the phrase “where once you left your barefoot trace” in line 4 prompt the listener to think about?

- A** Memorable times the listener has spent at the lake
 - B** The specific features of the lake that humans enjoy
 - C** Others who have visited the lake before the listener
 - D** The damage that humans have done to the lake
-

36 The title of the poem most likely refers to the lake’s promise to provide —

- F** knowledge
 - G** entertainment
 - H** forgiveness
 - J** peace
-

37 Read line 16.

you’ll find whatever you have lost.

What does this line suggest about the lake?

- A** The lake has kept the listener’s possessions safe.
- B** The lake thinks that the listener is careless.
- C** The lake wants to remind the listener of a time when life was more simple.
- D** The lake hopes the listener will remember how to get back to the water.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

The members of LEWIS and CLARK’s Corps of Discovery have unexpectedly washed ashore while seeking a water route from St. Louis to the western coast of North America. With them are SACAGAWEA, an American Indian woman separated from her Shoshoni tribe since childhood, and CHARBONNEAU, an expert guide.

Sacagawea

by Eric Coble

Characters

CLARK: *Second-in-command of Corps of Discovery*

LEWIS: *Captain of Corps of Discovery*

SACAGAWEA: *Wife of CHARBONNEAU*

CHARBONNEAU: *French-Canadian outdoorsman*

CAMEAHWAIT: *Shoshoni chief*

- 1 **CLARK:** The Rocky Mountains. Have you ever seen such beauty?
- 2 **LEWIS:** Have you ever seen such an impossible thing to cross? If we don’t find the Shoshoni and get horses from them, we’ll never make it over those mountains before winter.
- 3 *(SACAGAWEA steps forward on another part of the stage, looking into the distance.)*
- 4 **SACAGAWEA:** There. Those rocks above the valley. That’s Beaver’s Head.
- 5 **CHARBONNEAU:** She recognizes those rocks!
- 6 **LEWIS:** Is she sure?
- 7 **SACAGAWEA:** The rocks are shaped like the head of a beaver. Do you see it?
- 8 **LEWIS:** We see it! She knows where we are!
- 9 **SACAGAWEA:** We’re close to the three forks of the great river. My people hunt here.
- 10 **CLARK:** *(Yelling back to the crew.)* We’re close to the source of the Missouri, men! We’ll have horses any day now!
- 11 *(SACAGAWEA continues to stand, holding her baby, looking out at her old land.)*
- 12 **SACAGAWEA:** *(Stares, nods to herself . . . and points.)* That way. If you follow that path, you’ll save two days travel time.
- 13 **CLARK:** You heard her, men. The path to the right!
- 14 *(LEWIS steps forward.)*

- 15 **LEWIS:** I'm taking three men and scouting ahead.
- 16 **CLARK:** I'm not so sure—
- 17 **LEWIS:** We can move faster. Besides, it just may be that our great band of thirty loud men may be scaring off any Indians before we ever see them. Let me go ahead. I'll leave notes along the trail saying which way we've gone.
- 18 *(CHARBONNEAU staggers up to CLARK.)*
- 19 **CHARBONNEAU:** Sir, I hate to be the bearer of bad news—
- 20 **CLARK:** Of course you do.
- 21 **CHARBONNEAU:** Our canoes are overturning. The tow ropes are breaking—
- 22 **CLARK:** I know.
- 23 **CHARBONNEAU:** You, yourself, sir, are injured—our trade goods and powder and medicine are wet and damaged—
- 24 **CLARK:** And is any of this going to improve by your constant moaning about it?
- 25 **CHARBONNEAU:** Somebody's got to tell the truth, sir! We can't go on like this!
- 26 **CLARK:** Are you suggesting we turn back? And are you going to be the one to face President Jefferson and tell him we were wet and cold and tired and so we came home?
- 27 **SACAGAWEA:** Listen.
- 28 *(They stop. A low rumble in the distance.)*
- 29 **CHARBONNEAU:** That's hoofbeats.
- 30 **CLARK:** A lot of hoofbeats. Horses approaching!
- 31 *(In charge LEWIS and his men.)*
- 32 **LEWIS:** Clark! We found them—Shoshoni—sixty warriors—they're coming—they're—
- 33 *(And suddenly the group finds themselves surrounded by silhouettes and the sound of voices—horses—rising like a tidal wave around them.)*
- 34 **LEWIS:** *(Pulling SACAGAWEA forward.)* I told them I had a Shoshoni woman and child with me—they'll know we're not a war party if they see a woman and child . . .
- 35 *(SACAGAWEA steps forward.)*
- 36 **CLARK:** Tell them we come in peace.
- 37 **LEWIS:** Tell them we need horses—

