



ROBERT L. MERRITT MIDDLE SCHOOL

7TH Grade Learn-At-Home Packet

Reading

Week 1

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Swimming Against the Current

On September 2, 2013, Diana Nyad realized her goal of becoming the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida without a shark cage. It was Nyad's fifth attempt at the record but her first successful swim. Nyad fought exhaustion, jellyfish, and seasickness—not to mention the threat of sharks—to complete her historic 103-mile swim.

Nyad first got the idea to swim between Cuba and Florida while on a family vacation to Cuba in the 1950s. She looked across the Straits of Florida and wondered to her mother whether anyone had ever tried to swim across it.

Nyad's first attempt at completing the swim occurred in 1978. At the time, she was 29 years old. Raging seas caused Nyad to become exhausted and delirious. She also suffered attacks from jellyfish. A jellyfish sting causes toxins to course through a victim's body, creating a sensation like that of a burn. Nyad experienced partial paralysis from the stings and had problems breathing. In the end, she had to abandon her first attempt less than halfway through the swim.

All four of her remaining attempts occurred after Nyad turned 60 years old. In 2011, during the swimmer's second attempt at the record, she suffered an 11-hour-long asthma attack that forced her to abandon her plan. During her third attempt the very next month, jellyfish repeatedly stung Nyad. She had to put a halt to the swim.

In 2012, Nyad attempted the record for a fourth time. Once again, jellyfish were a problem for the swimmer. Despite wearing a special suit to ward off stings, Nyad was attacked on her lips, a place on her body that remained exposed. She also had sharks circling beneath her and was thrown off course by a storm that passed over while she swam. Though disappointed, Nyad was forced to abandon the swim once again.

After four failed attempts by Nyad, many people were skeptical of her ability to swim across the Straits of Florida. Nonetheless, Nyad never gave up. In 2013, she made her fifth and last attempt. This time she took special precautions to avoid some of the difficulties she'd faced during previous attempts. To prevent jellyfish from stinging her, for example, Nyad wore a special mask and surgical gloves. Her

35-member team, which sailed alongside her in two boats, also helped keep jellyfish—and sharks —away from the swimmer. Team members monitored Nyad’s health and provided her with food during the swim, as they had done during previous attempts.

Despite Nyad’s precautions and the help she received from her team, the swimmer still had plenty of challenges to contend with. Nyad faced strong winds and sunburn during the swim. She also became sick from swallowing salt water. Nonetheless, after 53 long hours of swimming, the 64-year-old Nyad emerged from the water in Florida, successful at last. Though exhausted, Nyad was happy and proud of her achievement.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 1** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which of the following statements is a central idea of the text?

- (A)** Swimming is a dangerous activity.
- (B)** Breaking a record is the only reason to try new things.
- (C)** Some goals require overcoming many challenges.
- (D)** Jellyfish stings are very painful.

Part B: Which sentence from the text **best** supports this central idea?

- (A)** "After four failed attempts by Nyad, many people were skeptical of her ability to swim across the Straits of Florida."
- (B)** "She also had sharks circling beneath her and was thrown off course by a storm that passed over while she swam."
- (C)** "To prevent jellyfish from stinging her, for example, Nyad wore a special mask and surgical gloves."
- (D)** "Nonetheless, after 53 long hours of swimming, the 64-year-old Nyad emerged from the water in Florida, successful at last."

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- 2** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which of the following statements is another central idea of the text?

- ☐ (A) Failure sometimes precedes success.
- ☐ (B) It's best to take time to reach a destination.
- ☐ (C) Seeking help is the best way to reach a goal.
- ☐ (D) It's important to learn first aid in case of emergencies.

Part B: How does the author convey this central idea?

- ☐ (A) by stating the amount of hours it took Nyad to reach Florida
- ☐ (B) by listing Nyad's multiple attempts before finally completing the journey
- ☐ (C) by discussing the various health problems Nyad endured during her swims
- ☐ (D) by mentioning the assistance that team members gave to Nyad

- 3** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Based on the five attempts to swim from Cuba to Florida in the text, which **three** statements **best** describe Nyad?

- ☐ (A) She enjoys ocean travel.
- ☐ (B) She has a determined personality.
- ☐ (C) She thinks this accomplishment was a great achievement.
- ☐ (D) She is interested in studying jellyfish.
- ☐ (E) She thinks swimming long distances is easy.
- ☐ (F) She is intent on conquering this challenge.

