

Read the passage from the nonfiction book *Catching Fog*.

Passage from
Catching Fog

by Sarah Brockett

1 The little village of Bellavista—near Lima, Peru—used to be a very dusty and dry place. Years ago, the land there was brown and bare. There aren't any rivers or lakes nearby, and it almost never rains in Bellavista. One year it only rained twice in the village, for about five minutes each time.

2 As a result of its location and the scarce rainfall, there was a serious shortage of fresh water in Bellavista. Without fresh water, the villagers could not bathe or clean their clothes and homes. They couldn't grow food to sell or to feed their families. They barely had enough water to drink.

3 To get the water they needed to survive, the people of Bellavista used to have to buy it. Every few days, a truck with a big tank brought water to the villagers. The water was very expensive, and the villagers had to spend as much as a quarter of their salary to pay for it.

4 Fresh water is one of the most important **natural resources** on Earth. People often forget this. Instead, we tend to think about natural resources like oil and expensive metals. But water is one natural resource that plants, animals, and people cannot live without.

5 Unfortunately, fresh water is scarce in many places. Even though most of Earth is covered in water, this water is salty, undrinkable ocean water.

Now read the passage from the nonfiction book *Making Rain*.

Passage from
Making Rain

by Sarah Brockett

1 **Cloud seeding** is a way of adding more solid particles to a cloud so that water particles can stick together and grow. In cloud seeding, scientists shoot a material called silver iodide (EYE-oh-died) up into clouds that have already formed. Silver iodide is a chemical solution that's similar to ice, so water particles stick to it easily. A plane can also fly above the cloud and drop the silver iodide down into it.

2 With more solid particles in the cloud, more water particles have something to stick to. Then they can grow into heavy pieces of ice. Cloud seeding doesn't work every time, but it does make rain more likely.

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- 3 Cloud seeding can help bring fresh water to dry places that have clouds but little precipitation. By making it rain just a bit more, plants can grow and trap water in the ground. The rainwater can be stored in the ground for use in dry months when there are no clouds. Increasing precipitation even by a small amount goes a long way.
- 4 Some people have concerns about cloud seeding. Could silver iodide be harmful to the environment? The answer so far seems to be “no.” Scientists say that the amount of it used in cloud seeding is too small to hurt the environment. Over the years, researchers have found no negative effects.

Reading Comprehension

Now answer questions 1 through 5 by filling in the circle next to the best answer. The questions relate to *Catching Fog* and *Making Rain*.

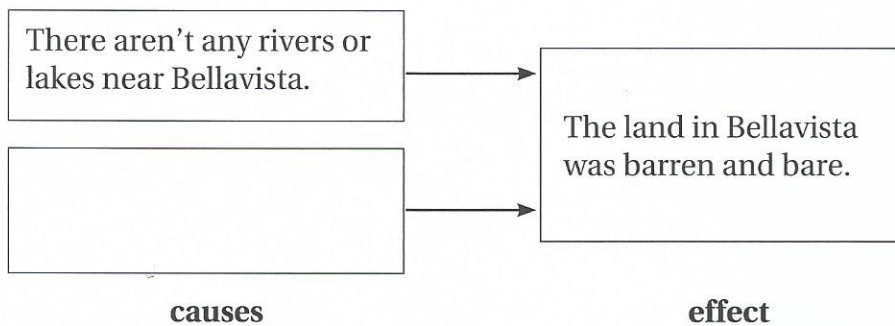
1. Read this sentence from paragraph 3 of *Catching Fog*.

The water was very expensive, and the villagers had to spend as much as a quarter of their salary to pay for it.

A synonym for *expensive* is

- A cheap.
- B costly.
- C plentiful.
- D unpleasant.
2. Which syllable in *precipitation* has a long vowel sound?
- A the second syllable
- B the third syllable
- C the fourth syllable
- D the fifth syllable

3. Read the cause-and-effect chart below.



Which statement belongs in the empty box?

