

Reading Comprehension

Directions Read the following selections. Then answer the questions that follow.

The narrator and his family are farm workers who travel from job to job.

from The Circuit

After traveling for about five hours, we arrived at our new home in Orosi. It was an old, two-story, yellow, wooden house. It was located about fifteen miles outside the city limits. Mr. Patrini, the owner, told us that the house was seventy years old. We could not use the second level because the floors were unstable. The first floor had two rooms and a kitchen. Behind the house was a large barn and hundreds of vineyards.

It did not take long to unload our *Carcachita*¹ and settle in. Papá, Mamá, and Rorra took one room; Roberto, Trampita, Torito, Rubén, and I moved into the other one. After my brothers and I had put away our few things, I sat on the
10 floor and looked at my pennies. I wanted to make sure they were not rubbing against each other in the box before placing them underneath the mattress. When I looked up, Rorra was standing next to me.

“Can I have one?”

“One what?” I asked.

“A penny,” she answered.

“Not one of these,” I said. “These are special.” She made a face and walked away stomping her tiny feet.

That evening, before going to bed, I checked on my pennies again. I then took off my shirt and carefully hung it on a nail in the wall and made sure my
20 note pad did not fall out the pocket. After our prayers, we slipped into bed. I had trouble falling asleep. “I can’t believe we are living in a house,” I thought to myself.

My little brothers must have been excited too because they started whispering and giggling. Roberto tried to quiet them down but they would not stop.

“Listen,” Roberto said in a loud whisper. “I hear *La Llorona*² weeping upstairs.”

“I don’t hear anything. You’re just trying to scare us,” Trampita answered.

“No, I am not,” Roberto responded. “Just be quiet and you’ll hear her.”

30 There was dead silence for the rest of the night.

The next day, before sunrise, Papá, Roberto, Trampita, and I went to pick

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1. *Carcachita*: the name that the narrator’s Papá gave to the family’s old Plymouth
 2. *La Llorona*: a ghost woman who goes around weeping for the loss of her children

grapes for Mr. Patrini. Mamá stayed home to take care of my little sister and brothers. I took my note pad with me. I wanted to learn some spelling rules while I worked, but I couldn't. The angry, blistering sun did not let me. By ten o'clock my shirt was soaking wet. I wiped my hands on my pants and carefully removed the note pad from my shirt pocket and took it to the *Carachita* and left it there. I did not want it to get dirty and wet. By the end of the day, my whole body was covered with dust from the vineyards. My arms and hands looked like they were made of clay. I scraped the muddy coat off them with the hooked
40 knife I used for cutting grapes.

At sundown, when we got home, Mamá and Rorra drove to the store while Papá, Roberto, Trampita, and I stripped to our underwear and bathed in a trough that was behind the house. After we got dressed, I placed the note pad in the pocket of my clean shirt.

When Mamá returned, I helped her with the groceries. "Did you get any pennies in change?" I asked.

She looked in her purse and handed me one. It was made in 1939. "Can I have it?"

"Of course, *mi jito*³," she answered.

50 I went to our room to add it to my collection. I took out my coin box from underneath the mattress and removed the top. The first layer of white cotton was bare. "No, they have to be here" I thought to myself. I swiftly removed the cotton and checked the second layer. Nothing. My 1910 and 1865 pennies were gone! I rushed out of the room shouting, "My pennies! Someone took them!"

When I got to the kitchen, Rorra ran and hid behind Mamá, who was standing by the stove preparing dinner. "Did you take my pennies?" I yelled at my sister. "If you did, give them to me!"

Holding on to Mamá's leg with her left arm, Rorra extended her right hand and offered me two red gum balls. "I don't want your gum, I want my two
60 pennies," I shouted. She dropped the gum balls and started whimpering.

"Calm down, Panchito," Mamá said. Then looking down at my sister, she said, "*Mi ja*⁴, did you take Panchito's pennies?" Rorra nodded sheepishly. "And what did you do with them?" Mamá continued. Rorra pointed to the gum balls on the floor. "Did you put the pennies in the gum machine at the store?" she asked.