Part B: Which of Nyad's actions **best** supports these statements?

- ☐ (A) She wears special gear for her swim.
- ☐ (B) She visits Cuba as a child with her family.
- ☐ (C) She ultimately swims for 53 hours straight.
- ☐ (D) She has 35 team members sail alongside her.

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- 4 Read the following sentence from the text.

A jellyfish sting causes toxins to course through a victim's body, creating a sensation like that of a burn.

What does the author's use of like that of a burn tell about a jellyfish's sting?

- (A) It feels hot and is painful.
- (B) It feels cold and is unpleasant.
- (C) It involves a flame and heat.
- (D) It leaves a large scar.

- 5 Read the following sentence from the text.

This time she took special precautions to avoid some of the difficulties she'd faced during previous attempts.

In this sentence, the word precautions **most likely** refers to _____.

- (A) steps that prevent problems in advance
- (B) equipment designed to enhance a swimmer's abilities
- (C) food with a high nutritional value
- (D) assistants who could provide medical support

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 6** The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: What is the **most likely** reason Nyad waited so long after her first attempt to try to swim to Florida again?

- (A)** She was waiting to become a more experienced swimmer.
- (B)** She wanted to give her jellyfish stings time to heal completely.
- (C)** She wanted to have better equipment for her swim.
- (D)** She was discouraged by her first unsuccessful attempt.

Part B: Which sentence from the text **best** explains why Nyad waited so long after her first attempt to try to swim to Florida again?

- (A)** "During her third attempt the very next month, jellyfish repeatedly stung Nyad."
- (B)** "Team members monitored Nyad's health and provided her with food during the swim, as they had done during previous attempts."
- (C)** "In the end, she had to abandon her first attempt less than halfway through the swim."
- (D)** "All four of her remaining attempts occurred after Nyad turned 60 years old."

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

from *The Errand Boy* by Horatio Alger

In the novel The Errand Boy, a boy named Phil Brent leaves his stepmother's home in 1922 to seek his fortune in New York City. With only a small amount of money to his name, he purchases a railroad ticket and encounters a fellow passenger who talks him into accepting a valuable ring in exchange for five of Phil's precious dollars. Suddenly, in this excerpt, an anxious-looking young lady and an unpleasant railroad conductor are at Phil's side, accusing him of theft.

No matter how honest a boy may be, a sudden charge of theft is likely to make him look confused and guilty.

"I assure you," Phil said earnestly, "that I did not steal this ring."

"Where did you get it, then?" demanded the conductor roughly.

"It was handed me by a young man who just left the car," said Phil.

"That's a likely story," sneered the conductor, "young men are not in the habit of giving valuable rings to strangers."

"He did not give it to me, I advanced him five dollars on it," Phil said politely.

"What was the young man's name?" asked the conductor incredulously.

"There's his name and address," answered Phil, drawing from his pocket the paper handed him by Mr. Lake.

"Lionel Lake, 237 Broadway, New York" repeated the conductor.

"If there is any such person, which I very much doubt, you are probably a confederate of his."

"You have no right to say this to me," returned Phil indignantly.

"Do you know what I am going to do with the likes of you?"

"If you wish me to return the ring to this young lady, I will do so, if she is positive it is hers."

"Yes, you must do that, but it won't get you out of trouble. I shall hand you over to a policeman as soon as we reach New York." Phil was certainly dismayed, for he felt that it might be difficult for him to prove that he came honestly in possession of the ring.

"Conductor," said a new voice, "you are doing the boy an injustice." The speaker was an old man with gray hair, who had been sitting in the seat just behind Phil.

"I understand my business," said the conductor impertinently, "and I don't need any instructions from you."

"Young man," said the old gentleman, in a very dignified tone, "I have usually found officials of your class polite and gentlemanly, but you are an exception to this rule."

"Who are you," asked the conductor rudely, "and what right have you to put in your oar?"

"As to who I am, I will answer you by and by. In reference to the boy, I have to say that his story is correct—I heard the whole conversation between him and the young man from whom he received the ring, and I can testify that he has told the truth."

"At any rate he has received stolen property," the conductor scoffed.

"Not knowing it to be stolen—the young man was an entire stranger to him, and though I suspected that he was an unscrupulous adventurer, the boy has not had experience enough to judge men."

"Very well, if he's innocent he can prove it when he's brought to trial," said the conductor, "and as for you, sir, it's none of your business."