- A** Ocean water is salty.
 - B** Villagers had little drinking water.
 - C** It almost never rains in Bellavista.
 - D** Water was very expensive in Bellavista.
4. Based on information in paragraphs 1 and 2 of *Making Rain*, you can infer that rain can fall when
- A** solid particles pull all of the water out of a cloud.
 - B** water particles are squeezed by a cloud until they fall.
 - C** ice crystals in a cloud become too heavy to stay afloat.
 - D** small pieces of ice are heated in a cloud to release water.
5. Which word BEST describes the author's style in both passages?
- A** fancy
 - B** poetic
 - C** informal
 - D** instructive

Read the passage from the fiction book *Locked Horns*. Then answer questions 1 through 6.

Passage from *Locked Horns*

by Sid Lustig

1 “Vince, we’ve been bushwacking for an hour,” said Davey, hot and tired. He pointed far to the right of where Vince was heading. “I think that way will take us onto dry land.”

2 “I need a rest. I’ll give you five minutes to check it out,” Vince growled. “And I’ve already started counting.”

3 Davey hadn’t gone fifty yards when he saw something odd where the woods met the marsh grass. It looked sharp and bony. Davey approached it, his shoes miring in thick muck with every step.

4 He easily recognized the pattern of moose antlers. No other animal had those broad, flat, slightly cupped horns. But these looked complicated. Bigger than he expected . . . and they had too many parts. They had bones attached to them. They weren’t just antlers rubbed off by a moose after mating in the fall. These had a spine, and some furry parts, and a skull.

5 No, *two skulls*.

6 There were two moose!

7 Davey hurried back to his brother.

8 “You’re covered in mud. Looks like you found a real dry route,” Vince mocked.

9 “You gotta see this,” Davey said. He said it in a way that was so strong, so insistent, that Vince had to follow. And he did, without another word.

10 The two boys stared at the antlers. When they finally spoke, it was in tandem.

11 “They’re attached,” said Davey.

12 “Stuck together.”

13 “That edge of antler got locked under that other piece.”

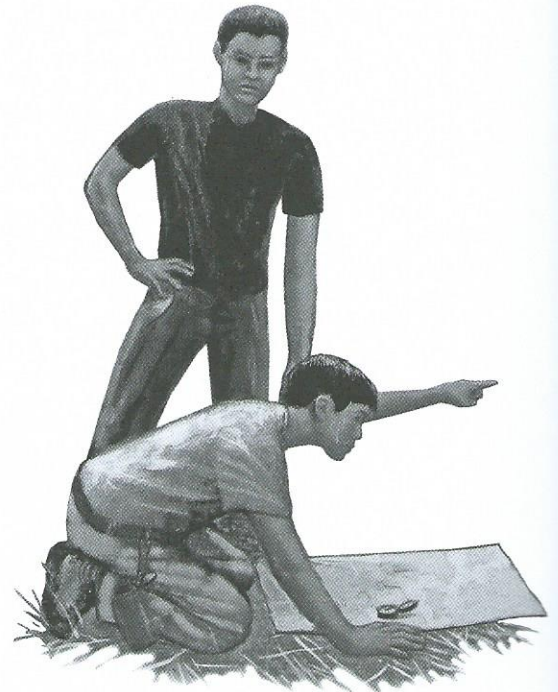
14 “They must have been fighting.”

15 “I bet when they shook their heads to get themselves loose they just got into it deeper,” Davey said.

16 “Yeah,” said Vince. “Locked.”

17 “Deadlocked,” echoed Davey. And repeated, separating the words. “Dead. Locked.”

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- 18 They were silent, staring.
19 "I wonder," said Davey. "Do you think they ever understood?"
20 "Understood?"
21 "What it meant. That they were doomed."

Reading Comprehension

Now answer questions 1 through 6 by filling in the circle next to the best answer.

1. Read these sentences from paragraph 9 of the passage.

"You gotta see this," Davey said. He said it in a way that was so strong, so insistent, that Vince had to follow.

What is a synonym for *insistent*?

- A playful
- B sensitive
- C demanding
- D quarrelsome
2. Which syllable in *complicated* has a long vowel sound?
- A first syllable
- B second syllable
- C third syllable
- D fourth syllable
3. Which event would have to be included in a summary of the passage?
- A Vince remarks that Davey is covered in mud.
- B Davey discovers two attached moose antlers.
- C Vince gives Davey only five minutes to check the route.
- D Davey points far to the right of where Vince was heading.
4. You can tell from the picture that
- A Vince is older than Davey.
- B Vince is younger than Davey.
- C Davey is happy.
- D Davey is well prepared.

