

Reading and Responding

A Story with a Surprise Ending

by Leslie Hall

Once upon a time, there was a family who lived happily in a city far, far away. . . .

When we, my brother and I, were little, our parents used to tell us bedtime stories every night. The bedtime stories my mom and dad used to tell always started with *Once upon a time* and ended with *happily ever after*. Right now I don't care so much about the *Once upon a time*, but I would like to see some *happily ever after*.

After the *Once upon a time*, would come the unsuspecting main character, who might be a prince, a princess, or even just a normal person. The main character was always a good person who suddenly got stuck with a big problem: a dragon, the hardhearted old king, a moat as deep as the ocean, or a wall as tall as the sky. The main character would undergo a series of troubles, which the character eventually overcame, and then would face the big problem with courage, compassion, or ingenuity. With the help of a wise old lady, a special word, or the knowledge he had learned from triumphing over the troubles, the main character would climb the wall, swim the moat, or otherwise overcome the big and final problem, and the story would end happily ever after.

In this story, the big problem is not a dragon or a hardhearted old king. In this story, the big problem will not be solved by saying a special word.

In this story, the problem is how pizza boxes are manufactured in a small town far, far away, across the river, over the mountains, and beyond the plains. There is a factory in that small town, a factory that makes boxes. In the factory are many boxes, boxes of every size and shape.

Someone at the factory decided it would be cheaper or faster to make pizza boxes a different way. There was nothing wrong with the old pizza boxes. There was, however, something wrong with the new pizza boxes. It may have been cheaper or faster to make the pizza boxes the new way, but it wasn't smarter. People who bought the pizzas packed in the new pizza boxes were unhappily surprised to discover that, by the time they got their pizzas home (or by the time their pizzas were delivered), the pizza boxes fell apart. After containing hot pizzas for more than a few minutes, the boxes became soggy and floppy and fell apart. The pizzas got cold, and the people who bought the pizzas became angry.

This is where we come in. To show us the problem, our dad shows us letters from angry customers who ended up with cold pizzas.

Our father works for the company that bought the factory that makes the boxes that fall apart. Our father is a packaging engineer. He can fold paper into beautiful designs; he can take a piece of the newspaper and make something so beautiful you'd hang it on the wall. Our father's company wants him to go to the factory in the small town and figure out what's wrong with the new pizza boxes.

No one says anything.

"I'm sorry," our dad says, and he looks at all of us. "I know you don't want to leave." Even though he is sad that we are sad, we can tell that he is happy, too. There is nothing our dad likes more than a big problem to figure out.

In this story, the mother, the girl, and the boy have to leave their beloved home in the city and travel to a small town far, far away, across the river, over the mountains, and beyond the plains so that the father can watch how pizza boxes are made and figure out how to make them better. The mother is not happy to leave her job, but she makes the best of it. Our mother tends to be optimistic.

"I always wanted to live in a small town," she says. "And the raise will be nice."

I have never wanted to live in a small town, but I don't want to make my dad feel worse, so I don't say anything.

In this story, the father tells the girl and the boy all of the facts he has learned about the small town that is far, far away, across the river, over the mountains, and beyond the plains. The small town is close to a mountain range where there are caves to explore. There is a river nearby where they can go rafting. The high school in the small town has an Olympic-sized swimming pool. In the winter, there is usually snow, which means sledding and skiing and snow days.

In this story, the mother finds a new job in the small town that she thinks she will like even better than her old job. “Time for something new,” our mom says.

In this story, the parents take the girl and the boy on a journey, and they leave the city and travel to the small town that is far, far away, across the river, over the mountains, and beyond the plains. The girl is charmed by the horses to ride and the farms to visit and the people who live in the town, who are kind and cheerful even if they are not good at making pizza boxes. The boy is pleased by the mountains to climb and the new house with a large basement that will become his room. The mother is eager to start a new job and is happy that she will be able to walk to and from work instead of sitting in the car and stewing in traffic for an hour each way.

The father is looking forward to solving the problem of the pizza boxes that fall apart. A thorough examination of the boxes leads him to suspect that the culprit may be low-quality glue or the thin cardboard, but he can’t be sure until he investigates further.

I guess “happily ever after” is as good an ending as any. If you can think of a better one, let me know.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	1.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>All stories have a theme, or a central idea. To understand the theme, you need to understand what happens in the story. Think about what happens in the beginning, the middle, and the end of the story. Why are these events important? What does the main character learn? What changes as a result of these events?</p> <p>If a main character learns a lesson, that is most likely the theme of the story. (In a folk tale or a legend, this lesson is the moral of the story.)</p>		

“A Story with a Surprise Ending”

If you answered A, C, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why.

Think about what happens in the story. Reread the end of the story and think about the lesson that the narrator learns.

1. Which of these proverbs **best** describes the theme of the story?
 - A. He who hesitates is lost. (**What is the problem with this answer?** This proverb does not accurately describe the narrator. Think about her situation and how the story ends.)
 - C. A rolling stone gathers no moss. (**What is the problem with this answer?** This proverb means that people who are always on the move stay free from attachments. This does not apply to the narrator’s situation in the story.)
 - D. A penny saved is a penny earned. (**What is the problem with this answer?** This proverb means that saving money (or not wasting money) is just as good as working to earn it.)
 - B. Every cloud has a silver lining.
Correct. This proverb is another way of saying that you can find some good in everything that happens. This is the best answer.

Throughout the story, the narrator describes the problems or the “clouds” faced by her family when they must move to a small town. However, at the end of the story, she discovers that moving away turned out to be much better than she expected (moving had “a silver lining”).

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	1.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>For this question, you need to be an investigator. You need to find evidence in the story that supports the narrator’s view of her mother.</p> <p>Here are some of the different ways writers tell their readers about characters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by the way characters act • by what characters say about themselves • by what characters say about each other 		

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about what the word optimistic means. A person who is optimistic is a person who is able to find the best in every situation. The narrator says her mother is optimistic. What does the mother do to prove that the narrator is right?

2. Which of these sentences supports the narrator’s idea that her mother is optimistic?
- A. The mother dislikes being delayed by traffic. (**What is the problem with this answer?** Finding the bad in something—even traffic!—is not the mark of an optimist.)
- B. The mother prefers walking to work to driving. (**What is the problem with this answer?** This may seem like a possible right answer, but it is not the best answer. Always be sure to read each possible answer carefully before you choose your answer. The mother may prefer walking to work to driving, but there is not a clear connection between her preference and her optimism.)
- C. The mother is reluctant to leave their old home. (**What is the problem with this answer?** Remember what the word optimistic means. Being reluctant to do something does not show that the mother is optimistic.)
- D. The mother is looking forward to trying a new job.
Correct. You can tell that the mother is optimistic because she makes the best of having to move. Rather than focusing on the negative aspects of moving to a new town, such as having to give up a job she loves and finding another one, the mother is optimistic that “trying a new job” will be pleasant. This is the *best* answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	2.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks about a character in the story. You know that you can learn about characters from what other characters say about them and from their actions and what they say to others, as well as what they say about themselves.</p>		

“A Story with a Surprise Ending”

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about what you know about the father. What does the narrator say about the father? What does he enjoy doing? How does he act when he tells his family about the move?

1. How does the father in the story feel about his transfer?
 - A. overjoyed, because he will receive a salary increase (**What is the problem with this answer?** Though the mother mentions that “the raise will be nice,” the father never mentions the raise. He is not overjoyed by it.)
 - B. eager, because he thinks it will make his wife happy (**What is the problem with this answer?** The mother is not eager to leave her home, so we know that the move will not make her any happier.)
 - C. calm, because he knows the new town has good schools (**What is the problem with this answer?** The father probably does feel better about moving if the town has good schools, but this is not apparent from the information in the story.)
 - D. pleased, because he loves having a new problem to solve
Correct. The narrator directly states that “There is nothing our dad likes more than a big problem to figure out.” At the end of the story, the father is “looking forward to solving the problem of the pizza boxes.” This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	2.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks about the plot. The plot is the sequence of events in a work of fiction (a story, a novel, or a play). The title tells you that the story has a “surprise ending.” In the beginning of the story, the narrator foreshadows the ending when she describes bedtime stories that end “happily ever after.” This foreshadowing at the beginning helps you better understand the ending of the story, so the “surprise ending” is more of a surprise to the narrator than to the reader.</p>		

If you answered A, B, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Reread the last 2 or 3 paragraphs of the story.