"Young man, you asked me a short time since who I am—do you want to know?"

"Sir, I have to inform you that I am Richard Grant, the president of this railroad."

The conductor's face was a curious and interesting study when he heard this announcement. "I beg your pardon, sir," he said in a composed tone. "If I had known who you were I wouldn't have spoken as I did and if you say the boy's all right, I won't interfere with him."

Upon this Philip drew the ring from his finger and handed it to the young lady, who went back to the car where her friends were sitting, while the conductor humbly took his leave.

"I am very much indebted to you, sir," Phil said to Richard Grant, "but for you I should have found myself in serious trouble."

"I am glad to have prevented an injustice, my lad, but I am sorry I could not save you from loss also. I hope the loss will not be a serious one to you."

"It was more than a third part of my capital, sir," said Phil, rather ruefully.

"And what are your plans, if you are willing to tell me?"

"I am going to New York to try to make a living."

"I cannot commend your plan, my young friend, unless there is a good reason for it. I hope you have not run away from home."

"I left home with my step-mother's knowledge and consent."

"That is well. I don't want wholly to discourage you, and so I will tell you that I, too, came to New York at your age with the same object in view, with less money in my pocket than you possess."

"And now you are the president of a major railroad!" said Phil hopefully.

"Yes, but I had a very hard struggle before I reached that position."

"Sincerely, I am not afraid of hard work, sir," said Phil.

"That is in your favor. Perhaps you may be as lucky as I have been. You may call at my office in the city, if you feel so inclined."

"Thank you, sir," said Phil gratefully. "I shall be glad to call, since I may need advice."

"If you seek advice and follow it you will be an exception to the general rule," said the president, smiling. "One thing more—you have met with a loss which, to you, is a serious one. Allow me to bear it, and accept this bill."

"But, sir, it is not right that you should bear it," commenced Phil.

Then, looking at the bill, he said: "Haven't you made a mistake—this is a TEN-dollar bill?"

"I know—accept the other five as an evidence of my interest in you."

"I am in luck after all," thought Phil cheerfully, "in spite of the mean trick of Mr. Lionel Lake."

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- 7 Read the following sentence from the text.

"Not knowing it to be stolen—the young man was an entire stranger to him, and though I suspected that he was an unscrupulous adventurer, the boy has not had experience enough to judge men."

Which **two** words **best** represent the meaning of the word unscrupulous in the sentence?

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| (A) brave | (D) unfamiliar |
| (B) youthful | (E) risky |
| (C) dishonest | (F) devious |

- 8 The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which of the following **best** explains how the story's setting on a train helps advance its plot?

- (A) It gives readers background information on train travel.
- (B) It allows characters to overhear conversations easily.
- (C) It is a place with a variety of actions happening.
- (D) It is a location where thefts take place.

Part B: Which sentence from the text supports how the setting advances the story?

- (A) "Upon this Philip drew the ring from his finger and handed it to the young lady, who went back to the car where her friends were sitting, while the conductor humbly took his leave."
- (B) "'Sir, I have to inform you that I am Richard Grant, the president of this railroad.'"
- (C) "'In reference to the boy, I have to say that his story is correct—I heard the whole conversation between him and the young man from whom he received the ring, and I can testify that he has told the truth.'"
- (D) "No matter how honest a boy may be, a sudden charge of theft is likely to make him look confused and guilty."

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 9 Read the following sentences from the text.

"Young man," said the old gentleman, in a very dignified tone, "I have usually found officials of your class polite and gentlemanly, but you are an exception to this rule."

"Who are you," asked the conductor rudely, "and what right have you to put in your oar?"

Based on these sentences from the text, in this situation to put in your oar means _____.

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| (A) to row | (C) to lie |
| (B) to deny | (D) to intrude |

- 10 The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: What does Richard Grant's defense of Philip tell readers about him? Choose **two** answers.

- (A) that he sympathizes with Philip
- (B) that he wants to embarrass the conductor
- (C) that he knew that the other boy was a thief
- (D) that he was already friends with Philip
- (E) that he identifies with Phillip

Part B: Which **three** of Grant's actions **best** support this view?

- (A) He informs the conductor that he is the president of the railroad.
- (B) He describes his experience in New York when he was younger.
- (C) He notifies the conductor that the other man on the train seemed unscrupulous.
- (D) He gives Philip ten dollars to make up for the money Philip lost to the thief.
- (E) He tells Philip to come to his office after Phillip gets to New York.