5. Which describes the organization of the passage?

- A related topics
- B chronological order
- C order of importance
- D comparison and contrast

6. Which term names the genre that *Locked Horns* is?

- A fantasy
- B folklore
- C science fiction
- D realistic fiction

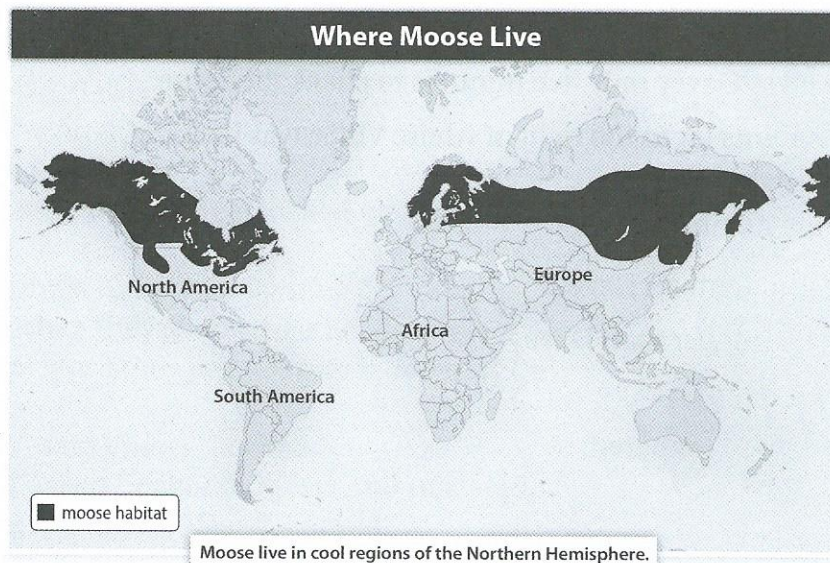
Now read the passage from the nonfiction book *Mortal Combat: Moose and Their Antlers*. Then answer questions 7 through 12.

Passage from
Mortal Combat: Moose and Their Antlers

by Sid Lustig

Meet the Moose

7 With big, rounded muzzles, drooping lips, and a flap of skin hanging under their chins, moose are not the most handsome members of the deer family. But they are the largest. They weigh 700 to 1200 pounds, and sometimes much more. They are usually dark brown or black and are shaped somewhat like a horse, with long legs and a hump at the shoulder. Only the males, called bulls, grow antlers.



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Growing Antlers

- 2 Antlers grow faster than any other bone in mammals. They start growing on a moose's head, between their ears and their eyes, early in the spring. To feed their growth, antlers have a soft, delicate skin on the outside called *velvet*. This velvet supplies the antlers with the blood they need to grow fast.
- 3 It takes three or four months for antlers to grow to full size. While the antlers are growing, they are very sensitive. The moose has to be careful not to whack or scrape them. This doesn't just hurt—it can also damage the velvet and make the antlers grow unevenly.
- 4 Once the antlers are fully grown, the velvet is no longer needed and it falls off. The moose helps this along by scraping the antlers against trees. What's left is hard bone.
- 5 Antlers on a mature male can be huge—up to six feet across and weighing as much as 75 pounds. Imagine having that kind of weight on your head. It takes a lot of muscle strength and coordination just to hold the antlers up and control them. Moose have big shoulder humps made of muscles strong enough to hold those antlers up.

Reading Comprehension

Now answer questions 7 through 12 by filling in the circle next to the best answer.

7. Read these sentences from paragraph 2 of the passage.

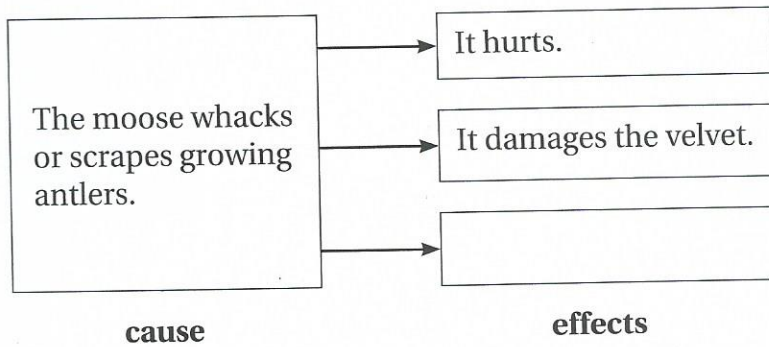
To feed their growth, antlers have a soft, delicate skin on the outside called velvet. This velvet supplies the antlers with the blood they need to grow fast.

