



ROBERT L. MERRITT MIDDLE SCHOOL

9TH Grade Learn-At-Home Packet

Reading

Week 4

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

from “The Uninhibited Flapper” by Helen Bullitt Lowry

In the following excerpt, Helen Bullitt Lowry writes about “flappers,” women in the 1920s who broke convention by wearing short skirts, short hair, and listening to jazz music.

Human nature can be pushed just so far. Instead of reforming, the young things apparently decided one might as well lose a reputation for stealing a husband as for smoking a cigarette. The whole arsenal for combating poachers blew up.

To make matters worse, in the excitement of the virtue wave our Wild Young People had been attacked as a group instead of as individuals. That was the second mistake. The whole strength of gossip consists in selecting one member of the clan for calumny, to stand out disgraced and alone among her exemplary sisters. Because the flappers had been gossiped about *en masse*, the whole reason for not being gossiped about had ceased. The poacher of that half generation ago had been the kind of a girl who stalked her game alone.

But, when all the girls in town are seeking to steal your husband, what are you going to do about it, if you are a woman of forty-five with a heaviness around the hips and a disinclination to learn the camel walk? Nor can you get the poachers off the scent by crossing the trail with an eligible bachelor. Logically, the young things should have enough sense to ignore a preempted husband and attend to the serious business of getting themselves husbands. But they haven’t. They seem to prefer the husbands of the other women. And curiously, the more they engage in this exotic sport of poaching, the less keen they become about owning a property for somebody else to poach on.

The real interstate joke on Puritanism is that the flapper, who flaps because Puritanism has driven her to it, will automatically bring about its cure. The whole vitality of Puritanism rests on the unswerving principle of letting not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth, if thy left hand is doing something it shouldn’t. Puritanism could not last out a week-end without the able assistance of the standardized double life.

And that is just what the flappers refuse to respect. They are even insisting on being taken along on the parties, which, by all the rules of Rolf and Comstock should be confined to man's double life. Where the chorus lady was once the only brand that had the proper and improper equipment to jazz up an evening, now mankind has come to prefer the flapper, who drinks as much as the Broadwayite, is just as peppy and not quite so gold-diggish.

"It is so simple," smiles Barbara nonchalantly blowing her smoke rings. "You old dears set man an impossible standard. As he had always to be pretending holy emotions whenever he was around you he just naturally had to get away half the time, to rest the muscles of his inhibitions. Why, you funny old things actually drove man into his double life, just as you made all of his best stories have two editions, one for a nice girl and one for—well say one not so nice. Our crowd has done more than all of your silly old social hygiene commissions to bring nearer the single standard—by going part way to meet him."

The preachers are wasting their time when they rail that the flappers are painting their faces like "fallen women." Of course they are painting them that way—for the very good reason that mankind has demonstrated too unmistakably that that kind of woman has "a way with her."

Not so long ago cosmetics became a moral issue. The curl rag was the only beautifier that somehow never lost its odor of sanctity—and that was doubtless because curl rags were a perfectly logical part of the long-sleeved Canton flannel nightgown civilization. Curls couldn't be so very wrong when they were so frightfully unbecoming in the making. And so the "good woman" handed over intact to her weaker sister every beautifier that the world had been eight thousand years accumulating.

Slowly, timidly the allurements returned. The talcum powder bought for baby surreptitiously reached the nose. When the half generation ago was young, we had adopted a certain lip salve, just one shade darker than the way lips come, explaining, to save our reputations, that we were keeping our lips from chapping. Rouge too had come coyly, back—but—and here's the gist of the whole matter—in polite society paint was put on to imitate nature.

We were still doing our make-up as man conducted his double life—with intent to deceive the general public. We still belonged at heart to the Puritan era, in spite of our wicked fox-trot. All may have been artificial below the neck, from our Gossard corsets with their phalanx of garters on to our hobble skirts. But above the neck, we pretended it was natural.

The flapper has changed all that. She has turned the lady up side down, as well as the world. For the flapper is *au naturale* below the neck. Above the neck she is the most artificially and entertainingly painted creature that has graced society since Queen Elizabeth. With one bold stroke of a passionately red lip stick, she has painted out Elaine the Fair and the later-day noble Christie Girl and painted in an exotic young person, meet to compete alike with a Ziegfield show girl, with a heaven-born Egyptian princess or even a good Queen Bess, who could not move her face after it was dressed up for the morning. And Bess was the Virgin Queen. The American-Victorian is indeed the only era in history when cosmetics became a moral issue. Even in dour Cromwellian England, rouge registered the wrong politics but not immorality. We are merely getting back to normalcy in cosmetics—back behind the dun wall of the Victorian era.