Read the texts. Then answer the questions.

from *Anne of Green Gables*

by Lucy Maud Montgomery

In the novel Anne of Green Gables, a young orphan named Anne Shirley is brought to Prince Edward Island in Canada in 1908 to be adopted by Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert. There is one problem—they asked to adopt a boy to help out on the farm. While Matthew has developed a fondness for Anne’s candor and spirit, Marilla is still set on adopting a boy. In this excerpt, she brings Anne back to Mrs. Spencer to try to resolve the issue.

Marilla knew Mrs. Peter Blewett only by sight as a small, shrewish-faced woman without an ounce of superfluous flesh on her bones. But she had heard of her. “A terrible worker and driver,” Mrs. Peter was said to be; and discharged servant girls told fearsome tales of her temper and stinginess, and her family of pert, quarrelsome children. Marilla felt a qualm of conscience at the thought of handing Anne over to her tender mercies.

“Well, I’ll go in and we’ll talk the matter over,” she said.

“And if there isn’t Mrs. Peter coming up the lane this blessed minute!” exclaimed Mrs. Spencer, bustling her guests through the hall into the parlor, where a deadly chill struck on them as if the air had been strained so long through dark green, closely drawn blinds that it had lost every particle of warmth it had ever possessed. “That is real lucky, for we can settle the matter right away. Take the armchair, Miss Cuthbert and Anne, you sit here on the ottoman and don’t wiggle. Let me take your hats. Flora Jane, go out and put the kettle on. Good afternoon, Mrs. Blewett. We were just saying how fortunate it was you happened along. Let me introduce you two ladies. Mrs. Blewett, Miss Cuthbert. Please excuse me for just a moment as I forgot to tell Flora Jane to take the buns out of the oven.”

Mrs. Spencer whisked away, after pulling up the blinds. Anne sitting mutely on the ottoman, with her hands clasped tightly in her lap, stared at Mrs. Blewett as one fascinated. Was she to be given into the keeping of this sharp-faced, sharp-eyed woman? She felt a lump coming up in her throat and her eyes smarted painfully. She was beginning to be afraid she couldn’t keep the tears back when Mrs. Spencer returned, flushed and beaming, quite capable of taking any and every difficulty, physical, mental or spiritual, into consideration and settling it out of hand.

"It seems there's been a mistake about this little girl, Mrs. Blewett," she said. "I was under the impression that Mr. and Miss Cuthbert wanted a little girl to adopt and I was certainly told so. But it seems it was a boy they wanted. So if you're still of the same mind you were yesterday, I think she'll be just the thing for you."

Mrs. Blewett darted her eyes over Anne from head to foot.

"How old are you and what's your name?" she demanded.

"Anne Shirley," faltered the shrinking child, not daring to make any stipulations regarding the spelling thereof, "and I'm eleven years old."

"Humph! You don't look as if there was much to you. But you're wiry. I don't know but the wiry ones are the best after all. Well, if I take you you'll have to be a good girl, you know—good and smart and respectful. I'll expect you to earn your keep, and no mistake about that. Yes, I suppose I might as well take her off your hands, Miss Cuthbert. The baby's awful fractious, and I'm clean worn out attending to him. If you like I can take her right home now."

Marilla looked at Anne and softened at sight of the child's pale face with its look of mute misery—the misery of a helpless little creature who finds itself once more caught in the trap from which it had escaped. Marilla felt an uncomfortable conviction that, if she denied the appeal of that look, it would haunt her to her dying day and more-over, she did not fancy Mrs. Blewett. To hand a sensitive, "highstrung" child over to such a woman! No, she could not take the responsibility of doing that!

"Well, I don't know," she said slowly. "I didn't say that Matthew and I had absolutely decided that we wouldn't keep her. In fact I may say that Matthew is disposed to keep her and I just came over to find out how the mistake had occurred. I think I'd better take her home again and talk it over with Matthew. I feel that I oughtn't to decide on anything without consulting him. If we make up our mind not to keep her we'll bring or send her over to you tomorrow night and if we don't you may know that she is going to stay with us. Will that suit you, Mrs. Blewett?"

"I suppose it'll have to," said Mrs. Blewett ungraciously.

During Marilla's speech a sunrise had been dawning on Anne's face. First the look of despair faded out; then came a faint flush of hope; her eyes grew deep and bright as morning stars. The child was quite transfigured; and, a moment later, when Mrs. Spencer and Mrs. Blewett went out in quest of a recipe the latter had come to borrow, she sprang up and flew across the room to Marilla.