- 38 **CLARK:** Tell them we'll trade—
- 39 *(The noises stop. SACAGAWEA stands out in front of the Corps. She puts her fingers in her mouth.)*
- 40 **CLARK:** Why is she sucking her fingers?
- 41 **CHARBONNEAU:** It says she's part of the tribe.
- 42 *(A few Shoshoni step forward—one man cautiously in the lead. It's CAMEAHWAIT.)*
- 43 **LEWIS:** He's the chief. I think.
- 44 *(SACAGAWEA stares at him—everyone stands waiting.)*
- 45 **CAMEAHWAIT:** *(Staring at her.)* Sacagawea?
- 46 **SACAGAWEA:** Cameahwait?
- 47 *(A moment more . . . and with a yell, they fall into each other's arms, crying, laughing, pulling a blanket around themselves as the other Shoshoni laugh.)*
- 48 **SACAGAWEA:** Tila!
- 49 **CAMEAHWAIT:** Ithla!!
- 50 **LEWIS:** What?
- 51 **CHARBONNEAU:** I think the chief . . . is her brother.
- 52 *(The two hold each other tightly. The other Shoshoni yell out "Ah-Hi-e!" and move to embrace the Corps—much shouting and embracing on both sides.)*
- 53 **SACAGAWEA:** *(Holding up her child.)* Cameahwait. This is my baby. Jean Baptiste. Jean, this is your uncle, Cameahwait. These are your people. This is your home.

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38 What is an important message presented in the play?

- F** It is unwise to expect help from people you do not know.
 - G** Traveling alone is easier than traveling with a group of people.
 - H** It is unrealistic to plan a trip without knowing your destination.
 - J** Circumstances can quickly change when least expected.
-

39 Based on line 34, what can the reader infer about Lewis?

- A** Lewis wants to prove to Clark the importance of scouting ahead.
 - B** Lewis is concerned about the Shoshoni's intentions.
 - C** Lewis did not expect to find such a large group of Shoshoni warriors.
 - D** Lewis wants the Corps to help him develop a plan of defense.
-

40 What does the conversation in lines 19 through 26 reveal about Charbonneau?

- F** Charbonneau has not told Clark what he is really thinking.
- G** Charbonneau disagrees with the decisions being made by Clark.
- H** Charbonneau does not think Clark knows that their equipment is failing.
- J** Charbonneau knows the rest of the crew feels the same way about Clark.

41 What do the stage directions in line 12 help the reader understand?

- A** Sacagawea's familiarity with the area
 - B** Why the Corps wants to find the Shoshoni
 - C** Sacagawea's feelings about her native land
 - D** Why the Corps needs to save time
-

42 Read line 33.

(And suddenly the group finds themselves surrounded by silhouettes and the sound of voices—horses—rising like a tidal wave around them.)

What does the author's use of simile help emphasize?

- F** The strategy that Lewis and Clark created to deal with a threat to their crew
- G** The overwhelming experience of being approached by the Shoshoni warriors
- H** The eagerness of the Shoshoni warriors to reconnect with a tribe member
- J** The extreme effects that being in the wilderness have on Lewis and Clark



Item Number	Reporting Category	Readiness or Supporting	Content Student Expectation	Correct Answer
1	3	Readiness	7.5(F)	B
2	3	Readiness	7.5 (F)	J
3	3	Readiness	7.5(F)	C
4	1	Readiness	7.2(B)	H
5	3	Readiness	7.8(D)(i)	D
6	3	Supporting	7.9(C)	F
7	3	Readiness	7.6(C)	C
8	3	Supporting	7.9(C)	G
9	2	Readiness	7.7(B)	B
10	2	Readiness	7.6(D)	F
11	1	Readiness	7.2(C)	D
12	2	Readiness	7.9(D)	F
13	2	Readiness	7.6(C)	C
14	2	Readiness	7.7(B)	J
15	2	Readiness	7.7(D)	D
16	2	Readiness	7.5 (F)	H
17	3	Readiness	7.6(D)	A
18	3	Readiness	7.5(H)	J
19	3	Readiness	7.8(D)(iii)	B
20	3	Supporting	7.9(A)	H
21	1	Readiness	7.2(B)	B
22	3	Readiness	7.5(F)	H
23	3	Readiness	7.5(F)	B
24	3	Readiness	7.5 (F)	J
25	3	Supporting	7.9(A)	D
26	3	Readiness	7.6(D)	G
27	1	Readiness	7.5(E)	A
28	1	Readiness	7.5(E)	J
29	1	Readiness	7.5(E)	C
30	1	Readiness	7.5(E)	F
31	1	Readiness	7.5(E)	C
32	2	Supporting	7.5(F)	G
33	2	Supporting	7.5(F)	C
34	2	Supporting	7.5(F)	G
35	2	Supporting	7.5(F)	A
36	2	Supporting	7.5(F)	J
37	2	Supporting	7.5(F)	C
38	2	Supporting	7.7(A)	J
39	2	Supporting	7.5(F)	B
40	2	Supporting	7.8(C)	G
41	2	Supporting	7.8(C)	A
42	2	Readiness	7.9(D)	G