And it is the flapper who has done it for us. What's more, she has done it frankly and purposefully—because the reformer, in his naive innocence, has explained to her that what she is doing is wicked and will get that kind of "results." Similarly those of 'em who had not yet taken off their corsets at dances, promptly did so when shocked elders began repeating the corset checking story. Dear heart, the only reason that they had not done so before was because the little dears hadn't heard that the worst people were using ribs instead of whalebone that season. Vice would die out from disuse, if the reformers did not advertise.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 1 Read this claim and the directions that follow.

When people tell flappers they are doing something wrong, they are only encouraging their bad behavior.

Select the sentence from the text that **best** supports this claim.

- (A) "Curls couldn't be so very wrong when they were so frightfully unbecoming in the making."
- (B) "We still belonged at heart to the Puritan era, in spite of our wicked fox-trot."
- (C) "Above the neck she is the most artificially and entertainingly painted creature that has graced society since Queen Elizabeth."
- (D) "Vice would die out from disuse, if the reformers did not advertise."

- 2 Which sentences from the text are relevant to Lowry's main claim that flappers are bad for society? Select **two** options.

- (A) "And curiously, the more they engage in this exotic sport of poaching, the less keen they become about owning a property for somebody else to poach on."
- (B) "They are even insisting on being taken along on the parties, which, by all the rules of Rolf and Comstock should be confined to man's double life."
- (C) "And so the 'good woman' handed over intact to her weaker sister every beautifier that the world had been eight thousand years accumulating."
- (D) "All may have been artificial below the neck, from our Gossard corsets with their phalanx of garters on to our hobble skirts."
- (E) "Even in dour Cromwellian England, rouge registered the wrong politics but not immorality."

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- 3 Read the paragraph from the text and the directions that follow.

But, when all the girls in town are seeking to steal your husband, what are you going to do about it, if you are a woman of forty-five with a heaviness around the hips and a disinclination to learn the camel walk? Nor can you get the poachers off the scent by crossing the trail with an eligible bachelor. Logically, the young things should have enough sense to ignore a preempted husband and attend to the serious business of getting themselves husbands. But they haven't. They seem to prefer the husbands of the other women. And curiously, the more they engage in this exotic sport of poaching, the less keen they become about owning a property for somebody else to poach on.

According to the author, what is one reason that flappers steal older women's husbands?

- (A) All flappers prefer men who are married.
- (B) There are not enough single men available.
- (C) All flappers want to be married themselves.
- (D) There are no eligible bachelors who prefer flappers.

- 4 Which reasoning **best** supports the author's claim that attacking "Wild Young People" as a group instead of as individuals is a mistake?

- (A) Gossiping about whole groups is considered old fashioned.
- (B) Gossip only makes a young person feel ashamed and singled out.
- (C) Gossiping about a young person is not considered a virtuous activity.
- (D) Gossip makes a group of people behave differently if they feel ashamed.

- 5 Underline **three** sentences that show comparisons between flappers and other women.

The flapper has changed all that. She has turned the lady up side down, as well as the world. For the flapper is *au naturelle* below the neck. Above the neck she is the most artificially and entertainingly painted creature that has graced society since Queen Elizabeth. With one bold stroke of a passionately red lip stick, she has painted out Elaine the Fair and the later-day noble Christie Girl and painted in an exotic young person, meet to compete alike with a Ziegfield show girl, with a heaven-born Egyptian princess or even a good Queen Bess, who could not move her face after it was dressed up for the morning. And Bess was the Virgin Queen. The American-Victorian is indeed the only era in history when cosmetics became a moral issue. Even in dour Cromwellian England, rouge registered the wrong politics but not immorality. We are merely getting back to normalcy in cosmetics—back behind the dun wall of the Victorian era.

- 6 This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A Which detail **best** describes how flappers are changing the structure of society?

- (A) Flappers do engage in drinking alcohol.
- (B) Flappers do engage in smoking cigarettes.
- (C) Flappers do not require men to live a double life.
- (D) Flappers do not mind if people gossip about them.

Part B Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A) "Because the flappers had been gossiped about en masse, the whole reason for not being gossiped about had ceased."
- (B) "The whole vitality of Puritanism rests on the unswerving principle of letting not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth, if thy left hand is doing something it shouldn't."
- (C) "'As he had always to be pretending holy emotions whenever he was around you he just naturally had to get away half the time, to rest the muscles of his inhibitions.'"
- (D) "The preachers are wasting their time when they rail that the flappers are painting their faces like 'fallen women.'"

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- 7 Select the statement from the text that **best** explains why more traditional women are threatened by flappers.