Orphan Trains

Between the mid-19th and early 20th centuries, at least 120,000 orphans were loaded onto trains and shipped across the country. They were passengers on so-called “orphan trains.” These trains transported parentless children to different parts of the country with the goal of providing them with temporary or permanent homes.

Reasons for Relocation

In the 1850s, about 30,000 children in New York were either homeless or living in orphanages. Many were the children of immigrants who had died in epidemics or were forced to abandon their children for a variety of reasons. Often, the parents were too poor to care for them. Other times, the parents had diseases and were physically unable to provide for the children.

At orphanages, children were typically underfed and undereducated. Once children reached the age of 14, the orphanages would usually release them. The orphans would then have to live on their own, with no means of support. In the mid-1850s, a man named Charles Loring Brace founded an organization called the Children’s Aid Society. Brace believed that children would function better by living with families than they would by living either in orphanages or on their own. In Europe, Brace had first observed the practice of bringing orphans to specific areas for placement with families. He decided to try a similar experiment in the United States.

Train Rides Begin

Brace began transporting children via train from New York City, which had a large number of orphans, to central and western states. He believed those parts of the country—in particular, the Midwest—could offer the children a better environment than the east would. Some of these trains even managed to stop at points as far away as Canada and Mexico. Fliers would announce in advance when the trains were expected to arrive at various destinations. Then, once they arrived at the train station, the orphans would be put on display. This was often a humiliating experience for the children, who were examined and questioned by people they’d never met before.

Families who were interested in children would first have to be approved. Once the children joined them, the families would receive yearly visits from agents. If agents found a household was unsuitable, they would remove the child.

Difficulties for the Children

Not all children were happy in their new homes. Some felt unwelcome at school because their classmates regarded them as “train children.” Others felt like strangers in their new homes. Still others resented having been taken away and moved elsewhere without their consent. In fact, when they boarded the trains, many children never knew where they were headed or even why they were on a train.

Nonetheless, due to the success of the orphan trains, other organizations mimicked the practice. The stream of cross-country trains didn’t end until the early 1900s. At that point, social service agencies began to place greater emphasis on keeping families together. New laws also restricted or prohibited the transport of orphans between states, and immigrants began to receive greater assistance.

The orphan-train experiment was not a practice without controversy. Though the motivation to match children with families was admirable, the actual practice often received mixed results.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer these questions about *Anne of Green Gables*.

- 11 The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Why does Marilla begin to have doubts about allowing Mrs. Peter Blewett to take Anne?

- (A) She is afraid Mrs. Blewett will be unable to take Anne soon enough.
- (B) She thinks Anne is too young to go with Mrs. Blewett.
- (C) She is unsure if Anne will be able to take care of Mrs. Blewett's baby.
- (D) She thinks Anne will be miserable with Mrs. Blewett.

Part B: Which paragraph is the **best** evidence for the reason Marilla begins to doubt allowing Mrs. Peter Blewett to take Anne?

- (A) Paragraph 8
- (B) Paragraph 9
- (C) Paragraph 10
- (D) Paragraph 11

- 12 What is the overall theme of the story? Use details from the text to support your answer.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 13** Read the following sentences from *Anne of Green Gables*.

Mrs. Blewett darted her eyes over Anne from head to foot. "How old are you and what's your name?" she demanded.

"Anne Shirley," faltered the shrinking child, not daring to make any stipulations regarding the spelling thereof, "and I'm eleven years old."

The author's use of shrinking tells the reader that Mrs. Blewett makes Anne feel _____.

- (A)** short
- (B)** remorseful
- (C)** frightened
- (D)** young

Answer these questions about "Orphan Trains."

- 14** Which **two** sentences **best** describe how Charles Loring Brace developed the idea to use trains to transport orphans?
- (A)** Brace saw orphans living in poor conditions, and he wanted to try to help find them homes.
 - (B)** Brace observed orphans in Europe being brought to specific places to be paired with families.
 - (C)** Brace was offered money by a railroad company for using its trains to transport the orphans.
 - (D)** Brace enjoyed riding trains and thought it would be fun for the orphans to do the same.
 - (E)** Brace was going to earn an award for placing orphans in more permanent homes.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 15 Determine which text structure **best** defines the type of organization used in the "Orphan Trains" section "Reasons for Relocation." Then explain how "Reasons for Relocation" contributes to the development of ideas in the article.