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
1	Option B is correct	In the selection there is information about a whistled language, <i>el Silbo</i> . However, <i>el Silbo</i> is “more than a whistle” because it represents an entire way of life. <i>El Silbo</i> “has a history that reaches back for many generations,” (paragraph 2) and is “an important and unique part” of the heritage of La Gomera (paragraph 4).
	Option A is incorrect	<i>El Silbo</i> is a whistled language produced with specialized sounds, but that fact alone cannot be used to justify the title “More Than a Whistle.”
	Option C is incorrect	The fact that <i>el Silbo</i> is comprised of different pitches and is used less often than it once was does not provide support to justify the title “More Than a Whistle.”
	Option D is incorrect	The importance of <i>el Silbo</i> and the reason that it is “more than a whistle” are not included in this statement.
2	Option J is correct	In paragraph 6, the author explains how Cyro and his family left La Gomera to “find jobs and lead new lives,” but Cyro eventually returned home to the island. Cyro states that he will remain on La Gomera because “the island needs me.” Based on this information, the reader can infer that for Cyro, living in a more modern place is not as important to him as preserving his heritage.
	Option F is incorrect	Cyro is using the language of his ancestors to communicate, which is how his ancestors used <i>el Silbo</i> , so he is not using the language in a new way.
	Option G is incorrect	Although Cyro is helping to keep the tradition of <i>el Silbo</i> alive, there is no evidence to support the conclusion that islanders see him as a role model.
	Option H is incorrect	Although some islanders do use <i>el Silbo</i> to entertain tourists, Cyro uses the language to communicate “with his friends and with his animals” (paragraph 6).