- (A) "The whole strength of gossip consists in selecting one member of the clan for calumny, to stand out disgraced and alone among her exemplary sisters."
- (B) "But, when all the girls in town are seeking to steal your husband, what are you going to do about it, if you are a woman of forty-five with a heaviness around the hips and a disinclination to learn the camel walk?"
- (C) "The curl rag was the only beautifier that somehow never lost its odor of sanctity—and that was doubtless because curl rags were a perfectly logical part of the long-sleeved Canton flannel nightgown civilization."
- (D) "When the half generation ago was young, we had adopted a certain lip salve, just one shade darker than the way lips come, explaining, to save our reputations, that we were keeping our lips from chapping."

- 8 Read the paragraph from the text.

To make matters worse, in the excitement of the virtue wave our Wild Young People had been attacked as a group instead of as individuals. That was the second mistake. The whole strength of gossip consists in selecting one member of the clan for calumny, to stand out disgraced and alone among her exemplary sisters. Because the flappers had been gossiped about en masse, the whole reason for not being gossiped about had ceased. The poacher of that half generation ago had been the kind of a girl who stalked her game alone.

Which is the best synonym for the underlined phrase en masse?

- (A) altogether
- (B) daringly
- (C) perfectly
- (D) speedier

9

Read the paragraph from the text.

The flapper has changed all that. She has turned the lady up side down, as well as the world. For the flapper is *au naturale* below the neck. Above the neck she is the most artificially and entertainingly painted creature that has graced society since Queen Elizabeth. With one bold stroke of a passionately red lip stick, she has painted out Elaine the Fair and the later-day noble Christie Girl and painted in an exotic young person, meet to compete alike with a Ziegfield show girl, with a heaven-born Egyptian princess or even a good Queen Bess, who could not move her face after it was dressed up for the morning. And Bess was the Virgin Queen. The American-Victorian is indeed the only era in history when cosmetics became a moral issue. Even in dour Cromwellian England, rouge registered the wrong politics but not immorality. We are merely getting back to normalcy in cosmetics—back behind the dun wall of the Victorian era.

Which phrases from the paragraph help the reader understand the meaning of exotic? Select **two** options.

- (A) "... Queen Elizabeth."
- (B) "... Elaine the Fair ..."
- (C) "... Ziegfield show girl ..."
- (D) "... Egyptian princess ..."
- (E) "... Virgin Queen."

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- 10 Read the paragraph from the text.

"It is so simple," smiles Barbara nonchalantly blowing her smoke rings. "You old dears set man an impossible standard. As he had always to be pretending holy emotions whenever he was around you he just naturally had to get away half the time, to rest the muscles of his inhibitions. Why, you funny old things actually drove man into his double life, just as you made all of his best stories have two editions, one for a nice girl and one for—well say one not so nice. Our crowd has done more than all of your silly old social hygiene commissions to bring nearer the single standard—by going part way to meet him."

What is the connotation of the underlined phrase social hygiene commissions?

- (A) acting a certain way because it is accepted by society
- (B) forming a group to determine how people should behave
- (C) going against what previous generations did in social situations
- (D) demonstrating to younger people how to behave in social situations

- 11 Which **three** phrases **best** demonstrate the author's condescending tone?

- (A) frankly and purposefully
- (B) naive innocence
- (C) shocked elders
- (D) corset checking story
- (E) Dear heart
- (F) little dears

Read the texts. Then answer the questions.

from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is a book about a girl that falls through a rabbit hole into a fantasy world.

from Chapter I. Down the Rabbit-Hole

Down, down, down. Would the fall never come to an end! 'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. 'I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think—'

...

Down, down, down. There was nothing else to do, so Alice soon began talking again. 'Dinah'll miss me very much tonight, I should think!' (Dinah was the cat.) 'I hope they'll remember her saucer of milk at tea-time. Dinah my dear! I wish you were down here with me! There are no mice in the air, I'm afraid, but you might catch a bat, and that's very like a mouse, you know. But do cats eat bats, I wonder?' And here Alice began to get rather sleepy, and went on saying to herself, in a dreamy sort of way, 'Do cats eat bats? Do cats eat bats?' and sometimes, 'Do bats eat cats?' for, you see, as she couldn't answer either question, it didn't much matter which way she put it. She felt that she was dozing off, and had just begun to dream that she was walking hand in hand with Dinah, and saying to her very earnestly, 'Now, Dinah, tell me the truth: did you ever eat a bat?' when suddenly, thump! thump! down she came upon a heap of sticks and dry leaves, and the fall was over.

...