When my sister nodded again, my heart dropped to my stomach. I felt my face on fire. Everything blurred. I stormed out of the house, slammed the door behind me, sat on the front stairs, and cried.

3. *mi jito*: my little child or my little son

4. *mi ja*: my daughter

Seconds later, Mamá came out and sat beside me. “I know how
 70 disappointed you are, *mi’jito*, but your sister is only four years old,” she said
 tenderly. Then clearing her throat, she continued. “Let me tell you a story I
 heard when I was a little girl. Long ago there lived a very smart ant who saved
 her pennies for so many years that she became rich. Many animals wanted to
 marry her but they frightened her. The cat mewed too much, the parrot talked
 too much, and the dog barked too loud. A bull and a goat also scared her, but
 not a little brown mouse named El Ratoncito. He was quiet, intelligent, polite,
 and mannerly. They got married and lived happily for a very long time. But one
 day, when the ant was cooking a pot of beans, she fell in it and drowned,
 leaving El Ratoncito with a lot of pennies, but terribly sad and lonely. So you
 80 see, *mi’jito*, Rorra is more important than the pennies. Don’t be so hard on your
 little sister.”

Mamá’s story calmed me down a little, but I was still angry at Rorra. I took
 a deep breath and went back inside to our room. I sat on the mattress and pulled
 out my note pad from my shirt pocket. I turned to the page where I listed my
 pennies, and crossed out LINCOLN HEAD, 1910 and INDIAN HEAD,
 1865.

From “To Have and to Hold,” from *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child* by Francisco Jiménez.
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from Little by Little

Jean Little

I looked up from my grade five reader and smiled. I liked Miss Marr a lot.
 And, even though we had only met an hour ago, I thought she liked me, too.

She was young and pretty and she had a gentle voice. But that was not all.
 Like Mr. Johnston, she had polio. As I listened to her passing out books
 behind me, I could hear her limping, first a quick step, then a slow one. The
 sound made me feel a little less lonely. My teacher would understand how it
 felt to be the only cross-eyed girl in Victory School.

“This is your desk, Jean,” she had said.

It sat, all by itself, right up against the front blackboard. I was supposed to
 10 be able to see better there. I had not yet managed to make anyone understand
 that if I wanted to read what was written on the board, I would have to stand
 up so that my face was only inches away from the writing. Then I would
 have to walk back and forth, following the words not only with my eyes but
 with my entire body. If the writing were up at the top of the board, I would
 have to stand on tiptoe or even climb on a chair to be able to decipher it. If it
 were near the bottom, I would have to crouch down.

I remembered Miss Bogart printing large, thick, yellow letters on a green chalkboard. That had been so different. These dusty grey boards looked almost the same color as the thin, white scratches Miss Marr’s chalk made.

20 Her small, neat words were composed of letters that flowed into each other, too, which made reading them even harder.

I would not explain. How could I? She might make me climb and crouch to read the words.

I stood out far too much as it was. All the desks except mine were nailed to the floor in five straight rows. The seats flipped up when you slid out of them. They were attached to the desk behind. On top was a trough for your pencil and, in the right-hand corner, an inkwell which Miss Marr kept filled from a big ink bottle with a long spout. All the desk lids were a dark wine color.

30 My desk was new and varnished a shiny golden brown. It had been provided for me because, in theory, it could be moved to wherever I could see best. It was, however, far too heavy and unwieldy for Miss Marr or me to shift. All that special desk did was single me out even more.

I turned sideways in my new desk so that I could watch Miss Marr and caught sight of Shirley Russell instead. If only she would notice me!

Shirley had about her the magic of a story. She and her brother Ian had come from England to stay with their aunt and uncle and be safe from the bombing. She had joined our class near the end of grade four. Shirley had a lovely voice, with an accent like the child movie actress Margaret O’Brien’s.