Which definition from the following dictionary entry fits the way *delicate* is used above?

delicate (del' ə kit) *adj.* 1 of a fine, thin quality 2 pleasing to taste or smell 3 requiring skill or tact 4 having a quick reaction to small differences

- A definition 1
- B definition 2
- C definition 3
- D definition 4
8. What is the base word in *coordination*?
- A order
- B nation
- C coordinate
- D coordinated

9. The chart below shows an event that is mentioned in paragraph 3 of the passage. This event appears in the box labeled “cause.” Two effects of this event have been printed in boxes to the right. First, read the chart.



- Which statement belongs in the empty box, because it is another effect of the event?
- A The velvet falls off.
 - B The antlers stop growing.
 - C The antlers grow unevenly.
 - D The antlers become very sensitive.
10. This passage gives information that encourages the reader to recognize that moose are
- A meek.
 - B sturdy.
 - C reckless.
 - D intelligent.
11. From the information in this passage, what can you infer about female moose?
- A They eat more than the males.
 - B They weigh less than the males.
 - C They have more velvet than the males.
 - D They are more attractive than the males.
12. What is the purpose of the map?
- A to introduce the section that follows
 - B to explain something mentioned in the text
 - C to provide new information that is not in the text
 - D to describe how the habitat of the moose has changed

Reading Comprehension

Now answer questions 13 through 15 by filling in the circle next to the best answer. These questions relate to both passages.

13. Based on the passage from *Mortal Combat: Moose and Their Antlers*, you know that the moose Davey finds were adults because
- A their antlers were fully grown.
 - B they were fighting with each other.
 - C their skulls and furry parts were obvious.
 - D they understood that they were doomed.
14. Based on the information given in the passages, what is MOST LIKELY true of a moose before its antlers grow in?
- A It needs to feed more.
 - B It is vulnerable to attack.
 - C It has no shoulder hump.
 - D It stays with other young moose.
15. Which statement about author's purpose is true about these two passages?
- A Both passages are informative.
 - B Both passages are entertaining.
 - C The first passage is informative and the second is entertaining.
 - D The first passage is entertaining and the second is informative.

Read the fiction passage “A Trip to a Wind Farm” and the fiction passage “All Wrong.” Then answer questions 1 through 5.

A Trip to a Wind Farm

1 “Be sure to pay attention on the tour,” Ms. Kushner announced to the class as the bus halted in the parking lot of the wind farm. “Each of you will be paired with a partner, and the two of you will be responsible for giving an oral presentation about the trip.”

2 Dora almost groaned when Ms. Kushner paired her with Angie, a girl who was really shy and brainy and awkward. This day was going to be no fun at all!

3 “Hi, Dora,” Angie ventured meekly. “I guess we should take notes for the report.”

4 “Sure,” Dora answered coolly as she followed Angie off of the bus.

5 A few moments later, the tour guide began to speak. “Wind farms are really just groups of wind turbines that produce electricity by harnessing the power of the wind,” he said.

6 Angie jotted down some notes and then remarked, “I’ve read that wind turbines are designed to last more than twenty years. In that time, they generate enough electricity to power a personal computer for 1,600 years.”

7 “Really?” Dora marveled. She thought for a moment. “We can use that in our report. Do you know any other cool facts?”

8 Angie nodded shyly. “Well, most wind energy comes from turbines that can be as tall as a twenty-story building and have three 200-foot-long blades.”

9 “Whoa! I wonder if the turbines here are that gigantic.”

10 “We’ll soon find out,” Angie said with a big grin.

11 Dora smiled herself, realizing that she was actually having fun with Angie.

All Wrong

1 Courtney’s family dashed for the storm shelter as the tornado approached. “Hurry!” her father called urgently. “Everybody get down there.” Just as Courtney was about to descend, she realized that Snuffles was missing. Without thinking, Courtney darted to the house to retrieve her cat. She made it inside, grabbed Snuffles, and headed toward the door as the powerful wind blew it open. Suddenly, everything went black.