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
3	Option C is correct	In paragraphs 4 through 6, the author explains that some islanders consider the language precious and think it should be preserved (paragraph 4) and embraced (paragraph 6). The idea that some islanders think the language is antiquated and only useful for entertaining tourists is explained in paragraph 5, illustrating that opinions on the language differ.
	Option A is incorrect	Tourism is referenced in paragraph 5, but its importance is not a key idea supported by the information in paragraphs 4 through 6.
	Option B is incorrect	Although <i>el Silbo</i> is a unique language, the difficulty of learning the language is not addressed in paragraphs 4 through 6.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 6, the author explains that Cyro's family left La Gomera to find jobs, and, although Cyro came back, there is no evidence that earning a living on La Gomera is easier now than in the past.
4	Option H is correct	In paragraph 2, the author explains that "No one is certain" of the origin of <i>el Silbo</i> . The reader can determine based on the context that <u>speculate</u> means to suppose or guess.
	Option F is incorrect	This phrase is related to a known fact about <i>el Silbo</i> , so it does not help the reader understand the meaning of <u>speculate</u> .
	Option G is incorrect	Although the phrase "for many generations" helps the reader understand that <i>el Silbo</i> has existed for a long time, it does not help the reader understand the meaning of <u>speculate</u> .
	Option J is incorrect	It is known by historians that <i>el Silbo</i> was used by "the original inhabitants" of the island, so this is not a question that some <u>speculate</u> about.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
5	Option D is correct	The sentences from paragraph 4 are included to show that use of <i>el Silbo</i> declined in recent decades and that the government took steps to bring back the language. Based on these sentences, the reader can understand the central idea that “A language can disappear over time if people no longer use it.”
	Option A is incorrect	Based on the information in the selection, the reader can infer that the needs of the islanders changed, but the people of La Gomera did not adapt <i>el Silbo</i> to meet their changing needs.
	Option B is incorrect	This idea is not supported by these sentences. The government requires that “ <i>el Silbo</i> be taught in the schools,” which implies that speaking a language and understanding it are both equally important.
	Option C is incorrect	Although tourists do come to La Gomera to hear <i>el Silbo</i> , the sentences focus on the preservation of the language to prevent it from being lost, not its ability to help people connect.
6	Option F is correct	In paragraph 4, the author explains that “Whistling allowed islanders to deliver messages across the ravines without having to walk great distances around them.” The author includes the photograph of the ravine to show the island’s terrain, providing additional evidence that the people of La Gomera needed a language that could travel long distances.
	Option G is incorrect	The photograph shows a ravine on La Gomera, but the idea that <i>el Silbo</i> is spoken only by people on the island of La Gomera is not supported.
	Option H is incorrect	Canaries and other birds likely inhabit the ravines of La Gomera, but the idea that you can hear their whistles is not supported by the photograph.
	Option J is incorrect	The landscape of La Gomera is shown in the photograph of the ravine, but it is not possible to make a comparison with other islands based solely on the photograph.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
7	Option C is correct	Based on this sentence, the reader can infer that other languages are spoken on La Gomera. If <i>el Silbo</i> is no longer “the common language that it used to be,” then another language or other languages must be spoken on the island.
	Option A is incorrect	This sentence is included to provide details about only one particular language— <i>el Silbo</i> .
	Option B is incorrect	Information about only one particular language, <i>el Silbo</i> , is provided in this sentence.
	Option D is incorrect	This sentence is included to show how one islander feels about <i>el Silbo</i> , not to support the idea that there is more than one language spoken on La Gomera.
8	Option G is correct	In paragraph 1, the author explains that “Just off the coast of Africa lies a small group of islands known as the Canary Islands.” The author includes a map to further help the reader understand where the Canary Islands are located, and to see exactly where among the islands La Gomera is located.
	Option F is incorrect	Although the author does refer to people leaving La Gomera, there is no connection between this information and the map.
	Option H is incorrect	The location of the islands is indicated on the map, but there are no sailing routes from the 1500s depicted.
	Option J is incorrect	Although a portion of northern Africa is depicted on the map, the reader cannot use the map to understand where <i>el Silbo</i> originated.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
9	Option B is correct	In paragraph 23, Kun Ya tells Noi that her “trembling is good” and gives her advice on how to paint a butterfly. Kun Ya’s comments guide Noi and give her confidence as she paints, and in paragraph 24, Noi comes to an instant understanding of the meaning of Kun Ya’s advice.
	Option A is incorrect	Noi does not lose focus. Because of Kun Ya’s comments, Noi is able to “Become the butterfly” (paragraph 23).
	Option C is incorrect	Noi gains confidence from Kun Ya’s comments and paints her own butterfly; she does not think about how Kun Ya paints butterflies.
	Option D is incorrect	Noi does try a new technique based on Kun Ya’s comments, but she is excited (“I did it!”), not uncomfortable.
10	Option F is correct	The best summary of the excerpt is presented in these sentences. Information is provided about what Kun Ya, Noi, and Ting are doing and where, what Kun Ya asks of Noi, and how Noi successfully fulfills Kun Ya’s request despite feeling anxious.
	Option G is incorrect	This summary does not include a reference to what Kun Ya asks of Noi, or what Noi does in response to the request, so it is incomplete.
	Option H is incorrect	This summary includes minor details and omits information about Kun Ya’s skill and how she influences Noi to successfully complete a challenging task.