2. What is the “surprise ending” of this story?
- A. The mother easily obtains a new job. (**What is the problem with this answer?** The mother does appear to be starting a new job in the story, but this is not the “surprise ending.” An answer may be true and yet may not be the best answer for the question.)
- B. The brother learns to climb mountains. (**What is the problem with this answer?** In the story, the brother “is pleased by the mountains to climb,” but this is not the “surprise ending.” Remember that this story is mostly about how the narrator is affected.)
- D. The father discovers a new packaging method for pizza. (**What is the problem with this answer?** This does not happen. At the end of the story, the father is still “looking forward to solving the problem.”)
- C. The narrator realizes that she actually likes the new town.
Correct. The narrator tells the reader that “I have never wanted to live in a small town.” The reader is just as surprised as the narrator when, after the family’s move, the narrator says that she “is charmed by the horses . . . and the farms” and that “happily ever after” describes her family’s new life in the small town. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.1: Use knowledge of word meaning and develop basic and technical vocabulary using various strategies (e.g., context clues, affixes, etymology, dictionary)	3.1

Introduction to Students:

When you read an unfamiliar word, look for clues in the sentence. Another way to determine what a word means is to think about other similar words. For example, the words *genius*, *ingenious*, and *ingenuity* all have a Latin root that comes from a word that refers to a person’s native intelligence, or the intelligence a person has at birth.

You can combine this knowledge with the clues from the passage to figure out what a word means. (Be careful with this strategy, however, as there are many words in English that have similar sounds but entirely different meanings. Whenever you can, look up a new word in the dictionary to make sure you know its meaning.)

“A Story with a Surprise Ending”

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about the root word of the word *ingenuity*. Then think about how the word is used in the sentence. What traits might a person need in order to overcome a challenging situation?

1. Read this sentence from the story.

The main character would undergo a series of troubles, which the character eventually overcame, and then would face the big problem with courage, compassion, or ingenuity.

In this sentence, “ingenuity” is closest in meaning to

- A. insistence (**What is the problem with this answer?** Insistence is the quality of being persistent in a demand. Think again about what ingenuity might have in common with genius.)
- B. persistence (**What is the problem with this answer?** Persistence is the quality of endurance. Although persistence may seem to fit in the sentence, it is not the correct meaning of ingenuity.)
- C. eagerness (**What is the problem with this answer?** To be eager means to be enthusiastic or to be impatient for something. Few people face a series of troubles with eagerness.)
- D. inventiveness

Correct. A character in a fairy tale would need to be inventive in order to overcome a problem or series of problems. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	6.2: Identify, compare, and respond to a variety of classic and contemporary literature from many genres (e.g., folktales, legends, myths, biography, autobiography, poetry, fiction, nonfiction, novels, drama)	3.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you to analyze the story. What kind of writing is the story? You know that it is fiction because it is a story that includes characters that don't really exist. There are different genres, or types, of fiction: mysteries, drama, tall tales, legends, and so on. Each genre has its own characteristics that makes it different from other genres.</p> <p>When you think about the characteristics of a genre and how a work of writing fits into that genre, you can have a deeper understanding of what you read.</p>		

For this question, you need to know the characteristics of a fairy tale. What are some characteristics of a fairy tale? How is this story like a fairy tale? How is it different from a fairy tale?

2. In the chart below write one way “A Story with a Surprise Ending” is similar to a fairy tale and one way “A Story with a Surprise Ending” is different from a fairy tale.

Sample answer:

	SIMILARITY	DIFFERENCE
How “A Story with a Surprise Ending” is similar to and different from a fairy tale:	The story begins with the words “Once upon a time.”	The narrator is a normal girl, not a princess.

This answer gives one correct similarity and one correct difference. What are some other possible answers? (The lists below are not exhaustive. Students may think of other examples.)

Similarities: The story ends with “happily ever after,” just as many fairy tales do.

The story includes a character with a problem to be solved, which is typical of fairy tales, too.

Differences: The narrator does not receive any help from a wise person nor is able to solve her problems “by saying a special word,” though this often happens in fairy tales.

The narrator’s problem is an attitude rather than fairy-tale dragons or other fanciful problems that might require extraordinary physical or mental powers to overcome.

The Road Not Taken

—Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

8 Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.1: Use knowledge of word meaning and develop basic and technical vocabulary using various strategies (e.g., context clues, affixes, etymology, dictionary)	4.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>For this question, you can use two strategies to find the meaning of the word that may be unfamiliar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take the word apart • look for clues in the stanza in which the word appears <p>The word <i>diverge</i> is another word with Latin roots. In Latin, <i>di-</i> is a prefix that means “apart.” <i>Divide</i> is another <i>di-</i> word. Knowing this will help you figure out the correct meaning.</p>		

“The Road Not Taken”

If you answered A, B, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about what divide means. Then reread the first stanza of the poem.

1. The poet writes, “Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, / and sorry I could not travel both . . .” What does the word “diverged” mean?
 - A. appeared (**What is the problem with this answer?** The poet regrets that he cannot travel both roads, then says that he looks down one road. What does this tell you about what the word *diverged* means?)
 - B. curved (**What is the problem with this answer?** Try replacing the word *diverged* with the word *curved*. This answer does not work.)
 - D. continued on (**Think about the meaning of the poem as a whole. This will also help you figure out the meaning of the word *diverged*.**)
 - C. branched off
Correct. Two roads branched off from one road. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	4.2

Introduction to Students:

This question asks you to tell what the roads in the poem symbolize. When we read poetry, we read for different levels of meanings. At the literal level, we read the words of the poem to mean exactly what they say: a person travels in the woods and chooses to go down one of two roads.

We can gain a deeper understanding by interpreting the symbolism of the poem. A symbol is a word, idea, or object that stands for something else, such as an idea, a quality, or a value. For example, on the United States flag, the stars symbolize the original colonies.

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about the last stanza of the poem and what it means.

2. The two roads might symbolize

- A. different ways out of the woods. (**What is the problem with this answer?** This is a literal meaning. That is, the roads do lead out of the woods.)
- B. different ways to return home. (**What is the problem with this answer?** Why would the speaker say that the road he chose “made all the difference” years later?)
- C. different ways to get to town. (**What is the problem with this answer?** If the roads were only two different ways to get to town, the speaker probably would not remember or continue to think about his decision to take one road or the other.)
- D. different choices in life.
Correct. The different choices would take the speaker in different directions in his life and would not come together again because “way leads on to way.” A more common way of expressing this idea is—one thing leads to another. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	6.2: Identify, compare, and respond to a variety of classic and contemporary literature from many genres (e.g., folktales, legends, myths, biography, autobiography, poetry, fiction, nonfiction, novels, drama)	5.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you what distinguishes a poem from other kinds of writing. Here are some characteristics of poetry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The form of a poem includes lines and stanzas. • Poems may be written in meter and have a certain rhythm or beat. • There may be a rhyming pattern. • There may be figurative language and other literary devices, such as metaphors, similes, personification, and symbolism. <p>Poetry shares some of these characteristics with other kinds of writing. For example, Shakespeare’s plays were written in meter. Almost any kind of writing may contain figurative language. You will find symbolism in most plays, novels, and other fiction.</p>		

“The Road Not Taken”

If you answered A, C, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about how you know the poem is a poem.