- 16 Read the following sentences from the text.

Not all children were happy in their new homes. Some felt unwelcome at school because their classmates regarded them as "train children." Others felt like strangers in their new homes.

What does the author's use of like strangers **most likely** tell the reader about how the orphans felt?

- (A) They felt like the family did not accept them.
- (B) They felt like they were in a large crowd.
- (C) They felt like the family was suspicious of them.
- (D) They felt like they were not allowed to leave.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 17** How is Anne's experience in *Anne of Green Gables* similar to the orphans' experiences discussed in "Orphan Trains"? Use details from **both** texts to support your ideas.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Informational Performance Task

Task

Mount Everest is the highest mountain in the world. Over the years, more and more people have made the attempt to climb it. But the popularity of Mount Everest troubles some people who worry about the mountain's future.

For this task, you will be writing a comparison-contrast essay related to the topic of Mount Everest. Before you write your essay, you will review two sources that provide information about who first climbed Mount Everest and the concern that Mount Everest has become too polluted by climbers.

After you have reviewed these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and the three questions that follow. Then, go back and read the sources carefully to gain the information you will need to answer the questions and write an essay.

In Part 2, you will write a comparison-contrast essay on a topic related to the sources.

Directions for Part 1

You will now read two sources. You can re-examine the sources as often as you like.

Research Questions

After reading the research sources, use the remaining time in Part 1 to answer three questions about them. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Also, your answers will help you think about the research sources you have read, which should help you write your informational article.

You may refer to the sources when you think it would be helpful. You may also refer to your notes. Answer the questions in the space provided.

Source #1: The World's Highest Mountain

On May 29, 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay became the first people known to reach the summit of Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain. In doing so, the men set a precedent that many climbers spend their lives trying to reproduce. Sir Edmund Hillary was not necessarily someone people would have expected to set such a monumental record on Everest. Though Hillary had climbed many mountains before, his main profession, like that of his father, was beekeeping. But Hillary's drive to climb Mount Everest was unstoppable. He first took part in an expedition there in 1951 and then was invited to return for a subsequent expedition in 1953. The goal of that expedition was to reach Everest's summit.

Hillary's climbing partner, Tenzing Norgay, had climbed Mount Everest many times, though never to the summit. Norgay was a Sherpa, one of the mountain people who live near Mount Everest in the country of Nepal. Sherpas are accomplished climbers who often serve as guides for others.

Before Hillary and Norgay's historic accomplishment, many climbers had tried to reach Mount Everest's summit but failed. In some cases, climbers even died trying. In fact, just a couple days before Hillary and Norgay managed to reach the mountain's summit, two other climbers had already given up and descended the mountain, unsuccessful in their quest.

The goal Hillary and Norgay set for themselves wasn't easy. The pair encountered difficult challenges on the way to the summit, such as narrow ridges and 10,000-foot drops off the mountain. Nonetheless, they managed to persevere. Once Hillary and Norgay reached the summit, they remained for about 15 minutes. The pair took photos of the surroundings and celebrated their accomplishment.

Much fanfare followed the duo's success. Shortly after the successful climb, the newly crowned Queen Elizabeth II knighted Hillary. As a result the beekeeper from New Zealand became Sir Edmund Hillary. In Nepal Norgay was a true national hero who was awarded the Star of Nepal by that country's king.

Despite all the praise he received as a result of reaching Everest's summit, Sir Edmund Hillary never considered the feat his most important achievement. For many years after the historic climb, Hillary raised money to help support the Sherpas of Nepal. The money he raised helped build schools and hospitals and provide educational funding for the Sherpas.

Hillary was also deeply concerned about the environment. He helped establish reforestation programs in Nepal. He also demanded that mountain climbers clean up the garbage that often got left behind on Mount Everest—materials like used oxygen bottles, which climbers would discard because of their weight.

In spite of Hillary's many achievements, he remained a humble man. It wasn't until many years after Tenzing Norgay's death that Hillary even admitted to being the first of the pair to reach Everest's summit. He also refused to describe himself as anything more than just an ordinary person, attributing his achievements to his imagination, enthusiasm, and energy rather than any particular genius. In both his climbing accomplishments and his work as a humanitarian, Hillary was indeed a tough act to follow.