2 Courtney was jolted awake with a thump. Still in her house, she peered out the window at pink and green cottages with thatched roofs. She definitely wasn’t in Oklahoma anymore. Why, the tornado must have transported her to Oz! Courtney walked outside, expecting to find a wicked witch under the house. Instead, she discovered a giant woman who had tripped over it. All the people here were giants. Where were the munchkins?

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3 After Courtney politely introduced herself and her pet, she learned that the woman was the queen of the land, which was called Og. "I'm sorry my house tripped you," Courtney apologized.

4 "I forgive you," said the queen in a snooty way. "But you must pay for the cracks you made in our purple brick road."

5 "This is all wrong," complained Courtney. "It should be a yellow brick road, the people in this land are supposed to be munchkins, and the name of this place should be Oz!"

6 "You're not what we expected either," the queen replied testily. "Your name really ought to be Dorothy. And shouldn't you have a dog named Toto, not a cat named Snuffles?"

Reading Comprehension

Now answer questions 1 through 5 by filling in the circle next to the best answer.

1. Read these sentences from paragraph 2 of "All Wrong."

She definitely wasn't in Oklahoma anymore. Why, the tornado must have transported her to Oz!

Which definition from the following dictionary entry fits the way *transported* is used in the sentence above?

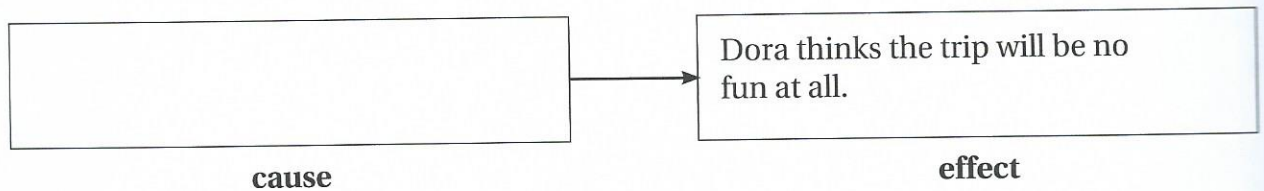
transport (tran' spôrt *for verb*; tran spôrt' *for noun*) **1 verb** to carry from one place to another **2 verb** to fill with strong emotion **3 noun** a ship for carrying troops and supplies **4 noun** an aircraft for carrying passengers or freight

- A definition 1
- B definition 2
- C definition 3
- D definition 4

2. What is the correct way to divide the word *presentation* into syllables?

- A pres-en-ta-tion
- B pres-en-tat-ion
- C pres-ent-a-tion
- D pres-ent-at-ion

3. The chart below shows an event that happens in paragraph 2 of “A Trip to a Wind Farm.” This event appears in the box labeled “effect.” The cause of this event has not been printed in the box to the left. First, read the chart.



Which statement belongs in the empty box?

- A** Angie jots down some notes.
 - B** Ms. Kushner pairs Dora with Angie.
 - C** The tour guide starts to talk about wind farms.
 - D** Ms. Kushner tells the class about the oral presentation.
4. Which word BEST describes the author’s style in “All Wrong”?
- A** stiff
 - B** playful
 - C** formal
 - D** peculiar
5. Which is true of both Dora and Courtney?
- A** They find it easy to make friends.
 - B** They are too quick to draw conclusions.
 - C** They act only after they think things through.
 - D** They immediately see what is really important.

Read the fiction passage “Comet Fever.” Then answer questions 1 through 6.

Comet Fever

1 “Are you sure we’ll be able to see Comet PANSTARRS?” Diego asked excitedly.

2 Aunt Sofia smiled. “According to all reports, we should be able to see it with the naked eye in March. The best viewing here in Texas will be between March 10 and 15.” Diego had always shared Aunt Sofia’s love of astronomy. His dad, Aunt Sofia’s brother, couldn’t be more different. He loved sports and had no desire to gaze up at the stars.

3 “I wish we had a good pair of binoculars,” Diego sighed.

4 “Don’t worry,” his aunt replied. “We should see the comet just fine. We’ve found the perfect spot here—a good western exposure with a minimum of trees, buildings, or hills to spoil the view. Do you remember the other viewing tips?”