1. Which feature of the selection most strongly indicates that it is a poem?
 - A. It appeals to the senses.
(What is the problem with this answer? Poetry usually does have sensory language or language that appeals to the senses. But so do other types of writing. Even nonfiction can use sensory language.)
 - C. It has a title.
(What is the problem with this answer? Titles are common to all kinds of writing, including articles, novels, plays, and poems, among others.)
 - D. It is told in first person.
(What is the problem with this answer? “First person” means that the poem is written from the point of view of an “I” character. Stories, novels, memoirs, and even some kinds of articles may be told in first person, but not all poems are told by an “I” character.)
 - B. It is divided into lines and stanzas.
Correct. Almost all poems have sentences that are divided into lines and stanzas. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	5.2

Introduction to Students:

Literary writing, especially poetry, may contain words and phrases that are used in ways that seem new to you. This makes the writing more interesting to read by bringing unusual combinations of words together to create new images in your mind. By rereading and considering these words and phrases, you can figure out what they mean. You may also want to read the lines that come before and after.

If you answered A, B, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Look back at the 2nd stanza of the poem.

2. What does “grassy and wanted wear” in the 8th line of the poem mean?
- A. Many people had walked the grassy road.
(**What is the problem with this answer?** If many people had walked the road, there probably would not have been much grass.)
 - B. The grass needed cutting.
(**What is the problem with this answer?** It is unlikely that anyone would cut the grass on a country road. Think about why such a road would or would not be grassy.)
 - D. The grass was too high for anyone to walk through it.
(**What is the problem with this answer?** Look at lines 9 and 10.)
 - C. Not many people had walked this road.
Correct. The phrase “wanted [or lacked] wear” means that there was not much of a path worn into the road. The word “grassy” shows that the grass was free to grow because few feet walked on it. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.1: Use comprehension strategies (e.g., sequencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, determining main ideas, summarizing, recognizing literary devices, paraphrasing) in contexts	6.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>For this question, you are asked to draw a conclusion or to characterize the speaker. Because there is no dialogue and there are no other characters, you must rely on what the speaker says and does in order to come to a conclusion about the speaker.</p>		

“The Road Not Taken”

If you answered A, C, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about what you know about the speaker from reading the poem. Reread the 1st stanza of the poem.

1. What conclusion can the reader draw about the speaker in the first stanza?
 - A. He is lonely and sad. **(What is the problem with this answer?** Even though the speaker is alone, there is nothing that indicates he is lonely or sad.)
 - C. He is hurried and rushed. **(What is the problem with this answer?** You can tell that he is not hurried or rushed because he takes his time choosing which way to go.)
 - D. He is kind and generous. **(What is the problem with this answer?** He may be kind and generous, but neither of these qualities appears in the poem.)
 - B. He is hesitant and thoughtful.
Correct. The phrase “long I stood” shows that the speaker is hesitant; that he looks ahead to see where one road goes shows that he is thoughtful. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.1: Use comprehension strategies (e.g., sequencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, determining main ideas, summarizing, recognizing literary devices, paraphrasing) in contexts	6.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>For this question, you are asked to find proof that the speaker feels regret about choosing one road over another. To regret something is to feel some sorrow, grief, or disappointment.</p>		

Think about what the speaker says and does that show what he feels about his decision. Then skim the poem to see what evidence you can find.

2. What evidence is there that the speaker of the poem feels some regret about his choice? Use at least **two** details from the poem to support your answer.

Sample answer: The speaker says that he was “sorry” that he could not go on both roads. Even though he says the roads seem about the same, he says that he will probably tell about this choice later “with a sigh,” which means he thinks he may regret his decision one day.

This answer gives two details from the poem as evidence that the speaker feels regret (the word “sorry” and that the speaker sighs when he looks back at his past decision).

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.6: Interpret texts to generate connections to real-life situations	7

Introduction to Students:

When you respond to an essay question, it is very important that you have a clear understanding of the question and what the question asks you to do. For this question, you are asked to write an essay about the choices made by a character in the story and by the speaker in the poem. When you write in response to what you read, you need to include details from what you read to explain and support your position.

“The Road Not Taken” and “A Story with a Surprise Ending”

This question asks you to focus on one aspect of the story and the poem: a choice made by a character and how that choice affected the characters’ lives.

In order to answer this question, you need to choose a character from the story. You could choose the mother, the father, or the narrator. (You could choose to write about the brother, but it may be more difficult to find details in the story to support your writing, as the story gives less information about the brother than about the other characters.) Then consider the choices made by these characters. How were their lives affected by their choices? Did they experience positive or negative consequences?

Because the poem only has one character, the speaker, all you have to consider is how the speaker’s choice affected his life.

1. In both “The Road Not Taken” and “A Story with a Surprise Ending,” someone must make a choice. Identify a choice made by a character from each passage, and explain how that choice made a difference in his or her life. Use a detail from each passage to support your explanation.

Before you begin writing, it is a good idea to take a few minutes to plan your writing. You may even want to make some notes or write an outline. An outline is especially helpful when you have a limited amount of time in which to write. It can help you to capture and order your ideas before you begin to write.

(After reviewing students’ responses, teachers may want to use the next three pages to create transparencies and then discuss the notes, outline, and resulting sample essay with students.)

One way to plan your writing might be to write notes like the following:

	Poem	Story
Character	Speaker	Narrator
Choice:	which direction to take in life	how to react when the family moves to a small town
How the character feels:	regretful that he could not go in both directions, but not unhappy with the choice he made	unhappy at first, but is willing to be open to seeing the good in the new town
How this affects the character's life:	It has had a lasting effect on the speaker's life and has stayed in his mind as a vivid memory, but the memory is bittersweet, because the speaker regrets he could not take both directions; he doesn't regret the choice he made.	Because the character is willing to see the good, she has a good experience and ends up happy with her new home, and the story ends "happily ever after."

An outline for an essay in response to this question may look something like this:

- I. Life offers everyone choices that are sometimes difficult and may have long-term effects on a person's life.
 - A. This is true of both the speaker of "The Road Less Traveled" and "A Story with a Surprise Ending"
 - i. Both the speaker of the poem and the father in the story came to a place in their lives in which they had to make an important choice.
 1. The father chooses to accept a transfer that means his family has to move.
 2. The speaker chooses to take "the road less traveled."
- II. The father's decision affects him and his family.
 - A. He is happy because he is looking forward to the challenges of his new job.
 - i. The father loves having new problems to solve, and the new job puts him in charge of finding out why new pizza boxes fall apart.
 - B. His children are unhappy about the move.
 - i. They don't want to leave their home and friends.
 - C. His wife is not eager to move, but makes the best of it.
 - i. She is an optimist, so she looks on the bright side, even though she has to find a new job.
- III. Unlike the father, the speaker appears to look back on his choice with regret.
 - A. The memory of choosing a direction is strong in his mind.
 - i. He describes the roads in a detailed way. The roads and the descriptions of the roads are symbolic of different choices.
 - ii. He will later tell about his choice "with a sigh."
 - iii. He was "sorry" he could not go on both roads at the same time.
- IV. The speaker and the father had very different experiences, perhaps because they looked at their choices so differently.
 - A. There is evidence that even though the speaker feels some regret, he feels he made the right choice.
 - i. He "took the road less traveled by/And that has made all the difference."
 - B. The only regret the father has is that his family is temporarily unhappy right before the move.

Sample Essay for Lesson 7

People make choices every day. Some are easy choices that do not seem to mean very much, such as whether to eat cereal or toast for breakfast. Other choices in life are difficult and may have long-term effects on a person's life. This is true of both the speaker of "The Road Less Traveled" and "A Story with a Surprise Ending." Both the speaker of the poem and the father in the story had to make important choices.

In the story, the father chooses to accept a job transfer that means his family has to move. The father's decision affects him and his family. His children are unhappy about the move. They don't want to leave their home and friends. His wife is not eager to move, but makes the best of it. She is an optimist, so she looks on the bright side, even though she must find a new job. The father, who loves having new problems to solve, is the only person who seems completely happy with his choice.

Unlike the father, the speaker of the poem appears to look back on his choice with some regret, because he says he may later tell about his choice "with a sigh." The speaker chose to take "the road less traveled," but he is "sorry" he could not travel both roads. The memory of choosing a direction in life stays in his mind, and he describes the roads with great detail. The roads and the speaker's descriptions of the roads are symbolic of the choices the speaker could make that would take his life in different directions.