Source #2: A Mountain of Garbage

It's been over 60 years since Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay became the first climbers to reach the summit of Mount Everest. Since that time, many other climbers have set the same goal for themselves. In doing so they've carried needed supplies up the mountain with them. Unfortunately, many of these materials haven't made their way back down again. As a result Everest has been turning more and more into a mountain of garbage.

By mid-2013, a total of nearly 4,000 people had reached the mountain's summit. With that number of people comes an even greater amount of food containers, tents, empty oxygen canisters, and even human waste. Most of these materials get left behind on the mountain. Climbers don't want to carry the extra weight down, especially when they're already tired. Due to the extreme weather conditions on Everest, the debris stays frozen in place. Some food cans found on Everest even date from as far back as the early 1960s. Several organizations are now trying to clean up Mount Everest for good. Launched in 2008, Eco Everest Expedition annually collects piles of debris covering the mountain. Since the expedition's start, climbers have removed more than 13 tons of garbage from Everest. In 2013, a joint effort by Indian and Nepalese military personnel resulted in the additional removal of two tons of waste from the mountain.

Some mountain-guiding operations on Mount Everest also go the extra mile to ensure the mountain is kept clean. Himalayan Experience, for example, requires all climbers to remove their own human waste and other debris from Everest.

Keeping the mountain clean isn't always a riskfree pursuit, though. Climbers face strong winds, bitter cold, steep drops, and altitude sickness on Everest. As a result, eco-mountaineers are at constant risk of injury or even death. In 2012, several climbers participating in an Eco Everest Expedition perished on the mountain during an especially deadly season.

Removing greater amounts of waste isn't the only solution to the problem, though. Climbers and environmentalists have recommended additional methods to combat Everest's pollution. Some promote issuing fines to people who don't remove their debris from the mountain. Others suggest placing greater restrictions on the total number of climbers allowed onto Everest.

One way to do this is by limiting the size of teams that guiding organizations can bring up the mountain. The hope is that allowing fewer people up the mountain will mean less garbage getting left behind. Many people, however, think it's unlikely that a poor country like Nepal will ever turn away the massive sums of money it makes from Everest mountaineers. Greater numbers of climbers mean bigger financial rewards for Nepal.

Though the solutions to the mountain's pollution aren't easy, some combination of these approaches just might return Everest to its naturally unspoiled state.

Name: _____ Date: _____

18 How did Sir Edmund Hillary's relationship with Sherpa Tenzing Norgay influence Hillary?

- (A)** He asked that Tenzing Norgay be knighted as well.
- (B)** He started a guiding organization with Tenzing Norgay.
- (C)** He raised money to help Sherpas in many ways.
- (D)** He decided to become a Sherpa himself.

19 How did both Sir Edmund Hillary and organizations like Eco Everest Expedition share similar concerns about Mount Everest? Use details from **both** sources to support your ideas. Be sure to identify the source of each piece of information by title or number.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 20** Which source would be more useful for writing a research report about the reasons why Mount Everest is polluted? Explain why, and provide at least **two** pieces of evidence from that source to support your ideas.

Directions for Part 2

You will now look at your sources; take notes; and plan, draft, revise, and edit your essay. You may use your notes and refer to the sources. Now read your assignment and the information about how your comparison-contrast essay will be scored; then begin your work.

Your Assignment

Your teacher would like you to write a comparison-contrast essay about the benefits and drawbacks of completing certain activities. You have decided to write about climbing Mount Everest. Write a multi-paragraph essay that gives the pros and cons of climbing the mountain. Your essay will be read by the teacher and students in your class. In your essay, clearly state the main idea and support your main idea with reasons that are thoroughly developed using information from what you have read.

Comparison-Contrast Essay Scoring

Your article will be scored using the following:

- 1. Statement of Purpose/Focus:** How well did you clearly state your main idea on the topic? How well did you maintain your focus?
- 2. Organization:** How well did your ideas logically flow from the introduction to the conclusion? How often did you use effective transitions? How well did you stay on topic throughout the essay?
- 3. Elaboration of Evidence:** How well did you provide evidence from sources about your main idea? How well did you elaborate with specific information?
- 4. Language and Vocabulary:** How well did you effectively express your ideas? How often did you use precise language appropriate for your audience and purpose?
- 5. Conventions:** How well did you follow the rules of grammar usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

Now begin work on your informational article. Manage your time carefully so that you can plan, write, revise, and edit the final draft of your article. Write your response on a separate piece of paper.