Alice opened the door and found that it led into a small passage, not much larger than a rat-hole: she knelt down and looked along the passage into the loveliest garden you ever saw. How she longed to get out of that dark hall, and wander about among those beds of bright flowers and those cool fountains, but she could not even get her head through the doorway; 'and even if my head would go through,' thought poor Alice, 'it would be of very little use without my shoulders. Oh, how I wish I could shut up like a telescope! I think I could, if I only knew how to begin.' For, you see, so many out-of-the-way things had happened lately, that Alice had begun to think that very few things indeed were really impossible.

There seemed to be no use in waiting by the little door, so she went back to the table, half hoping she might find another key on it, or at any rate a book of rules for

shutting people up like telescopes: this time she found a little bottle on it, ('which certainly was not here before,' said Alice,) and round the neck of the bottle was a paper label, with the words 'DRINK ME' beautifully printed on it in large letters.

It was all very well to say 'Drink me,' but the wise little Alice was not going to do *that* in a hurry. 'No, I'll look first,' she said, 'and see whether it's marked "*poison*" or not'; for she had read several nice little histories about children who had got burnt, and eaten up by wild beasts and other unpleasant things, all because they would not remember the simple rules their friends had taught them: such as, that a red-hot poker will burn you if you hold it too long; and that if you cut your finger very deeply with a knife, it usually bleeds; and she had never forgotten that, if you drink much from a bottle marked 'poison,' it is almost certain to disagree with you, sooner or later.

However, this bottle was *not* marked 'poison,' so Alice ventured to taste it, and finding it very nice, (it had, in fact, a sort of mixed flavour of cherry-tart, custard, pine-apple, roast turkey, toffee, and hot buttered toast,) she very soon finished it off.

'What a curious feeling!' said Alice; 'I must be shutting up like a telescope.'

And so it was indeed: she was now only ten inches high, and her face brightened up at the thought that she was now the right size for going through the little door into that lovely garden. First, however, she waited for a few minutes to see if she was going to shrink any further: she felt a little nervous about this; 'for it might end, you know,' said Alice to herself, 'in my going out altogether, like a candle. I wonder what I should be like then?' And she tried to fancy what the flame of a candle is like after the candle is blown out, for she could not remember ever having seen such a thing.

After a while, finding that nothing more happened, she decided on going into the garden at once; but, alas for poor Alice! when she got to the door, she found she had forgotten the little golden key, and when she went back to the table for it, she found she could not possibly reach it: she could see it quite plainly through the glass, and she tried her best to climb up one of the legs of the table, but it was too slippery; and when she had tired herself out with trying, the poor little thing sat down and cried.

...

Soon her eye fell on a little glass box that was lying under the table: she opened it, and found in it a very small cake, on which the words 'EAT ME' were beautifully marked in currants. 'Well, I'll eat it,' said Alice, 'and if it makes me grow larger, I can reach the key; and if it makes me grow smaller, I can creep under the door; so either way I'll get into the garden, and I don't care which happens!'

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- 12** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A Which statement **best** summarizes a theme of the text?

- (A)** Impossible things are possible.
- (B)** Small things can be very dangerous.
- (C)** A child's pet is his or her best friend.
- (D)** Be careful drinking from unmarked bottles.

Part B Which excerpt from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "'Dinah'll miss me very much tonight, I should think!' (Dinah was the cat.) 'I hope they'll remember her saucer of milk at tea-time. Dinah my dear! I wish you were down here with me!'"
- (B)** "She felt that she was dozing off, and had just begun to dream that she was walking hand in hand with Dinah, and saying to her very earnestly, 'Now, Dinah, tell me the truth: did you ever eat a bat?' . . ."
- (C)** "It was all very well to say 'Drink me,' but the wise little Alice was not going to do that in a hurry. 'No, I'll look first,' she said, 'and see whether it's marked "*poison*" or not' . . ."
- (D)** "And so it was indeed: she was now only ten inches high, and her face brightened up at the thought that she was now the right size for going through the little door into that lovely garden."

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- 13** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A Select the detail that **best** contributes to the development of the story's theme.

- (A)** Alice feels sleepy while she falls down the long hole.
- (B)** Alice cries when she cannot reach the key to the garden.
- (C)** Alice is worried about whether someone will feed her cat.
- (D)** Alice finds a glass box with a piece of cake that says 'EAT ME'.

Part B Which detail from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A)** "... 'Do cats eat bats? Do cats eat bats?' and sometimes, 'Do bats eat cats?' ..."
- (B)** "'Oh, how I wish I could shut up like a telescope! I think I could, if I only knew how to begin.'"
- (C)** "'No, I'll look first,' she said, 'and see whether it's marked "*poison*" or not' ..."
- (D)** "... she was now only ten inches high, and her face brightened up at the thought that she was now the right size for going through the little door ..."

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- 14** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A Read the paragraph from the text.

Down, down, down. Would the fall never come to an end! 'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. 'I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think—'

What tone does the author establish in this paragraph?