	Option J is incorrect	Noi’s success in completing a challenging task with Kun Ya’s guidance is not included in this summary, making it incomplete.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
11	Option D is correct	In paragraph 10, Noi and Ting open umbrellas, causing the silk to bloom “into <u>translucent</u> flowers of pinks, greens, purples.” Based on the context in the paragraph and the Latin roots, opening the umbrellas allows light to shine through, or enter, the umbrellas.
	Option A is incorrect	Although an umbrella can be used to provide shade, this meaning is not supported by the Latin roots of <u>translucent</u> (<i>trans</i> and <i>lucere</i>).
	Option B is incorrect	Based on the context in paragraph 10 and the Latin roots of <u>translucent</u> , the light is shining through the umbrella. The umbrella is not a “source of light.”
	Option C is incorrect	Although the umbrella allows light to shine through it, there is no evidence to support the conclusion that the umbrella is “fragile.”
12	Option F is correct	Figurative language is language that uses words that mean something different from the literal interpretation. In paragraph 24, the author compares the movements of Noi’s hand holding the paintbrush to the flit of a butterfly, showing how Noi captures the motions of a butterfly in her painting.
	Option G is incorrect	There is no evidence in paragraph 24 that Noi is not looking at her brush.
	Option H is incorrect	Noi senses butterflies nearby but does not have a butterfly actually land on her.
	Option J is incorrect	The author uses figurative language to compare Noi’s brush strokes to the flitting movement of a butterfly, not to suggest that the strokes are simple.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
13	Option C is correct	In paragraph 17, Noi holds out an umbrella to Kun Ya and challenges her to “Paint a butterfly landing on the flower.” Noi doubts her abilities and is hesitant to accept the challenge, revealing her central conflict in paragraph 20 when she states, “But, Kun Ya, I don’t know how.”
	Option A is incorrect	The fact that Noi is eleven and still likes to pretend that Kun Ya’s creatures are real is not a conflict for Noi.
	Option B is incorrect	This sentence is used to provide an important detail about what Noi and Ting are doing, but it is not used to help the reader identify Noi’s central conflict.
	Option D is incorrect	Kun Ya provides advice to help Noi resolve her central conflict, but the conflict itself is not identified in this sentence.
14	Option J is correct	Based on the sentence from paragraph 28, where the girls lay their heads on their grandmother’s lap while she strokes their hair, the reader can infer that the characters feel strong affection for each other.
	Option F is incorrect	Based on this sentence, the reader can infer that Noi admires Kun Ya’s work, but not what the relationship between the characters is like.
	Option G is incorrect	In this sentence, there is information about how Noi and Ting help Kun Ya, but the relationship between the characters is not revealed.
	Option H is incorrect	This sentence from paragraph 22 is included to describe what Noi is painting. The close relationship between Noi and her sister and grandmother is not shown.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
15	Option D is correct	In the excerpt, Noi, Ting, and Kun Ya are in a clearing in the jungle. In paragraph 17, Noi challenges Kun Ya to paint a butterfly on an umbrella. The plot is influenced by the setting when Noi is able to observe butterflies hovering nearby before she starts painting, and she is able to follow Kun Ya's instructions in paragraph 23 to "Become the butterfly."
	Option A is incorrect	Noi is with Ting and Kun Ya, so she is not alone or practicing her painting in private.
	Option B is incorrect	Noi admires Kun Ya's painting of an elephant; she does not learn about how elephants live in the wild.
	Option C is incorrect	Noi is nervous because she thinks she does not know how to paint something as complicated as a butterfly; she is not nervous because of the setting.
16	Option H is correct	In paragraphs 13 and 14, Ting twirls an umbrella while she skips around the clearing, making her sister Noi laugh. The author includes this information to reveal the "playful bond that the sisters share with each other."
	Option F is incorrect	The sisters are having fun helping Kun Ya and playing with the umbrellas; they are not bored.
	Option G is incorrect	There is no evidence that Kun Ya made a mistake painting the elephant.
	Option J is incorrect	Ting is enjoying the umbrella with the painting of the elephant on it, but there is no evidence that she wants to paint one herself.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
17	Option A is correct	The best summary of the selection is presented in these sentences. Ferdinand Cheval's hobby of collecting stones is explained, as well as what he accomplished with the stones. The summary also includes how people initially felt about Cheval's project, and how the initial doubt turned to admiration, which persists today.
	Option B is incorrect	Some important details of Cheval's work are included in this summary, but the duration of the work is omitted, as is the explanation of how the perception of Cheval's work changed over time, making this summary incomplete.
	Option C is incorrect	The key detail of how Cheval built his palace—by collecting stones—is omitted from this summary, as is the duration of Cheval's project.
	Option D is incorrect	The fact that the Ideal Palace is on a postage stamp is a minor detail, and the explanation of how Cheval built his palace—by collecting stones—is omitted.
18	Option J is correct	Cheval did not have any training in architecture or construction, nor did he follow any design rules. He was still able to create an elaborate structure that is visited and admired to this day. Based on this evidence, the reader can conclude that Cheval did not let his inexperience prevent him from achieving his goal of building a stone palace.
	Option F is incorrect	Although Cheval did not follow any existing design rules, there is no evidence that he wanted to "invent a new design that would impress professional builders."
	Option G is incorrect	Although Cheval was inexperienced, the idea that Cheval experienced challenges while building his palace is not expressed in these sentences.
	Option H is incorrect	Cheval's inspiration came from a dream (paragraph 3), not from the prospect of using unfamiliar materials.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