40 She also had golden ringlets, longer and fairer than Shirley Temple’s. She was a War Guest. She was different, too, but everybody wanted to be her friend.

“Face front, Jean,” Miss Marr said. “Here are your spelling words.”

She had typed them for me on a big print typewriter. I bent over them, drawing each letter on the roof of my mouth with the tip of my tongue. I had discovered that this helped me to remember them. It also helped fill in time.

When the bell rang for recess, Miss Marr astonished me by saying to Shirley Russell, “This is Jean Little, Shirley. She can’t see well. Would you be her friend and help her get into the right line when it’s time to come back
50 inside?”

Shirley smiled sweetly and nodded her golden head. I could not believe this was really happening. Shirley Russell was actually going to be my friend. At last I was going to have a girl to do things with, and not just any girl. The War Guest herself!

We marched down the stairs and went out into the girls’ side of the playground. I turned to Shirley, my smile shy, my heart singing.

5. Which lines contain an example of foreshadowing?
- A. lines 13–17
 - B. lines 20–24
 - C. lines 28–32
 - D. lines 35–39
6. Which words from lines 41–43 let you know the sequence of events?
- A. At sundown
 - B. Mamá and Rorra
 - C. to the store
 - D. bathed in
7. A conflict is created after the narrator realizes that his
- A. clothes are dirty
 - B. dinner is cold
 - C. pennies are missing
 - D. note pad is full
8. Who is the narrator in conflict with in lines 55–64?
- A. Roberto
 - B. Papá
 - C. Trampita
 - D. Rorra
9. In which lines does the climax occur?
- A. lines 65–67
 - B. lines 70–72
 - C. lines 73–75
 - D. lines 76–78

COMPREHENSION

Directions Answer the following questions about the excerpt from *Little by Little*.

10. What background information do you learn about Jean Little in the exposition?
- A. She walks with a limp.
 - B. Jean’s teacher is Mr. Johnston.
 - C. She is in the fifth grade.
 - D. Jean is very pretty.
11. What do lines 6–7 foreshadow?
- A. special desks
 - B. problems with Miss Marr
 - C. bad test scores
 - D. trouble fitting in
12. Based on the details in lines 9–16, you can best make the inference that Jean has
- A. very bad eyesight
 - B. incredibly blue eyes
 - C. extremely positive views
 - D. awfully poor manners
13. In Miss Marr’s classroom, most of the desks were
- A. littered with pens
 - B. covered in paint
 - C. positioned in circles
 - D. nailed to the floor

- 14.** Based on the details in lines 33–40, which inference can you best make?
- A.** Miss Marr is beautiful.
 - B.** Jean likes Shirley.
 - C.** Shirley is very short.
 - D.** Ian likes the new school.
- 15.** In the rising action, Miss Marr
- A.** tells Jean to talk to the tree
 - B.** asks Shirley to help Jean
 - C.** talks to Mr. Johnston
 - D.** hands out small chalkboards
- 16.** Jean experiences a conflict with
- A.** Shirley
 - B.** the tree
 - C.** the leaves
 - D.** Mr. Johnston
- 17.** The playground has a
- A.** short basketball hoop in the front
 - B.** tall tree on the far side
 - C.** small bush to the left
 - D.** broken swing on the right side
- 18.** What does Jean do in the falling action?
- A.** turns sideways in her desk
 - B.** draws letters on the roof of her mouth
 - C.** walks to the far side of the playground
 - D.** smiles sweetly to Shirley

COMPREHENSION

Directions Answer the following questions about both selections.

- 19.** Both authors use foreshadowing to
- A.** illustrate the resolution
 - B.** describe the setting
 - C.** set up the conflict
 - D.** explain the falling action
- 20.** The narrator of each selection deals with a conflict that involves
- A.** disappointment about a loss
 - B.** anger at a prank
 - C.** fear because of a test
 - D.** nervousness due to shyness

Written Response

SHORT RESPONSE

Directions Write two or three sentences to answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

- 21.** Based on the excerpt from *The Circuit*, you can make the inference that the pennies are important to the narrator. Give two details from the excerpt that support this inference.
- 22.** Identify two words from the excerpt of *Little by Little* that provide clues to the sequence of events.