- ☐ (A) fantastical
- ☐ (B) friendly
- ☐ (C) hopeful
- ☐ (D) irritated

Part B Which phrases from the paragraph support your answer in part A? Select **two** choices.

- ☐ (A) "Down, down, . . ."
- ☐ (B) "Would the fall . . ."
- ☐ (C) "'I wonder how many miles I've fallen . . .'"
- ☐ (D) "' . . . by this time?' . . ."
- ☐ (E) "' . . . the centre of the earth.'"

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- 15** Read the excerpt from the text.

Alice opened the door and found that it led into a small passage, not much larger than a rat-hole: she knelt down and looked along the passage into the loveliest garden you ever saw. How she longed to get out of that dark hall, and wander about among those beds of bright flowers and those cool fountains, but she could not even get her head through the doorway; ‘and even if my head would go through,’ thought poor Alice, ‘it would be of very little use without my shoulders. . . .’

Which statement **best** describes the meaning of the word passage in the excerpt?

- (A)** a space of eerie silence
- (B)** a law that was accepted
- (C)** a page of a book to read
- (D)** an area to travel through

- 16** Read the paragraph from the text.

Down, down, down. There was nothing else to do, so Alice soon began talking again. ‘Dinah’ll miss me very much tonight, I should think!’ (Dinah was the cat.) ‘I hope they’ll remember her saucer of milk at tea-time. Dinah my dear! I wish you were down here with me! There are no mice in the air, I’m afraid, but you might catch a bat, and that’s very like a mouse, you know. But do cats eat bats, I wonder?’ And here Alice began to get rather sleepy, and went on saying to herself, in a dreamy sort of way, ‘Do cats eat bats? Do cats eat bats?’ and sometimes, ‘Do bats eat cats?’ for, you see, as she couldn’t answer either question, it didn’t much matter which way she put it. She felt that she was dozing off, and had just begun to dream that she was walking hand in hand with Dinah, and saying to her very earnestly, ‘Now, Dinah, tell me the truth: did you ever eat a bat?’ when suddenly, thump! thump! down she came upon a heap of sticks and dry leaves, and the fall was over.

Which word from the paragraph **best** suggests the meaning of the word saucer?

- (A)** milk
- (B)** dear
- (C)** mice
- (D)** hand

Read the texts. Then answer the questions.

A Tough Decision

In this short fictional story, a student sacrifices an opportunity by staying with the person she loves.

When Min walked in the front door after school on Friday, a letter was waiting for her on the kitchen table. The envelope was addressed to her with the emblem for Oakmont University on the front. After laying down the bouquet of roses her boyfriend, Jordan, had given her at school that day, she hesitated for a moment before opening the letter. Though part of her was counting on staying in state to be near Jordan, Oakmont was the school she had been dreaming of for years, and the only out-of-state school she had applied to. When she opened the letter, she scrolled through the first paragraph, which read, "Ms. Min Lee, we are pleased to accept you into the freshman class of 2016 at Oakmont University." Thrilled, she ran upstairs to tell her mother the good news.

Throughout high school, Min had dedicated her evenings to studying hard and writing articles for the school newspaper, *The Roar*, where she had been named senior editor. Her academic excellence earned her the title of Salutatorian of her graduating class. She had it all planned out: she would move to New York, attend classes with some of the brightest students in the country, graduate with a journalism degree, and travel the world. At first she thought about calling Jordan to tell him but decided it would be better to tell him in person. Since Valentine's Day was that weekend, he had a date planned for Saturday night.

Jordan came to pick her up Saturday evening, and they walked downtown to Maurice's, one of the nicest restaurants in town. Once they were seated at a small, candlelit table in the back corner, she excitedly told Jordan the good news.

"Congratulations," he said in a flat tone, avoiding her eyes.

Her smile faded instantly. "What's wrong?" she asked. "Aren't you happy for me? You know how hard I've worked to get into Oakmont."

"You're right," he said, finally smiling. "I am happy for you. Congratulations. But what about us? You'll be nine hours away while I'm here going to community college."

She felt deflated, as if the wind had just been knocked out of her. "I know, but we can see each other on the weekends and during breaks. It's not like Oakmont is in another country."

"You're right," he said, and the conversation drifted to other topics. While they split a brownie sundae, they planned out their beach trip with Min's family over spring break.

Because the weather was unseasonably warm for February, they decided to go for a walk around town. The air had the pleasant chill of early spring, and as they passed by a fountain in the town square, the lights glistened against the water. Pausing by the fountain bench, Min began to sit down, and before she knew it, Jordan was lowering himself to the stone floor, removing a ring from his jeans pocket and proposing to her.