The speaker and the father had very different experiences, perhaps because they looked at their choices so differently. From the father's point of view, the only regret is that his family is temporarily unhappy. By the end of the story, his family is happy again, leaving the father free to be completely happy with his decision. He never second-guesses himself or wonders whether he made the right choice, unlike the speaker. Even though the speaker does feel regret and does seem to wonder about what might have happened if he had chosen the other road, it seems that he thinks he made the right choice, because he says that he "took the road less traveled by / And that has made all the difference."

Niagara Falls

Passing a digital sign that first displayed the current temperature and then the time, Sara shook her head. “Twenty-five degrees? That can’t be right,” she thought. The sun was setting, and was beginning to dip behind the skyscrapers that lined the unfamiliar streets. Even though it was sunset, it certainly wasn’t at all cold. Twenty-five degrees! She glanced up at the sign again. The temperature was still the same: 25° C.

“Of course! Celsius!” It all made sense. Quickening her pace, she caught up with her family. “Dad?” she asked, “How do you convert from Celsius to Fahrenheit?”

“Multiply by nine fifths, and add thirty-two,” he said without hesitation and without slowing down. No matter what the question, her father always seemed to know the answer.

“So,” she thought, “if it’s twenty-five degrees, I multiply that by nine...that’s...two hundred and...uh...twenty five. Divided by five is...five and twenty...then another twenty...so...forty-five, plus thirty-two is...seventy-seven.” She wasn’t so bad with numbers herself.

For the first time, Sara was in another country. She and her family were visiting Niagara Falls, Ontario. Even though it was Canada, a section of which stood just across the river from the United States, traveling was still exciting. Crossing the border had felt symbolic and meaningful to Sara. She figured that there would be many cultural and other differences to make her feel like she was in another country. She took note of every difference, no matter how small. She wanted to remember everything—how the street lamps were of a different shape and size than the ones back home, that the sidewalks were a tiny bit wider, money was completely different (bills were so brilliantly colored that Sara had trouble thinking of them as money), and now she knew that temperature was measured in Celsius degrees.

6 The waterfalls produced a low rumbling that could be heard clearly throughout the city. The rumbling sounded like a train in the distance, getting closer and closer, until Niagara Falls stretched out before them. Sara watched a boat full of tourists wearing bright yellow parkas slowly bobbing toward the waterfalls, approaching the torrents of water from below. Another group of tourists, clustered around a guide like so many ducklings, milled closer to get a better view. Sara sidled over in order to eavesdrop. The guide’s voice was so perky and practiced she sounded like a tape recording.

“The first person to go over Niagara Falls sealed in a barrel was Mrs. Annie Edison Taylor,” said the guide. “She performed this feat on October the 24th in 1901. At the time, Mrs. Taylor was sixty-four years old. She risked everything in the hope of acquiring fame and fortune as a result of her daring escapade, but unfortunately, her plan was unsuccessful, and she died a poor woman. Since then, there have been less than a dozen people who have...”

Sara’s grandmother was sixty-four. Sara tried to picture her poised, elegant grandmother sealed in a rickety wooden barrel and careening over Niagara Falls. She burst out laughing.

8 Rejoining her family, Sara cast her vote for a restaurant that overlooked the view of rushing water over the massive cliffs. Sara was briefly disappointed at the familiarity of the menu. Ordering a grilled cheese sandwich, she thought she might as well be at home. Canada wasn’t nearly as different from home as she had expected. Even if they *did* give the temperature in Celsius. Just then, a crowd of people entered the restaurant, laughing and talking in French, and it made Sara think that there were just enough differences to keep things interesting.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	8.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>Writers use different types of writing for different purposes. Narrative writing is the telling of a story. A story may also contain dialogue, which is the speech of a character. You can usually tell which parts of the story have dialogue because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dialogue appears inside quotation marks • dialogue frequently begins or ends with words that tell you which character is talking • dialogue is usually written in more casual language to show how the characters would actually speak • dialogue changes depending on which character is talking 		

“Niagara Falls”

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Reread some of the dialogue in the story. Then think about what the dialogue accomplishes in the story. What do you learn from the dialogue?

1. The writer most likely uses dialogue in this story
 - A. to give the reader background information. **(What is the problem with this answer?** You can learn some information from the dialogue, but giving background information is not the main purpose. Look again at the dialogue between Sara and her father.)
 - B. to describe the sequence of events. **(What is the problem with this answer?** The story unfolds in a logical sequence in the narrative writing—the writing that is not dialogue. You would be able to follow the events of the story even if there were no dialogue.)
 - C. to predict a future event in the story. **(What is the problem with this answer?** Phrases or sentences that predict future events in a story are called foreshadowing. In this story, the dialogue does not contain foreshadowing. This means that the dialogue does not hint to the reader about future events in the story.)
 - D. to make the characters seem more alive.
Correct. The reader learns more about the characters from their words and from how they talk to each other. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	8.2

Introduction to Students:

This question asks you to analyze one of the characters in the story. Here are some different ways a writer might give a reader information about characters:

- **describe the characters in the narrative writing**
- **have one character describe another**
- **have a character describe himself or herself**
- **provide dialogue so the reader can learn more about the characters from what they say and how they act to each other**

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about what you know about the father from the story. Rereading the third paragraph will help you answer this question.

2. Sara’s father is **best** described as
- A. confusing. (**What is the problem with this answer?** Some readers might be confused by the father’s answer to Sara’s question about converting from degrees measured in Celsius to degrees measured in Fahrenheit, but the father is not confusing.)
- B. generous. (**What is the problem with this answer?** The father may be generous, but this is not emphasized in the story, and the reader is given no specific details to show whether the father is generous or not.)
- C. adventurous. (**What is the problem with this answer?** The reader cannot tell from this story whether the father is adventurous.)
- D. knowledgeable.
Correct. In the story, Sara asks her father how to convert Celsius to Fahrenheit. Her father immediately answers her question. You also read that “no matter what the question, her father always seemed to know the answer.” This shows he is knowledgeable. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.4: Distinguish fact from opinion and probability, skimming and scanning for facts, determining cause and effect, inductive and deductive reasoning, generating inquiry, and making connections with real-life situations across texts	9.1

Introduction to Students:

To answer this question correctly, you need to be able to tell the difference between fact—something that is true—and opinion. Opinions are statements or beliefs that may be true for one person and not true for another. However, facts are always true and you can look up information to verify a fact.

If a statement has an adjective, the adjective may provide a clue. Adjectives describing traits that can be verified or measured, such as color or height, tell you that the statement is a fact. For example, the statement “Nevell’s car is red” is a fact (if Nevell’s car is indeed red). Adjectives describing qualities that cannot be verified or measured, such as beauty, tell you that the statement is probably an opinion. The statement “Nevell’s car is a pretty shade of red” is an opinion, because the prettiness of the color cannot be verified; some people might think the color is pretty, but others might not.

“Niagara Falls”

If you answered B, C, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about what you know about facts. Look for words that are clues that the statements are opinions.

1. Which statement about information from the story is a fact?
 - B. Sara’s grandmother is poised and elegant. **(What is the problem with this answer?** Sara clearly thinks her grandmother is poised and elegant, but another person may not have the same opinion. These are not traits that can be measured, which means this statement is an opinion, rather than a fact.)
 - C. Canada is very different from the Unites States. **(What is the problem with this answer?** This statement is one opinion; another opinion would be that Canada and the United States have many similarities.)
 - D. It is funny to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel. **(What is the problem with this answer?** What is funny to one person may not be funny to another. This is an opinion.)
 - A. Math is used to convert Celsius to Fahrenheit.
Correct. We know this statement is a fact because it tells something that is true and that can be verified. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.1: Use knowledge of word meaning and develop basic and technical vocabulary using various strategies (e.g., context clues, affixes, etymology, dictionary)	9.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you to figure out the meaning of a word that may be unfamiliar to you. When you see a word you don't know, you can often figure out what it means by looking for clues in the sentence or paragraph in which the word appears. These would be context clues.</p>		

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let's talk about why. Reread paragraph 6. The writer uses the word *torrents* to describe the waterfalls. Now think about other ways the writer describes the waterfalls. The waterfalls make a "low, rumbling sound that could be heard clearly from throughout the city." What would this scene look like? How much water would it take to make so much noise?