EXTENDED RESPONSE

Directions Write two or three paragraphs to answer this question on a separate sheet of paper.

- 23.** How does the setting contribute to the conflicts in the excerpt from *Little by Little*? Give three examples from the excerpt to support your response.

Vocabulary

Directions Use context clues and your knowledge of synonyms to answer the following questions.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. Which word is a synonym for the word <i>unstable</i> as it is used in line 4 of <i>The Circuit</i>? We could not use the second level because the floors were unstable.</p> <p>A. dirty C. rocky
 B. uncomfortable D. wobbly</p> | <p>3. Which word is a synonym for the word <i>vows</i> as it is used in line 59 of <i>Little by Little</i>? There was a hubbub of offered bribes and vows of eternal friendship.</p> <p>A. poems C. promises
 B. documents D. hopes</p> |
| <p>2. Which word is a synonym for the word <i>scraped</i> as it is used in line 39 of <i>The Circuit</i>? I scraped the muddy coat off them with the hooked knife I used for cutting grapes.</p> <p>A. rubbed C. pushed
 B. jiggled D. locked</p> | <p>4. Which word is a synonym for the word <i>cease</i> as it is used in line 64 of <i>Little by Little</i>? She was popular at the moment, but if she had me trailing after her, her accent might suddenly cease to be interesting and just be weird.</p> <p>A. jump C. decrease
 B. stop D. forget</p> |

Directions Use context clues and your knowledge of base words and suffixes to answer the following questions.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>5. What is the meaning of the word <i>swiftly</i> as it is used in line 52 of <i>The Circuit</i>?</p> <p>A. in a quick manner
 B. over a small hill
 C. one who distracts
 D. with many movements</p> | <p>7. What is the meaning of the word <i>golden</i> as it is used in line 29 of <i>Little by Little</i>?</p> <p>A. full of jewelry
 B. having a gold color
 C. in a shiny coating
 D. made of gold</p> |
| <p>6. What is the meaning of the word <i>tenderly</i> as it is used in line 70 of <i>The Circuit</i>?</p> <p>A. with a happy smile
 B. at a loud level
 C. in a caring manner
 D. without speed</p> | <p>8. What is the meaning of the word <i>leafy</i> as it is used in line 73 of <i>Little by Little</i>?</p> <p>A. alling leaves
 B. one that uses leaves
 C. in a bushy manner
 D. full of leaves</p> |

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Writing and Grammar

Directions Read the short story and answer the questions that follow.

(1) P’abo was in a panic. (2) He had searched four trees in the forest, and there was still no sign of the small, chestnut-colored monkey he had found on March 14 2006. (3) The 14th was a week ago P’abo was worried that he would never again see his new friend.

(4) As he started looking at a new tree, Collette, a girl who lived two huts away from P’abo, walked by. (5) P’abo couldn’t stand Collette. (6) She was always acting like she was better than everyone else because she had moved to the village from Paris France. (7) Most other people in the village had never been outside the village and its environs.

(8) “P’abo, what in the world are you doing?” Collette asked.

(9) “I’m looking for a monkey, Collette.”

(10) “Tsk. (11) Tsk. (12) If somebody didn’t lose their monkey in the first place, this wouldn’t be a problem,” she replied. (13) “Perhaps you should keep your monkey on a leash as I do. (14) No one wants them pet to escape into the surrounding trees.”

(15) “Some of us think it’s unkind to keep monkeys on leashes,” P’abo replied without looking away from the tree he was scouring.

(16) Collette huffed as she turned around and left P’abo alone again.

(17) “Kayla! Kayla!” P’abo shouted. (18) It was hard to see through the all of the trees’s leaves from the forest floor. (19) P’abo knew that he was not a good climber, but he needed to be able to look through the tops of the trees. (20) Then an idea hit him—T’kan!