"Of course I'll marry you!" she beamed.

He slipped the ring around her finger, and she was pleased at how perfectly it fit.

Over the years, she and Jordan had spent every weekend together, attended the same school, and gone on vacation with each other's families during the summer. They were perfect together, she thought. Ever since the first time they said "I love you," she had dreamed of marrying him one day.

That night, she sat on her bed, thinking how lucky she was to have Jordan, because she loved him, and he loved her. Then, her eye caught the acceptance letter on her bedside table. She had worked so hard to get into Oakmont, but she couldn't imagine being married and living nine hours away from the one she loved. She thought it over for a while and decided that college could wait. She would marry Jordan, take some classes at the Community College with him, and then maybe she could attend Oakmont in a few years. Looking down at the ring around her finger, she turned out the lamp and fell asleep, thinking about what it would be like to be married to Jordan.

Is It a Mistake to Marry Young?

In this article, the author presents information on the debate of whether it's best to marry young or wait until later in life.

When you think about marriage, what comes to mind? It may be a white dress, flowers, a honeymoon, and living happily ever after. When it comes to the topic of marriage, many people tend to romanticize the idea and forget the daily realities of the commitment they are about to make. Marriage can be a wonderful and satisfying part of life, but, as with any commitment, it also requires hard work. When entering into such a commitment for the first time, it is important for both parties to consider the financial, emotional, and social aspects involved.

Sixty percent of marriages for couples between the ages of 20 and 25 end in divorce. This is not to say that every young marriage is doomed, but statistics show that marrying later in life has a higher success rate. The average marriage age in the United States has steadily increased over the last few years. Though there are several contributing factors to this pattern, one is that young people are taking time for higher education and career development in order to become more personally and financially stable before entering a marriage.

The amount of people with college degrees has also increased throughout the past few decades, and the job market has become increasingly competitive.

Accordingly, many young people have taken extra steps to prepare themselves for a competitive job market by seeking higher education, learning a trade or skill, or working hard to move up in a company. Gaining financial independence is an important step to consider before entering a marriage and starting a family.

Finances are not the only important factor when considering marriage. From teen years through early twenties is an important time for personal exploration and emotional development. Teenagers are still evolving emotionally—more than they will at any other point in their adult lives—and still exploring who they are and hope to be. This stage of life is an important time to discover one's own personal values and identity.

Having a strong and supportive social network is important. Couples who marry young might miss out on some social aspects of life that their single counterparts take for granted, such as going out with friends and opportunities to meet new people. Many young people have aspirations of travel, and during this time in their lives, travel opportunities often present themselves in the form of studying abroad during college or traveling for a job. Travel becomes increasingly difficult once a family and children are involved.

Evidence suggests that couples may have a better success rate for a lasting marriage when they are older because they have become more stable in their identities, finances, and careers. In a person's early twenties, circumstances are more likely to change frequently, as is a person's personality and interests. Many young couples may get caught up in romanticizing marriage and make a decision based on emotion before considering all the implications of marriage. Older individuals who have more relationship experience have a better understanding of what they want from a partner and from life.

Prioritizing career goals, academic goals, and personal development before marriage will set you up for a more successful relationship. While marrying young works well for some people and their lifestyles, considering all aspects of marriage is an important step. Consider what you want from life and what your priorities are before making such an important commitment.

Answer these questions about "A Tough Decision."

- 17 What is the theme of the story? Support your answer using details from the text.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- 18** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A How does Min's character develop over the course of the text?

- (A)** Min learns about different ways of making sacrifices.
- (B)** Min learns about becoming stronger after heartbreak.
- (C)** Min learns about the importance of loyalty and friendship.
- (D)** Min learns about the dilemma of choosing between colleges.

Part B Which quotations from the text show how your answer in part A supports the story's theme? Select **two** options.

- (A)** "Though part of her was counting on staying in state to be near Jordan, Oakmont was the school she had been dreaming of for years . . ."
- (B)** "Throughout high school, Min had dedicated her evenings to studying hard and writing articles for the school newspaper . . ."
- (C)** "He slipped the ring around her finger, and she was pleased at how perfectly it fit."
- (D)** "Over the years, she and Jordan had spent every weekend together, attended the same school, and gone on vacation with each other's families during the summer."
- (E)** "She thought it over for a while and decided that college could wait."

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- 19** Read the sentence. Then, answer the question.

"Of course I'll marry you!" she beamed.

How does the word beamed impact the meaning of the text? Select **two** options.

- ☐ **A** The word implies that Min feels excited about her new jewelry.
- ☐ **B** The word implies that Min is very happy about the engagement.
- ☐ **C** The word implies that Min feels conflicted about going to college.
- ☐ **D** The word implies that Min is not sure how she feels about Jordan.
- ☐ **E** The word implies that Min feels positive about her future with Jordan.