All of the possible answers are related in some way to water. But only one answer gives a correct meaning for the word.

2. In paragraph 6, "slowly bobbing toward the waterfalls, approaching the torrents of water from below," what does torrents mean?
 - A. depth (**What is the problem with this answer?** The boat could not approach the *depth* of the water from below.)
 - B. pool (**What is the problem with this answer?** It is unlikely that a calm pool of water would be at the foot of the waterfalls.)
 - C. drops (**What is the problem with this answer?** The word drops could describe rain water, but not large waterfalls. Remember that Sara could hear the rumbling of the waterfalls from far away. That would be a lot of water!)
 - D. rush
Correct. The word torrents refers to the waterfalls, which could be described as a rush of water. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.1: Use comprehension strategies (e.g., sequencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, determining main ideas, summarizing, recognizing literary devices, paraphrasing) in contexts	10.1

Introduction to Students:

This question asks you to “read between the lines.” You are asked to choose the best explanation for something that is not clearly stated in the text: why Sara pictures her grandmother in a barrel.

If you are not sure of the answer, rereading the paragraph will help you make the connection between what happens in the story and what the character is thinking. Then you will be able to answer the question. You also may need to look at the paragraph that comes before the paragraph that is mentioned in the question.

“Niagara Falls”

If you answered A, C, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about what happens in the story just before Sara imagines her grandmother going over Niagara Falls in a barrel. Look back at paragraph 7.

1. In paragraph 8, why did Sara picture her grandmother in a wooden barrel?
 - A. Because her grandmother was poised and elegant. **(What is the problem with this answer?** Sara does think her grandmother is poised and elegant, and this is what makes the image funny. But this is not the reason she thought about her grandmother in a barrel.)
 - C. Because her grandmother was not there to do it. **(What is the problem with this answer?** Sara’s grandmother was not there, but this is not the reason Sara thought about her grandmother in a barrel. Remember that just because a possible answer is true does not mean that it is the best answer for the question.)
 - D. Because she wanted to make herself laugh. **(What is the problem with this answer?** Sara imagined her grandmother in a barrel because the tour guide said something that reminded Sara of her grandmother. What did the tour guide say?)
 - B. Because Ms. Taylor was her grandmother’s age.
Correct. In paragraph 7, Sara hears a tour guide talk about Ms. Annie Edison Taylor, who was 64 when she attempted to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel. This makes Sara think about her grandmother because her grandmother is also 64 years old. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.1: Use comprehension strategies (e.g., sequencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, determining main ideas, summarizing, recognizing literary devices, paraphrasing) in contexts	10.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you to consider an event from a character’s point of view and explain why the character felt as she did. Go back to the paragraph in which the event occurs (paragraph 5) and summarize what happens as you reread. This will help you answer the question.</p>		

To answer the question, you need to think about why crossing the border from the United States to Canada feels symbolic to Sara *and* about how you know this. What information in the passage tells you the answer?

In paragraph 5, the writer describes Sara’s feelings about traveling to another country and specifically mentions how Sara feels about coming to Canada from the United States. How does Sara feel about crossing the border to Canada? What makes her feel this way?

- In paragraph 5, why did “crossing the border” feel symbolic to Sara? Explain your answer with information from the passage.

Sample answer: Crossing the border felt symbolic to Sara because she had never been to another country. Even though Canada wasn’t far away, crossing the border, the symbolic boundary between countries, put her in what she considered another world in which everything was different and new.

This answer tells why the border crossing was significant to Sara (“crossing the border . . . put her in what she considered another world”) and uses information from the passage to explain (“she had never been to another country”).

From Here to There: Becoming a Foreign Exchange Student

Holly had never traveled more than 100 miles from her home in Oklahoma when she applied to be a foreign exchange student to Brazil. Her hands were shaking when she came home one day to find an envelope bearing the return address of the exchange program. She had been accepted as an exchange student to Brazil. A sophomore in high school, Holly was thrilled and a little scared to know that she was going to spend a whole year, her junior year, in another country. Holly didn't speak Portuguese, the official language of Brazil. She didn't even know anyone who had ever been to Brazil. Fortunately, she had two months to get ready. She started a study program, checking out Portuguese language tapes and books about Brazil from her library.

Gabriel looked out the airplane window. He couldn't believe he was on his way to the United States from his native Argentina. He was going to live a whole new life. Born and raised in Buenos Aires, one of the busiest cities in South America, Gabriel was going to Lincoln, Nebraska. Gabriel was an only child, but he was going to live with an American family that had six children. Used to city sights and sounds, Gabriel would be living on a ranch where sheep and cattle were raised and everyone knew how to ride a horse. Learning English was going to be easy, Gabriel thought. He had already studied English for several years. He wasn't sure about learning how to ride a horse!

Every year, thousands of students all over the world participate in student exchange programs such as AFS Intercultural Programs (formerly known as American Field Service), Rotary Youth Exchange, and Youth for Understanding. With the goal of promoting understanding among people all over the world, these nonprofit programs offer students an opportunity to study and live in another country for a certain period of time. Some programs last only a few weeks, but there are also programs that last a summer, a semester, or even a year.

Students who have studied abroad report that being an exchange student is an overwhelmingly positive experience. The opportunity to live in another country, staying with a family and attending school, means a chance to learn about the country and the culture in ways you would never experience as a tourist. Learning another language is an extra benefit. Many former exchange students never lose their love of travel. They go on to look for opportunities to travel throughout their lives, even choosing careers that will take them all around the world.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	11.1

Introduction to Students:

This question asks you to analyze language in the article in order to figure out what is happening. If you do not know what a phrase means, you can usually figure out the meaning by rereading the sentence. You may also have to read the sentences that come before and after.

The words *literal* and *figurative* describe how words and phrases are to be interpreted. If a phrase is to be taken literally, this means that the phrase means exactly what it says. For example, you can take the statement “Donna is happy today” literally. But the statement “Donna is as happy as a clam” is figurative. We have no way of knowing whether clams are happy or if indeed Donna is experiencing the same kind of happiness a clam might feel. What this figurative phrase really means is simply that Donna is very happy.

“From Here to There”

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Look back at the first paragraph. We can interpret this language either literally or figuratively. The literal interpretation is that a person’s hands might shake if she were nervous. Why was Holly nervous? The figurative interpretation is that we might use the image of a person’s hands shaking to show that the person is feeling a great deal of emotion. What is Holly feeling?

1. In the first paragraph, why were Holly’s hands shaking?
 - A. She was nervous about learning Portuguese. **(What is the problem with this answer? Holly did not yet know if she would need to learn Portuguese.)**
 - B. She knew she was going to another country. **(What is the problem with this answer? Holly did not yet know if she would be traveling to another country.)**
 - C. She was considering applying to an exchange program. **(What is the problem with this answer? Holly had already applied to the exchange program.)**
 - D. She was about to find out whether she had been accepted to the program. **Correct. The envelope Holly was holding contained her acceptance letter into the program. Her hands were shaking because she had not yet opened the envelope and did not know whether she had been accepted. This is the best answer.**

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.1: Use comprehension strategies (e.g., sequencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, determining main ideas, summarizing, recognizing literary devices, paraphrasing) in contexts	11.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you to compare Holly’s and Gabriel’s experiences. When you compare, you are looking for similarities. You want to find what two or more things have in common. If you were contrasting the two students’ experiences, you would look for differences instead of similarities.</p>		

If you answered A, B, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about Holly’s and Gabriel’s experiences. How were their experiences alike?