19	Option B is correct	The author organizes the section "Inspiration" by presenting the steps Cheval took to accomplish his dream of creating a palace made from stones. While delivering mail along his route, Cheval found a stone he admired. He began collecting more and more stones, decided to build his dream palace, worked at it for many years, and eventually devoted his life to his goal when he retired from the postal service.
	Option A is incorrect	Cheval's route is described in paragraph 2, but it is not compared to the routes of other mail carriers.
	Option C is incorrect	The author mentions Cheval's retirement in paragraph 4 but does not organize the section around the cause and effect of this event.
	Option D is incorrect	Cheval did not have any training as a builder, and he built the palace to realize a dream, not solve a problem.
20	Option H is correct	Throughout the selection, the author provides details about "the history of the creation of the Ideal Palace." The author explains how Cheval began collecting stones while walking along his postal route, how he collected more and more stones for many years and dedicated himself to completing the Ideal Palace upon his retirement.
	Option F is incorrect	The author does provide some details about the life of Ferdinand Cheval, but the main focus of the selection is the history of the Ideal Palace.
	Option G is incorrect	The author does include information about the tourists that visit the Ideal Palace, but only in paragraph 8, so this is not likely the author's reason for writing the selection.
	Option J is incorrect	The author wrote the selection to tell about Cheval's "Legacy of Stone," not just to highlight facts about Cheval.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
21	Option B is correct	In paragraph 1, the author says about art that "Sometimes it can be created quickly, and other times its creation requires a <u>prolonged</u> effort." The contrast between "created quickly" and "a <u>prolonged</u> effort" can be used as context to determine that the meaning of <u>prolonged</u> is "Continuing for an extended time."
	Option A is incorrect	Inspiration can be an important factor in creating art, but there is no mention of inspiration in paragraph 1, so this is not the meaning of <u>prolonged</u> .
	Option C is incorrect	Creating art can be challenging, but there is no mention of a "large problem" in paragraph 1.
	Option D is incorrect	Cheval does move stones to make the Ideal Palace, but there is no reference in paragraph 1 to how great a distance the stones were moved. Further, the contrast with "created quickly" in the same sentence suggests that the word <u>prolonged</u> deals with a period of time, not distance.
22	Option H is correct	In paragraph 9, the author explains how "Cheval's uniqueness helped him single-handedly create a marvel beyond duplication." Although Cheval was "Untrained in architecture or construction," he was able to achieve his goal because he was "'courageous, persistent, and hardworking.'"
	Option F is incorrect	Cheval likely did not know how long it would take to complete his project, but this idea is not supported by the quotation.
	Option G is incorrect	Cheval had a dream to create a masterpiece from stones, so it is unlikely that he was surprised by what occurred.
	Option J is incorrect	Cheval is an independent artist, but there is no evidence in this quotation that he did not want others to help him.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
23	Option B is correct	Based on the information in "Trees Rise in the Desert," the reader can infer that Sawadogo values sharing what he knows with others. He shared his thought process with skeptics in his village, and he "travels all over the region and spreads the message of how <i>zaï</i> farming can transform the landscape and save lives" (paragraph 5).
	Option A is incorrect	In this selection, Sawadogo gives advice; he does not take anyone else's advice.
	Option C is incorrect	Sawadogo's "patch of green forest grows in the midst of a desert" (paragraph 5), but there is no reference to personal wealth in the selection.
	Option D is incorrect	Sawadogo travels to spread his message about <i>zaï</i> farming, not because he values exploring new places.
24	Option J is correct	The conclusion that looking to the past for answers can be helpful is supported by the information in paragraph 3. Sawadogo explains to the other villagers that " <i>Zaï</i> farming was really an old method that Africans had used long ago," and that "It had worked once; perhaps it was time to try it again."
	Option F is incorrect	Sawadogo is trying an old method of farming, not a new one.
	Option G is incorrect	The author says the desert landscape is as "hard as concrete" (paragraph 3), which suggests that it does not naturally encourage plant growth.
	Option H is incorrect	In paragraph 3, the author supports the idea that <i>zaï</i> farming can be successful in the desert but does not suggest that it is the only way to prevent desertification.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
25	Option D is correct	In paragraph 2, the author explains, “Burkina Faso was suffering a ten-year drought” in 1980. In paragraph 3, the author includes information about how Sawadogo dug small pits called <i>zaï</i> that would catch water, allowing a “lush, green field and forest” to take the place of a “rocky, barren desert.” Describing Sawadogo’s method for improving desert land is the author’s purpose for writing the selection.
	Option A is incorrect	The author focuses on a particular farming method used by Sawadogo and used by his people in the past, not on their desert lifestyle.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author does explain in paragraph 5 that Sawadogo’s methods result in a “patch of green forest,” the author is not showing people how to plant forests using <i>zaï</i> farming.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the author does explain some of the steps involved in <i>zaï</i> farming, that is not the purpose of the selection.
26	Option G is correct	Information about the drought and Sawadogo’s solution are both included in this complete summary. Information about the other villagers’ response to Sawadogo’s methods, the result of Sawadogo’s efforts, and Sawadogo’s current work is also included.
	Option F is incorrect	There is no mention of the drought, the doubt the villagers felt regarding Sawadogo’s methods, or Sawadogo sharing his methods with others in this summary, making it incomplete.