Answer these questions about "Is It a Mistake to Marry Young?"

- 20** What is the overall argument of the text? What evidence does the author offer to support the argument? Support your answer using evidence from the text.

- 21** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A Which statement **best** summarizes the central idea of the text?

- (A) Most marriages will fail based on current statistics.
- (B) It is difficult to know what elements make a marriage successful.
- (C) People often feel unnecessarily pressured to get married at an early age.
- (D) A marriage is more likely to last if a variety of variables are considered beforehand.

Part B Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A) "Sixty percent of marriages for couples between the ages of 20 and 25 end in divorce."
- (B) "The amount of people with college degrees has also increased throughout the past few decades, and the job market has become increasingly competitive."
- (C) "Finances are not the only important factor when considering marriage."
- (D) "Prioritizing career goals, academic goals, and personal development before marriage will set you up for a more successful relationship."

- 22** Read the excerpt from the text.

When it comes to the topic of marriage, many people tend to romanticize the idea and forget the daily realities of the commitment they are about to make. Marriage can be a wonderful and satisfying part of life, but, as with any commitment, it also requires hard work. When entering into such a commitment for the first time, it is important for both parties to consider the financial, emotional, and social aspects involved.

What does the word commitment mean?

- (A) a command
- (B) a judgment
- (C) an obligation
- (D) a compromise

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23 Read the paragraph.

The amount of people with college degrees has also increased throughout the past few decades, and the job market has become increasingly competitive. Accordingly, many young people have taken extra steps to prepare themselves for a competitive job market by seeking higher education, learning a trade or skill, or working hard to move up in a company. Gaining financial independence is an important step to consider before entering a marriage and starting a family.

Which **three** words or phrases help the reader understand the meaning of the word degrees?

- ☐ (A) college
- ☐ (B) competitive
- ☐ (C) higher education
- ☐ (D) trade or skill
- ☐ (E) working hard
- ☐ (B) financial independence

Narrative Performance Task

Task

You have been learning about narrative writing in class. Narrative writing tells a story about characters and how they react in certain situations. You will write a narrative story that includes theme, character, and story structure.

Before you begin, briefly scan the stories and the three questions that follow in Part 1. Then, go back and read the stories carefully to gain the facts you will need to answer the questions. Take notes while you read.

In Part 2, you will write an original narrative story that includes one or more characters and a theme.

Directions for Part 1

You will now read two stories. You can re-examine both stories as often as you like.

Research Questions

After reading the stories, 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 stories you have read, which should help you write your own narrative story.

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.

Story #1: Dale Gets Moving!

At the start of summer, Dale met Lindsay on a hiking trip organized by the local recreation center. Dale's mother had made him go, saying it would be good for him to get outside and breathe some fresh air for a change, rather than sitting inside all day. The day was hot, humid, and filled with bugs, and on top of that, the hike was steep. However, when the cute girl next to him started making conversation, Dale forgot about how miserable he was. She even talked him into making it to the top, despite how tired and out of breath he felt. After the hike was over, he asked her to get ice cream with him the next afternoon, and they had been dating ever since.

Lindsay was fun loving, adventurous, and kind, and despite her passion for outdoors and athletics—and Dale's ambivalence to anything of the sort—they hit it off. Lindsay enjoyed waking up early to run, going on afternoon bike rides, and hiking on the weekends. Dale, on the other hand, had never felt very athletic, and he preferred to stay home during the day and watch television or play video games.

Dale's mom had expressed concern in the past about his sedentary lifestyle, but he wasn't worried, although he knew diabetes and heart disease ran in his family. Still, he admired the way Lindsay was so active, healthy, and confident. One day as they were having lunch at a local café, she told him about some of the races she was planning to run in the fall.

"You should run a 5K with me," she suggested casually. "You might enjoy it."

Dale looked at her doubtfully. He had never even run a mile in his life, so he couldn't imagine running three.

"We could train together," she said. "It would be fun."

Somehow, he found himself accepting the challenge, persuaded by Lindsay's enthusiasm. If nothing else, he would get to spend more time with her and appease his mother's desires for him to get off the couch and become more active.

The next morning, Dale met Lindsay at the park near her house to go for a run. For the first couple of weeks he could only run for a few minutes at a time before stopping to walk, but Lindsay was patient and never ran off without him, even though he knew she easily could. The first week was miserable. His body ached, his feet were covered in blisters, and he hated the feeling of coming home sweaty and out of breath. Still, he kept showing up in the mornings, because he knew she was expecting him to be there.