2. How are Holly’s and Gabriel’s experiences similar?
 - A. They both had to learn a new language quickly. **(What is the problem with this answer?** Holly had to learn a new language quickly, but Gabriel had already studied English for several years.)
 - B. They both were used to living in cities. **(What is the problem with this answer?** We know from the text that Gabriel was from a big city, but we do not know where Holly grew up.)
 - D. They both had two months to get ready. **(What is the problem with this answer?** We know from the text that Holly had two months to get ready, but we do not know how much time Gabriel had before he left Argentina.)
 - C. They both were excited about living abroad.
Correct. The first paragraph states that Holly was “thrilled and a little scared to know that she was going to spend a whole year, her junior year, in another country.” The second paragraph states that Gabriel “couldn’t believe he was on his way to the United States from his native Argentina.” Both students were excited about being in a foreign exchange program. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.1: Use knowledge of word meaning and develop basic and technical vocabulary using various strategies (e.g., context clues, affixes, etymology, dictionary)	12.1
<p>Introduction to Students</p> <p>When you do not know the meaning of a word, you can look for clues in the sentence or the paragraph in which you find the word. Another strategy is to analyze the word itself, or take the word apart.</p> <p>One good way to build your vocabulary is to get into the habit of using a dictionary to look up the meanings of unfamiliar words. The more words you know, the more unfamiliar words you will be able to figure out, and the more enjoyment you will get from reading.</p>		

“From Here to There”

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about what the verb to overwhelm means. When you know that it means to overcome or to overpower someone or something, you can figure out what the word overwhelmingly means.

1. In paragraph 4, what does overwhelmingly mean?
 - A. slightly. **(What is the problem with this answer?** In the 4th paragraph, the text states that “students who have studied abroad report that being an exchange student is an overwhelmingly positive experience.” What caused these students to make this statement? Can you see why the word *slightly* does not fit?)
 - B. somewhat. **(What is the problem with this answer?** When you look at the sentence and replace the word *overwhelmingly* with the word *somewhat*, you can see that this is not the best answer.)
 - C. largely. **(What is the problem with this answer?** Think about what the word *overwhelm* means and what the phrase “overwhelmingly positive” probably means.)
 - D. extremely.
Correct. The writer lists many benefits from participating in a foreign exchange program. Taken together, these benefits contribute to an *extremely* positive experience for the students participating in the programs. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.3: Analyze the effects of an author's purpose and point of view	12.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>In order to analyze the effects of the writer's purpose and point of view, you need to think about how the author feels about the topic and why the author most likely wrote the passage. Then think about how you know the answers to those questions.</p> <p>An author does not always directly state a purpose or point of view. Instead, the author uses language, tone, and even punctuation to reveal the point of view. You can usually figure out the purpose by analyzing the passage itself. For example, text that is written to persuade the reader will have strong persuasive language and a very different tone from text that is written to entertain.</p>		

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let's talk about why. Think about how the author describes student exchange programs. Think about the words used by the author to describe the programs and the supporting examples the author uses. Are the programs presented in a positive or a negative light?

2. The writer of this passage most likely believes
 - A. there are too many exchange programs. (**What is the problem with this answer?** The author states that students report that their exchange experience was very positive, so the author probably does not feel there are too many exchange programs.)
 - B. Holly will not be ready to go in two months. (**What is the problem with this answer?** The author says that "fortunately, Holly had two months to get ready." The word fortunately is a clue that the author probably thought two months was a good amount of time for Holly to prepare for her trip.)
 - C. Buenos Aires is the best place to travel. (**What is the problem with this answer?** There is no clue in the passage to tell you what the author thinks about Buenos Aires. All we know about Buenos Aires from the passage is that it is "one of the busiest cities in South America.")
 - D. there are many rewards to traveling abroad.
Correct. This information can be found in the last paragraph. The author states that learning about another country, language, and culture are some of the benefits to living in another country. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.3: Analyze the effects of an author's purpose and point of view	13.1

Introduction to Students:

This question asks you to figure out the author's main purpose in writing this passage. You can determine the purpose for a reading passage when you think about:

- the information that the passage contains
- how the information is presented
- the kind of writing

An author selects and presents information in order to achieve a certain purpose. The kind of writing also provides a clue. The purpose of a poem is different from the purpose of written directions.

“From Here to There”

If you answered A, B, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let's talk about why. Think about the information in the passage and how that information was presented. What does this help you understand about the author's purpose?

1. The **main** purpose of this passage is to
 - A. instruct. (**What is the problem with this answer?** This passage does not tell the reader about how to do something.)
 - B. entertain. (**What is the problem with this answer?** While reading this passage may be entertaining, this was probably not the author's **main** purpose.)
 - D. describe. (**What is the problem with this answer?** While this passage does contain some description, the description serves the author's purpose.)
 - C. inform.
Correct. The author's main purpose in this article is to give information about different aspects of foreign exchange programs for students. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.3: Analyze the effects of an author's purpose and point of view	13.2

Introduction to Students:

When you consider the author's purpose in selecting which information and examples to include in a passage, it is helpful to think about the effect the information and examples had on you. For example, if an author wants you to feel sorry for a character in a story, the author might explain that the character had suffered in some way, and give examples of how the person suffered and what terrible things happened as a result.

Here's another example: if the author of an article wanted to show you that the information is true and reliable, the author might quote scientists or other experts and provide other ways for you to verify the information.

Think about what you learned from reading about both Holly's and Gabriel's experiences.

2. Why did the writer include both Holly's and Gabriel's experiences in the passage instead of just one or the other? Explain your answer using information from the passage.

Sample answer: The writer included both experiences in the passage to emphasize the "exchange" part of exchange programs. Even though they had different backgrounds and were from different countries, the two students also had some things in common. Holly traveled from Oklahoma to Brazil, and Gabriel went from Buenos Aires to Nebraska, but both students were eager for adventure and to learn new things.

This answer tells why the author included both students' experiences ("to emphasize the 'exchange' part of the exchange programs"), and uses information from the passage to explain ("Holly traveled from Oklahoma to Brazil, and Gabriel went from Buenos Aires to Nebraska, but both students were eager for adventure and to learn new things").

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.1: Use comprehension strategies (e.g., sequencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, determining main ideas, summarizing, recognizing literary devices, paraphrasing) in contexts	14
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>When you compare, you are examining similarities, or things that are alike. When you contrast, you are looking at differences. This question asks you to write an essay in which you compare and contrast how a character in the story feels with how a student in the article feels.</p> <p>A writer sometimes describes how a character is feeling, and sometimes lets you figure out how the character feels from reading about what happens to the character and how the character reacts. In this case, however, both writers make direct statements about how Sara and Holly feel.</p>		

“Niagara” and “From Here to There”

Before writing an essay, it is important to make sure you understand all of the requirements of the task. For this essay, you will need to write about feelings the two girls have in common and feelings they have that are different from another, giving at least two similarities and two differences. No matter how well you write, your score could suffer if you do not remember to include all of the information you are asked to provide.

With this kind of question, it can be helpful to jot down notes before you begin writing. This can help you make sure you organize your writing and express your answer in a logical way that is easily understood.

1. Compare and contrast how Sara from “Niagara” and Holly from “From Here to There” feel about traveling to a different country. Using information from both passages as support, give two similarities and two differences.

When your task is to compare and contrast, it is simple to jot down notes in an organized way that helps you make sure you include all the necessary information.

(Teachers may want to create transparencies of the following pages to discuss with students.)

Here is one way you might organize your ideas before you begin writing:

How Sara Feels	How Holly Feels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excited—even though it is just a vacation to Canada, “traveling was still exciting” • Eager—wants to remember everything, notices every detail • Like an explorer, always seeking differences between US & Canada, and is disappointed when there are similarities, like the grilled cheese sandwich she orders at the restaurant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Thrilled and a little scared”—didn’t know anyone from Brazil, had never traveled more than 100 miles from home before, didn’t speak Portuguese, but would be spending a year in Brazil • Hands shaking when she receives letter from exchange program • Eager—prepares by starting a language study program

Another way to get organized might be to write notes like this:

Feelings Sara & Holly Share	Differences in How Sara & Holly Feel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excited <p>Sara: “traveling was still exciting” Holly: “thrilled”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eager <p>Sara: wants to remember everything Holly: starts language study program 2 months before leaving for Brazil</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holly: “scared”; didn’t know anyone from Brazil; had never traveled more than 100 miles from home before; didn’t speak Portuguese, would be away from home & family for a year • Sara: always seeking differences between US & Canada, and is disappointed when there are similarities, like the grilled cheese sandwich she orders at the restaurant, notices every detail, traveling with family on vacation

Sample Essay for Lesson 14

Visiting another country and experiencing another way of life is thrilling. That is the message to the reader from both the story and the article. Both Sara from the story and Holly from the article are excited about their trips and interested to learn and discover new things in another country. Sara thinks that, even though it is just a vacation to Canada, “traveling was still exciting.” Holly is “thrilled” to find that she will be going to Brazil.