5 “I sure do. PANSTARRS won’t be very high in the sky, so we need to scan the horizon to the west as soon as the sun goes down. We also need to pick a day that isn’t cloudy or hazy.”

6 “You’re more than ready,” said his aunt. “Let’s get home before your father sends out a search party.”

7 Diego’s dad greeted the pair with somber news. Uncle Samuel needed emergency heart surgery. To take care of him, Aunt Sofia would have to fly to New York. She would be gone the entire month of March, so they would not be viewing Comet PANSTARRS together. Diego loved his uncle, but he couldn’t help feeling disappointed.

8 Dad offered to view the comet with Diego, but the boy declined. His dad just wouldn’t feel his excitement and wonder, which would ruin the experience. So Diego sulked and avoided any mention of the comet.

9 It was the end of April when Aunt Sofia finally returned home. She opened her suitcase and retrieved a package. “This is from Uncle Samuel,” she explained as she handed it to Diego. He quickly tore it open to reveal a pair of high-powered binoculars perfect for comet viewing.

10 Taken by surprise, Diego mumbled, “But PANSTARRS is no longer visible.”

11 “Ah, but an even brighter comet is coming in the fall,” his aunt replied. “Now we can get a good look at Comet ISON when it gets here in November.”

Reading Comprehension

Now answer questions 1 through 6 by filling in the circle next to the best answer.

1. Read these sentences from paragraph 8 of the passage.

Dad offered to view the comet with Diego, but the boy declined. His dad just wouldn't feel his excitement and wonder, which would ruin the experience.

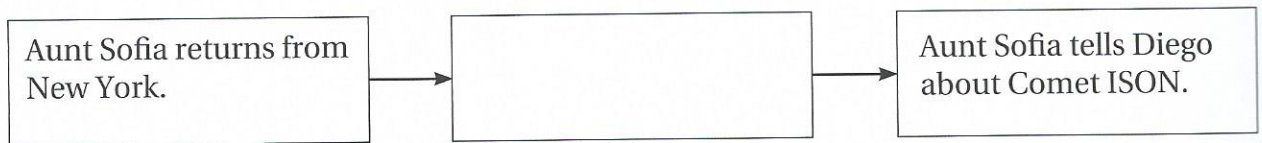
Which word is a synonym for *declined*?

- A forgot
- B refused
- C nodded
- D understood

2. The word *emergency* is spoken with the most stress on the

- A first syllable.
- B second syllable.
- C third syllable.
- D fourth syllable.

3. The chart below shows events in sequence. First, read the chart.



Which event belongs in the empty box in the chart?

- A Diego receives binoculars from Uncle Samuel.
- B Diego declines to view the comet with his dad.
- C Diego finds out that Uncle Samuel needs heart surgery.
- D Diego and his aunt find the perfect spot for comet viewing.

4. How does Diego MOST LIKELY feel when he receives the binoculars?

- A guilty but stubborn
- B calm but concerned
- C happy but confused
- D proud but supportive

5. Which sentence BEST states the theme of the passage?

- A Do not make a big fuss over a small matter.
- B A new opportunity can overturn disappointment.
- C You should not always take people at their word.
- D Think of the consequences before you do anything.

6. Diego's main problem is solved at the point when

- A Aunt Sofia tells him not to worry.
- B he remembers the comet viewing tips.
- C his father offers to view the comet with him.
- D he finds he has a chance to view Comet ISON.

Now read the nonfiction passage "Dirty Snowballs." Then answer questions 7 through 12.