	Option H is incorrect	There is no information about why Sawadogo utilized <i>zaï</i> farming methods in this summary, so it is incomplete.
	Option J is incorrect	This is not the best summary because there is no information included about <i>zaï</i> farming or the success Sawadogo experienced with this method.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
27	Option A is correct	Cheval created a new building based on a unique palace that he saw in a dream (paragraph 3). Sawadogo, however, applied the old <i>zaï</i> method of farming, which had been used in Africa in the past (paragraph 3). This is a way the two men are different.
	Option B is incorrect	It is not clear from the first selection at what point in his lifetime Cheval became interested in building a palace, nor is it specified in the second selection when Sawadogo became interested in farming.
	Option C is incorrect	Cheval's palace "has inspired artists and writers the world over (paragraph 8)," but Sawadogo also shared his work with others in his region, so it did not go unnoticed.
	Option D is incorrect	Cheval was confident he would finish his project, and Sawadogo did not know if his experiment would be successful. Both parts of this option are incorrect.
28	Option J is correct	In both selections, the idea that "Accomplishing a task can take years of dedication" is presented. Cheval collected stones for his Ideal Palace for 20 years while he walked along his postal route, and he spent 33 years total building his dream structure. Sawadogo cultivated land that he knew would take 20 years to grow into green fields and forests.
	Option F is incorrect	Cheval and Sawadogo relied more on perseverance than talent to achieve their goals.
	Option G is incorrect	Although both the Ideal Palace and the <i>zaï</i> method of farming have been recognized by others, the focus of both selections is on how long it takes to accomplish a task, not how long it takes people "to appreciate the world around them."
	Option H is incorrect	The changes effected by Cheval and Sawadogo were not natural; they were intentional, so this is not an idea presented in both selections.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
29	Option C is correct	In paragraph 5 from the selection "Trees Rise in the Desert" there is information about Sawadogo traveling all over the region and spreading the message of "how <i>zaï</i> farming can transform the landscape and save lives" (paragraph 5). There is no information about Cheval sharing his methods in "A Legacy of Stone." His palace is "beyond duplication" (paragraph 9).
	Option A is incorrect	Based on the information in both selections, it is clear that both Sawadogo and Cheval are committed to their ideas, so this is not a difference.
	Option B is incorrect	Sawadogo does have a deep respect for nature. Cheval's appreciation for the stones he finds suggests that he also appreciates nature.
	Option D is incorrect	Based on the information in both selections, it is clear that both Sawadogo and Cheval are willing to work hard.
30	Option F is correct	The idea that the "work of one person can have far-reaching effects" is presented by both authors. Cheval created a historic monument visited by thousands of tourists every year, and Sawadogo teaches people from "all over the region" how to grow life-saving crops in the desert.
	Option G is incorrect	Both Cheval and Sawadogo transform the world around them but do not necessarily protect it.
	Option H is incorrect	Sawadogo wisely utilizes a traditional method, but Cheval does not.
	Option J is incorrect	Cheval invents something new, but Sawadogo utilizes a traditional method.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
31	Option C is correct	Initially, villagers scoffed at Sawadogo’s efforts to grow crops using <i>zaï</i> farming methods but changed their minds when they saw how successful he was. Similarly, people laughed at Cheval’s early efforts to build the Ideal Palace, but as illustrated in the sentence from paragraph 6 of “A Legacy of Stone,” people stopped criticizing Cheval and began to respect him.
	Option A is incorrect	There is a reference to time in both sentences, but a similar idea is not illustrated.
	Option B is incorrect	The idea of people changing their initial unfavorable opinions is not presented in this sentence from “A Legacy of Stone.”
	Option D is incorrect	There is information related to Cheval’s accomplishment in this sentence, but there are no details about how people’s feelings towards his work changed.
32	Option G is correct	The description of the lake in line 8 is used to suggest that the lake “will continue to care for its visitors.” Although people may change, the lake waits with an “unchanging heart” for visitors to return.
	Option F is incorrect	The reference to “heart” in line 8 is used to suggest that the lake is capable of love, but there is nothing that suggests it lost something.
	Option H is incorrect	In line 7, there is a reference to “stillness” at the lake, but there is no context to suggest that the lake is lonely.
	Option J is incorrect	There is no evidence in line 8 that the lake feels anger.
33	Option C is correct	In both lines 9 and 11, the poet repeats the word “Return,” suggesting that though the listener is away, “the lake will always be there for the listener” when he or she comes back.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the poet repeats the request for the listener to “Return,” there is no evidence that the listener has forgotten the lake, only that the listener has been away.
	Option B is incorrect	Hoping that the listener will return is not an unrealistic expectation.
	Option D is incorrect	The repetition of “Return” suggests that the lake has affection for the listener, but it does not indicate how the listener feels about the lake.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
34	Option G is correct	In lines 5 and 6, the lake acknowledges that visitors “grow” and “change” when they are “Out in the world” and realizes that the listener leads a “busy life” when “apart” from the lake. The reader can conclude that the lake understands that the listener has other priorities in addition to visiting the lake.
	Option F is incorrect	Based on the reference to the listener’s life, the reader could conclude that the visitor is mature, but there is no evidence that the lake is proud.
	Option H is incorrect	Although the lake does not have the same experiences as the listener, there is no reason to conclude that the lake cannot relate to the listener.