Both girls are eager. Holly’s eagerness is clear from the way she prepares for her year in Brazil by starting a language study program. Sara, who is already in Canada, wants to remember everything and notices every detail in her surroundings, such as the difference in the way the temperature is measured (Canada uses Celsius). Like an explorer, Sara is always seeking differences between the United States and Canada.

Because Holly is not yet in Brazil, the reader does not know her reaction to the new country. However, unlike Sara, who seems very comfortable and sure of herself, Holly is “a little scared” about her upcoming trip. She is most likely nervous because she has never traveled more than 100 miles from home before and doesn’t speak Portuguese. Also, Holly’s trip will last a whole year—that’s longer than just a vacation.

Even though Sara does not feel any fear, she does seem a little disappointed about some parts of her experience. When she sees too many similarities between her home and Canada, such as the grilled cheese sandwich on the menu at a Canadian restaurant, she feels less excited about traveling.

In spite of Sara’s disappointment and Holly’s fear, both girls are able to stay excited and happy about traveling. Holly does what she can to prepare herself by studying Portuguese before she leaves, which means she will be more comfortable when she arrives in Brazil. Even after Sara’s disappointment at the restaurant, she immediately perks up when she hears people around her speaking French, which reminds her that she is in a different country.

We, the People, Reply

- 1 They said this, they said that.
They said it all, thinking they spoke for us.
- 2 “No,” said the ladies.
“No,” said the gentleman.
“No,” we said, and we all spoke together,
in one voice.
- 3 They said, “The ladies have been invited to listen,
the ladies have been invited to learn,
but—
the ladies have *not* been invited to speak.”
- 4 Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton
shook their heads and laughed out loud.
“Not for ourselves alone!” the ladies replied,
as they tirelessly swept away the dust
of old ideas, pushing the country forward
into a future in which the ladies imagined they might
own their own land
cast their own votes
speak their own minds.
- 5 They said, “Yes, you can be educated.
Yes, you have a right to learn.
But—
not in the same place.
Not in the same way.
Not by the same teachers. Let it be
separate but equal.”
- 6 Thurgood Marshall shook his head, smiling
to himself. “Equal means
getting the same thing,
at the same time, and
in the same place,” he replied,
as he marched into battle, armed with a
briefcase and sheaves of legal papers, papers
foretelling the futures of generations.
- 7 “No,” the people said,
we said, and we all spoke together,
in one voice.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.1: Use comprehension strategies (e.g., sequencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, determining main ideas, summarizing, recognizing literary devices, paraphrasing) in contexts	15.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>When reading poetry, you often find that the poet does not always make direct statements about themes, characters, and ideas in the poem. The reader must carefully consider the information in the poem and make connections between what the poem says and what the reader already knows.</p> <p>For this question, you are asked to identify characters in the poem, people the poet refers to only as “they.” At first, you might wonder how you can identify the “they” of the poem— couldn’t “they” be anybody? But when you read carefully and understand what is happening in the poem, you can figure out who “they” are by thinking about and making connections with what you already know about the movement for a woman’s right to vote and the civil rights movement.</p>		

“We the People, Reply”

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about what happens in the poem. Then think about what you already know about the fight for a woman’s right to vote and the civil rights movement. What did women’s rights and civil rights activists want to change?

1. To whom does “They” refer in this poem?
 - A. the ladies (**What is the problem with this answer?** The ladies in the poem are Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, part of the “we” demanding change. Look back at the poem and see if you can figure out who says what.)
 - B. the gentleman (**What is the problem with this answer?** The gentleman in the poem is Thurgood Marshall, part of the “we” demanding change. From whom does he demand change?)
 - C. civil rights activists (**What is the problem with this answer?** The civil rights activists in the poem are “we, the people,” who demand change. The “they” are the ones who are resisting change.)
 - D. past lawmakers
Correct. The people referred to as “they” made laws that favored one group of people over another. The “ladies,” “gentleman,” and “the people” in the poem are part of the “we” demanding changes be made to old laws in order to treat all people equally. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.4: Distinguish fact from opinion and probability, skimming and scanning for facts, determining cause and effect, inductive and deductive reasoning, generating inquiry, and making connections with real-life situations across texts	15.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>When you are asked a question that refers to a specific instance or event in a passage, you can skim the text to find the instance or event, and then reread as much as you need to in order to determine the answer. For example, if you were asked about Thurgood Marshall’s response to the policy of separate but equal, you could skim the poem until you found Thurgood Marshall’s name in the 6th stanza of the poem. Then rereading the stanza would help you know how to answer the question.</p>		

If you answered B, C, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Find the stanza that contains the names of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. What do the two women say and do in this stanza?

2. What do Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton discuss in this poem?
- B. abolition of slavery (**What is the problem with this answer?** Even though we know from history that abolition of slavery was a subject of great interest to Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, it is not what they discuss in this poem. Reread the part of the poem in which these two women are talking.)
 - C. equality in education (**What is the problem with this answer?** Read the last four lines of the 4th stanza to find out what Anthony and Stanton discuss in the poem.)
 - D. the democratic process (**What is the problem with this answer?** Anthony and Stanton do discuss the right to vote, but this is only one part of what they wanted.)
 - A. individual rights
Correct. This answer is found in the last four lines of the 4th stanza:
“ . . . the ladies imagined they might/own their own land/cast their own votes/speak their own minds.” Anthony and Stanton wanted women to have the same rights as men did at that time in history. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.2: Analyze literary devices (e.g., figurative language, flashback, foreshadowing, dialogue) and story elements (e.g., setting, plot, character, theme, mood) within a selection	16.1

Introduction to Students:

This question asks you to identify a phrase from the poem that contains a metaphor, one of many literary devices that writers use to make their writing more interesting. Here are some examples of literary devices:

- **foreshadowing: the technique of hinting at or predicting future events**
- **flashback: the technique of showing events from the past**
- **dialogue: the speech of characters in a story, poem, or play**
- **figurative language: a literary technique of using language to have more than a direct, or literal, meaning. Metaphors and similes are two examples of figurative language. A metaphor is a figure of speech in which one thing stands for another. (You can tell a metaphor from a simile because a simile compares one thing to another, using words such as “like” or “as.”)**

“We the People, Reply”

If you answered A, B, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Remember that a metaphor uses one thing to mean something else.

1. Which phrase from the poem contains an example of metaphor?
 - A. They said it all, thinking they spoke for us. (**What is the problem with this answer?** A metaphor is a literary technique in which one thing represents another.)
 - B. “Not for ourselves alone!” the ladies replied, (**What is the problem with this answer?** This line is a direct statement that may be taken literally—it means what it says, and does not stand for another idea or thing.)
 - D. Thurgood Marshall shook his head, smiling (**What is the problem with this answer?** We do not know if Thurgood Marshall actually shook his head and smiled. This may be an invention on the part of the poet, but it is not a metaphor.)
 - C. as they tirelessly swept away the dust/of old ideas
Correct. In this metaphor, old ideas are represented by dust that is “swept away” by Anthony and Stanton, who wanted new ideas of equality to replace the old ones. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.4: Interpret texts with supportive explanations to generate connections to real-life situations and other texts (e.g., business, technical, scientific)	16.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>The formatting of text in any kind of passage or document can help you understand the content. Headings, subheadings, and bullets help you find information you need. You understand that highlighting text by using all capital letters, italics, or bold-face type is a way to emphasize, or call attention to, specific words, phrases, or other text. Italics may also be used to indicate the title of a book, magazine, or a play.</p>		

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let's talk about why. Reread each line in the poem that contains italics. How does the italic type affect how you read the poem? Does it add to the meaning?