Dirty Snowballs

- 1 Did you know that a comet is really a dirty snowball? Comets are big chunks of ice, rock, and gas left over from the beginning of our solar system. These balls, which are roughly the size of a small town, did *not* form into planets about 4.6 billion years ago. Instead, the dirty snowballs kept on circling around the sun on their own. Most comets orbit way beyond the orbit of Neptune. It can take a comet anywhere from seven years to millions of years to go once around the sun.
- 2 A comet gets very hot when its orbit brings it close to the sun. The heat causes it to expel dust and gases into a giant glowing head. The dust and gases also form a tail that stretches away from the sun for millions of miles. In fact, comets get their name from a Greek word meaning "long hair"—a reference to their tails.
- 3 When a comet gets close enough to Earth, some of its smaller rocks get sucked into Earth's gravity and come falling down. We call these rocks meteors. As Earth passes through the tail of a comet, we see a meteor shower.
- 4 Comets are generally named for their discoverer, usually a person or spacecraft. Lately, they have been named for the project that discovered them. This is true of two comets recently seen from Earth, Comet PANSTARRS and Comet ISON. ISON passed very close to the sun, coming within 1.2 miles of the star. At that point, the intense heat and gravity caused it to break apart. Before it did, this bright comet put on quite a show for the people watching from Earth.
- 5 What are some tips for observing a comet? First, be informed of what comets are visible and where they are located. Be sure to get the latest information. Comets are fast travelers. Since they move so fast, they can change position quite a bit in a few days' time. One big problem for observing comets is interfering lights. The best thing you can do is find a dark site from which to observe. Even if the comet is visible with the naked eye, binoculars will enhance the view—particularly when it comes to seeing the tail.

Reading Comprehension

Now answer questions 7 through 12 by filling in the circle next to the best answer.

7. Read this sentence from paragraph 5 of the passage.

Even if the comet is visible with the naked eye, binoculars will enhance the view—particularly when it comes to seeing the tail.

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

- A give away
- B make more popular
- C make greater or better
- D give less importance to

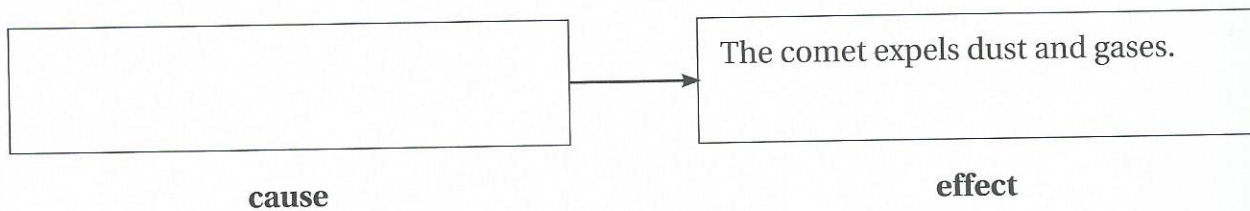
8. Read this sentence from paragraph 2 of the passage.

The heat causes it to expel dust and gases into a giant glowing head.

The word part *pel* comes from a word meaning “drive.” What does the prefix mean in the word *expel*?

- A out
- B single
- C smooth
- D together

9. Read the cause-and-effect chart.



Which statement belongs in the empty box?

- A Earth passes through the tail of a comet.
- B A comet is a big chunk of ice, rock, and gas.
- C A comet gets very hot when it nears the sun.
- D Small rocks from a comet get sucked into Earth’s gravity.

10. Based on the information in the passage, what is true of a comet's orbit?
- A A comet and Earth orbit the sun in opposite directions.
 - B A comet stops orbiting after Earth passes through its tail.
 - C Only the largest comets orbit way beyond the orbit of Neptune.
 - D It takes longer for a comet to orbit the sun than it takes for Earth to orbit the sun.
11. You can tell from the passage that the author thinks comets are
- A very dangerous.
 - B worth observing.
 - C all going to break apart.
 - D of little use to astronomers.
12. Which pattern of organization is used in paragraph 3 of the passage?
- A cause and effect
 - B question and answer
 - C problem and solution
 - D compare and contrast

Reading Comprehension

Now answer questions 13 through 15 by filling in the circle next to the best answer. These questions relate to both passages.

13. According to information in "Dirty Snowballs," what useful preparation did Diego and Aunt Sofia in "Comet Fever" fail to make to get the best view of PANSTARRS?
- A using binoculars
 - B picking a clear day
 - C choosing a dark site
 - D knowing the comet's location
14. Based on both passages, which word BEST describes comets?
- A common
 - B alarming
 - C humorous
 - D interesting

15. Which statement about author's purpose is true?

- A** In both passages, the author's purpose is to inform the reader about comets.
- B** In both passages, the author's purpose is to persuade the reader to view a comet.
- C** In the first passage, the author's purpose is to entertain the reader; in the second passage, the author's purpose is to inform the reader about comets.
- D** In the first passage, the author's purpose is to persuade the reader to view a comet; in the second passage, the author's purpose is to describe comets to the reader.