	Option J is incorrect	The lake acknowledges that the listener has a life apart from visits to the lake, but the lake does not seem upset.
35	Option A is correct	With the phrase “where once you left your barefoot trace,” the poet invites the listener to think about a special time experienced at the lake. The listener once walked barefoot around the “wavelets” and “pebbles” of the lake (line 3).
	Option B is incorrect	Features of the lake that humans enjoy are referred to in lines 2 and 3, not line 4.
	Option C is incorrect	The poet refers to the listener in line 4, not to people who visited the lake before the listener.
	Option D is incorrect	A trace left by bare feet would not cause damage to the lake, and the poet does not mention any other damage.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
36	Option J is correct	The lake tells the listener "I will wash/your cares from you" (lines 9–10) and encourages the listener to "Return from hurry, clash, and noise" (line 11). The lake's promise to provide peace can be inferred from these lines.
	Option F is incorrect	The lake is aware that the listener leads a separate life, but there is no evidence that the lake has additional knowledge to provide.
	Option G is incorrect	Although visiting a lake can be entertaining, the lake is promising to provide peace, not entertainment.
	Option H is incorrect	Although the listener does leave the lake for periods of time, there is no evidence that the listener feels sorry or that the lake needs to forgive the listener for anything.
37	Option C is correct	In line 16, the lake tells the listener "you'll find whatever you have lost," and based on the context in the rest of the poem, the lake is referring to the listener losing a time when life was simpler and the listener had time to walk barefoot and float "free in dizzy rings/of clouds and sky, of fir and moss" (lines 13–14).
	Option A is incorrect	The poet does not include any references to the listener's possessions, only the listener's time.
	Option B is incorrect	The lake thinks that the listener has too many cares, not that the listener is careless.
	Option D is incorrect	The lake wants the listener to come back and visit but does not suggest that the listener has forgotten how to get back to the water.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
38	Option J is correct	The idea that one's situation can quickly and unexpectedly change is an important message presented in this play. At the beginning of the play, things are not going well for Lewis and Clark and the other members of the Corps of Discovery, who desperately need horses. Suddenly, sixty Shoshoni warriors mounted on horseback arrive, and Sacagawea is reunited with her brother Cameahwait.
	Option F is incorrect	Lewis and Clark are expecting help from the Shoshoni, whom they do not know, but this turns out to be a wise decision since Sacagawea reunites with her brother and the Shoshoni may be able to provide horses.
	Option G is incorrect	Lewis does take a smaller group to scout ahead because they will be able to move faster than the larger group, but that is a detail and not a theme that is developed in the play.
	Option H is incorrect	Lewis and Clark are planning on crossing the Rocky Mountains and finding the source of the Missouri River, so they do know their destination.
39	Option B is correct	In line 34, Lewis wants to make sure that the Shoshoni know that his party is accompanied by "a Shoshoni woman and child" and has peaceful intentions. Based on this evidence, the reader can infer that Lewis is concerned about the intentions of the Shoshoni warriors.
	Option A is incorrect	In line 34, Lewis is concerned about the Shoshoni warriors; he is not trying to prove anything to Clark.
	Option C is incorrect	Lewis does find a large group of Shoshoni warriors, but there is no evidence in line 34 to support the conclusion that he is surprised at this discovery.
	Option D is incorrect	Lewis calls on Sacagawea to communicate with the Shoshoni warriors. Based on line 34, Lewis does not make any attempt to ask the Corps to help him develop a plan of defense.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
40	Option G is correct	In the conversation in lines 19 through 26, the playwright reveals that Charbonneau disagrees with Clark's decisions. Charbonneau tells Clark about all the problems the Corps is facing, and how they "can't go on like this!" Clark, on the other hand, insists that the group continue with their journey.
	Option F is incorrect	Charbonneau tells Clark exactly what he is thinking.
	Option H is incorrect	It is not clear from lines 19 through 26 if Charbonneau initially thinks that Clark knows that their equipment is failing, but in line 22, Clark says lets Charbonneau know that he is aware of the situation ("I know.").
	Option J is incorrect	Based on lines 19 through 26, it is unclear how the rest of the crew feels about Clark or if Charbonneau knows how the crew feels.
41	Option A is correct	In the stage directions in line 12, there is a description of Sacagawea nodding and pointing out the direction in which the group should travel. Based on these stage directions, the reader can infer that Sacagawea is familiar with the area.
	Option B is incorrect	Sacagawea is helping the Corps find the Shoshoni, but the stage directions are not included to show why the Corps want to find the Shoshoni.
	Option C is incorrect	In the stage directions, Sacagawea only stares, nods, and points. Her feelings about her native land are not revealed.
	Option D is incorrect	In line 12, Sacagawea says they will "save two days travel time" if they take the route she is indicating, but there are no details included in the stage directions to show why the Corps needs to save time.

2021 STAAR Grade 7 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
42	Option G is correct	A simile is a figure of speech in which two objects are compared using the word “like” or “as.” In the simile in line 33, the author compares the rising sound of being surrounded by the Shoshoni warriors to that of a tidal wave, which would be an “overwhelming experience.”
	Option F is incorrect	Being surrounded by warriors could certainly be threatening, but there is no reference to a defense strategy in line 33.
	Option H is incorrect	The Shoshoni are eager to reconnect with Sacagawea, but that is not evident until later in the play.
	Option J is incorrect	The simile with the tidal wave is used to describe the sound of the Shoshoni’s voices as they surround Lewis and Clark. It has nothing to do with the effects of spending time in the wilderness.