(21) P’abo ran to T’kan’s hut. (22) He thought his legs would not move fast enough. (23) He wondered why he hadn’t thought of T’kan before T’kan was known in the village for her climbing skills.

(24) As he walked up to the doorway of T’kans hut, P’abo heard an unusual sound coming from inside. (25) He knocked on the door. (26) The noise sounded somehow familiar, but he couldn’t quite place it.

(27) T’kan answered the door. (28) “P’abo!” she said excitedly. (29) “I was just coming to find you. (30) Look who I found.”

(31) Kayla was sitting on the top of the couch, eating a banana. (32) P’abo raced over to Kayla and grabbed her in his arms.

(33) “I found her in a tree in the south side of the village,” T’kan explained.

(34) “Thanks, T’kan. (35) I don’t think I can thank you enough,” P’abo said with tears streaming down his flushed cheeks.

1. The central conflict is that P'abo
 - A. dislikes climbing trees
 - B. cannot find his monkey
 - C. misplaced Kayla's leash
 - D. forgets where T'kan lives

2. To correct the punctuation error in sentence 2, add a comma after
 - A. searched
 - B. still
 - C. he
 - D. 14

3. To which sense do the sensory details in sentence 2 appeal?
 - A. touch
 - B. sound
 - C. sight
 - D. taste

4. Choose the best way to correct the run-on sentence in sentence 3.
 - A. The 14th was a week: ago P'abo was worried that he would never again see his new friend.
 - B. The 14th was a week ago, and P'abo was worried that he would never again see his new friend.
 - C. The 14th was a week ago, P'abo was worried that he would never again see his new friend.
 - D. The 14th was a week ago P'abo. Was worried that he would never again see his new friend.

5. To correct the punctuation error in sentence 6, add a comma after
 - A. was
 - B. than
 - C. moved
 - D. Paris

6. To maintain pronoun-antecedent agreement in sentence 12, change "their" to
 - A. his
 - B. them
 - C. hers
 - D. him

7. To maintain pronoun-antecedent agreement in sentence 14, change "them" to
 - A. we
 - B. our
 - C. her
 - D. hey

8. Choose the correct way to punctuate the possessive in sentence 18.
 - A. trees'
 - B. treeses
 - C. treeses's
 - D. tree's

UNIT 1, TEST A CONTINUED

- 9.** Choose the best way to correct the run-on sentence in sentence 23.
- A.** He wondered why he hadn't thought of T'kan before T'kan was known: in the village for her climbing skills.
 - B.** He wondered why he hadn't thought of T'kan before, T'kan was known in the village for her climbing skills.
 - C.** He wondered why he hadn't thought of T'kan. Before T'kan was known in the village for her climbing skills.
 - D.** He wondered why he hadn't thought of T'kan before. T'kan was known in the village for her climbing skills.
- 10.** Choose the correct way to punctuate the possessive in sentence 24.
- A.** T'kansas
 - B.** T'kans's
 - C.** T'kan's
 - D.** T'kans'
- 11.** To which sense do the sensory details in sentence 35 appeal?
- A.** taste
 - B.** smell
 - C.** sound
 - D.** sight
- 12.** The conflict is resolved when P'abo realizes that
- A.** T'kan had found Kayla
 - B.** Collette climbs trees
 - C.** Kayla likes bananas
 - D.** Collette will not help him

Writing

Directions Read the following quotation. Then read the prompt that follows and complete the writing activity.

Imagination is the beginning of creation.

George Bernard Shaw

Prompt: Write a short story that is set in outer space. As Shaw says, all stories begin with your imagination. Try to think of interesting characters and a plot for your story. Make sure your story follows a clear sequence of events.

Now write your story. Use the reminders that follow to help you write.

Reminders

- Be sure your writing does what the prompt asks.
- Create clearly described characters and an interesting plot.
- Have a central conflict and provide an ending for that conflict.
- Use details to help the reader picture the setting, characters, and events.
- Check for correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.