After a few weeks, Dale was able to run a mile without stopping, and he felt better than he had in years. Suddenly he found himself enjoying getting up to run, and the feeling of accomplishment he had afterward. He noticed that he even had more energy and did not want to sit inside playing video games as often anymore.

As their training continued, he became more and more confident that he could achieve his goal. Finally, the day of the 5K arrived. He was a little nervous, but excited and confident as well. They lined up and started out slowly, just as Lindsay had suggested. He ran next to her the whole time, and she urged him on when he felt tired. Once or twice, he thought about quitting, but then he thought about how hard he had worked to get there, and he kept running. When they crossed the finish line, he was exhausted, but he felt stronger than he had in a long time.

Story #2: Love and Loss

After many years of searching, Anthony had finally found true love. A love, he thought, that would never leave him, that would bring him true and lasting happiness, and that love was money. He heard people say money can't buy happiness, but he knew that they were wrong. As a teenager, Anthony had worked as a sales clerk at a video game store, and by the time he was 20 he had a marketing job with one of the most prominent agencies in the country. By the age of 28, he was in management with this company, earning a very comfortable salary.

He could buy anything he wanted, travel anywhere in the world, and stay at the nicest resorts. Whoever said money couldn't buy happiness clearly had not spent a holiday on the nicest beaches in the Mediterranean, wearing designer sunglasses and swim shorts, eating the finest in Mediterranean cuisine. He had his own yacht and private jet, and he didn't feel like he was missing anything in life. He had never been married or thought about starting a family, because money was the only thing he needed to be happy.

Though he was earning more than enough money to satisfy all of his desires, he still wanted more, so he began investing in the stock market, starting with safe companies that his stockbroker recommended. His money grew without any extra work required, and Anthony took more luxurious vacations.

One sunny afternoon as he was lying on the deck of his yacht, he got a phone call from his stockbroker, who had bad news to deliver.

"Some of the stocks you've invested in lately haven't quite taken off. You've lost a fair amount of money," he said.

After Anthony hung up the phone, he tried to calm himself down. *I'm sure it's not that bad*, he thought. But when he got back in town and went into to see his accountant, he realized it was worse than he thought. He had lost a large portion of his savings, and he would have to sell his yacht, his jet, and two of his cars. He was devastated that the one love he thought would never leave him had abandoned him at last.

Though he still had enough money to live comfortably, Anthony was brokenhearted. He went to work every day and stayed in town on the weekends. He began to look for something fulfilling to do on the weekends when sitting around his house became tiresome. He started playing basketball again, the sport he had played and loved in high school. He met some other guys who played as well and began to build friendships with them. Weekends became something he looked forward to, not because of exciting trips to exotic places, but for the simple relaxation and comradery he shared with his friends.

Some weekends he went to visit his parents, whom he hadn't seen in years, despite the fact that they only lived a few hours away. They were glad to see him, and his mother prepared homemade dinners for them to eat as a family. He had forgotten how nice it was just to be around his parents, eating good food and having good conversation, and he felt very lucky to have such a loving family. He felt happier and more fulfilled than he had in many years.

Slowly, he began to forget about his sadness over the loss of money and enjoy other aspects of life. The old saying that money can't buy happiness had been right all along, but he hadn't realized it until now. Money could buy a lot of things, but it was not fulfilling, and it was no replacement for those he loved.

25 Which statements **best** describe the central idea of each text? Select **two** options.

- (A) Dale decides to train for a 5K run.
- (B) Anthony enjoys going on many luxury vacations.
- (C) Dale prefers to stay inside and play video games.
- (D) At his mother's urging, Dale goes on a hiking trip.
- (E) Anthony is hard working and successful at business.
- (F) After losing money, Anthony begins to visit his parents.

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- 26** What are the **most** important details each author uses to develop the characters in the texts? Support your answer using details from both texts.

- 27** What theme do the two texts have in common? Support your answer using details from both texts.

Directions for Part 2

You will now look at two stories, take notes, and plan, draft, revise, and edit your narrative story based on what you have learned. You may use your notes and refer to the stories. Now read your assignment and the information about how your narrative story will be scored; then begin your work.

Your Assignment

Write a multi-paragraph narrative story in which you use the elements of theme, character, and story structure that were modeled in the two stories you have just read. In your narrative story, use details about the character and the story to express your theme.

Narrative Scoring

Your narrative story will be scored using the following:

- 1. Organization/Purpose:** How clearly did you express a theme in your story? How well did you maintain your focus on the story? How well did your ideas flow from the beginning to the end? How often did you use effective transitions?
- 2. Development/Elaboration:** How well did you support the theme of your story with details? How well did the development of your characters support your theme?
- 3. Conventions:** How well did you follow the rules of grammar usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

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