2. The **main** purpose of printing the word *not* in italic type in this poem is to
- A. indicate where new lines begin. (**What is the problem with this answer?** Italics are not usually used to indicate changes in line breaks. Also, the word *not* appears in the middle of a line in the 3rd stanza, so this cannot be the right answer.)
 - B. highlight what should be read aloud. (**What is the problem with this answer?** If *not* were the only part of the poem read aloud, it would not be very interesting for the listener.)
 - C. identify where the speakers change. (**What is the problem with this answer?** You can tell that the speakers change because the speakers are identified in the poem ["said the ladies," "said the gentleman"] and because the dialogue is set off by quotation marks.)
 - D. suggest what to read with emphasis.
Correct. In the poem, the poet compares inequality and equality. The poet emphasizes inequalities by printing the word *not* in italic type. This is the best answer.

When at first you do not know the answer to a question, it can be very helpful to think about what you do know about what you read. What is the theme? This will help you answer questions like this one and others, because the poet uses formatting and language to support the theme, just as a fiction writer or playwright uses the plot to support the theme.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	6.3: Classify various genres according to their unique characteristics	17.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you to determine the source in which you are most likely to find the poem “We, the People, Reply.” In order to answer this question, you must draw on your own knowledge of different sources and the kinds of writing these sources would probably include.</p> <p>Here are some different kinds of writing:</p> <p><u>autobiography</u>: nonfiction writing by the author about himself or herself</p> <p><u>biography</u>: nonfiction writing about a person</p> <p><u>essay</u>: a nonfiction composition which discusses a specific topic</p> <p><u>novel</u>: a book-length work of fiction</p> <p><u>play</u>: a dramatic work of fiction for the stage</p> <p><u>poem</u>: writing in verse that may or may not be rhymed</p>		

“We the People, Reply”

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about the theme of the poem. Where would you most likely find a poem about social justice and equal rights?

1. In which type of book would you be most likely to find this poem?
 - A. a biography of famous Americans (**What is the problem with this answer?** Although Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Thurgood Marshall are famous Americans, this poem is not biographical. In addition, a biography of famous Americans would not necessarily contain poetry.)
 - B. an American history of civil rights (**What is the problem with this answer?** Although an American history of civil rights might contain poetry, this is not the **best** answer.)
 - C. a collection of autobiographical poems (**What is the problem with this answer?** “We, the People, Reply” is not an autobiographical poem.)
 - D. an anthology of political poetry
Correct. “We, the People, Reply” deals with political issues such as equality and justice, so this type of anthology would be most likely to contain the poem. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.3: Reading, comprehending, and responding to written, spoken, and visual texts in extended passages	17.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you to describe what happens in the poem. The purpose of the question is to determine how well you understand the poem as a whole. This question is actually a question about the theme, or the main idea of the poem. You can approach this question in two ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. make a general statement of what happens, using the actions taken and the words said by the characters in the poem as support 2. describe the theme of the poem, which may be described as “the fight for equality,” and use any relevant details from the poem as support 		

For open-ended questions, you need to make sure that you understand all of the requirements of the question. If your answer is correct but you do not include supporting details, your answer may not receive the score it deserves.

For this question, think about what happens in the poem. How is what happens significant? What details in the poem can you use to support your answer?

2. What is happening in this poem? Give at least two details from the poem to support your answer.

Sample answer: By describing imaginary conversations of famous activists like Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Thurgood Marshall, the poem tells a story about the civil rights movement in America and how these activists succeeded in their quests to obtain voting rights for women and end segregation.

This answer gives two details from the poem to support that the poem tells the story of the civil rights movement (lists the names of activists and specifically states the activists’ goals—“to obtain rights for women and end segregation”).

An Uncommon Appointment

When Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark retired in 1967, rumors flew through Washington, D.C. Who would President Lyndon B. Johnson appoint to replace Justice Clark? Because the Supreme Court has the responsibility and power to interpret and put in place laws for the United States, the matter was of national importance.

There were many qualified candidates throughout the country. In the days leading up to Justice Clark's retirement, one candidate in particular began to hope and dream. His name was Thurgood Marshall.

3 No ordinary lawyer, Thurgood Marshall was already the Solicitor General of the United States. His career as a civil rights lawyer had been impressive. He had argued many cases before the Supreme Court, and had won most of them. Racial integration was a cause that was special to Thurgood Marshall. He had taken the landmark case of *Brown vs. the Board of Education* to the Supreme Court. *Brown vs. the Board of Education* had to do with integrating public schools. The Supreme Court had agreed with Thurgood Marshall that public schools should be integrated.

Thurgood Marshall did not believe in the idea of "separate but equal." He believed strongly that integration was the way to peace between the races in the United States. Marshall had grown up in an integrated neighborhood in Baltimore, Maryland. He had lived and worked among people of different races. His family had encouraged him to do his best. His father had always taught him to stand up for himself. Thurgood Marshall learned these lessons of his childhood well. These lessons served Marshall well throughout his life.

Even when Thurgood Marshall was hoping to be a Supreme Court justice, he knew he would not be willing to give up his own beliefs. He would stay true to his beliefs, even if that meant he would not be appointed. Marshall told President Johnson that he would always act as he thought best. He also told President Johnson that he might sometimes disagree with the president. President Johnson was glad to hear that Thurgood Marshall would be independent. Still, Marshall did not feel sure that he was President Johnson's first choice for the job.

6 When President Johnson told Thurgood Marshall that he would be on the Supreme Court, Marshall was so surprised that he could hardly speak. He was the first African American to serve on the Supreme Court. Marshall had worked hard for civil rights for all of his life. His own great-grandfather, Thorney Marshall, had been born a slave. Now Thurgood Marshall was one of the most powerful men in the country.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	1.1: Use knowledge of word meaning and develop basic and technical vocabulary using various strategies (e.g., context clues, affixes, etymology, dictionary)	18.1

Introduction to Students:

This is a vocabulary question that asks you to find the best meaning for a word. You can often find clues to the meaning of unfamiliar words in the sentence in which the word appears.

When the word is familiar but has more than one meaning, you may want to try substituting different meanings for the word to see which meaning makes the most sense in the sentence.

“An Uncommon Appointment”

If you answered A, B, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about the significance of the case of *Brown vs. the Board of Education*. Why was this case important?

1. In paragraph 3, the author states that Marshall “had taken the landmark case of *Brown vs. the Board of Education* to the Supreme Court.” What does landmark mean in this sentence?
 - A. enormous (**What is the problem with this answer?** Although the effects of this case were extremely important to the civil rights movement and might even be described as “enormous,” this word does not mean the same as *landmark*.)
 - B. illegal (**What is the problem with this answer?** The result of the case was to make segregation in schools illegal, but the case itself was not illegal. Read the 3rd paragraph again to help you figure out what *landmark* means.)
 - D. confusing (**What is the problem with this answer?** Use the context of the paragraph in which this sentence is found to help you find a synonym for *landmark*.)
 - C. historic
Correct. When you substitute the word historic for landmark in the sentence, the sentence still makes sense. The landmark case was historic because it changed history. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.4: Distinguish fact from opinion and probability, skimming and scanning for facts, determining cause and effect, inductive and deductive reasoning, generating inquiry, and making connections with real-life situations across texts	18.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you to identify an opinion. Remember that opinions are statements that cannot be measured or verified. Opinions also vary from person to person and may be true for one person, but not true for another. Here is an opinion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catahoula leopard dogs make the best pets. <p>However, a fact is always true and can be verified. Here is a fact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catahoula leopard dogs weigh between 55–80 pounds and can be from 20 to 26 inches tall. <p>When you want to tell the difference between a fact and an opinion, think about whether you would be able to check the truth of the statement.</p>		

If you answered A, B, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think about the difference between facts and opinions.

2. Which statement is an opinion?

- A. “Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark retired in 1967.” (paragraph 1) **(What is the problem with this answer?** This statement gives a date. That is one clue that you can check the truth of this statement, which is a fact.)
- B. “Thurgood Marshall’s great-grandfather had been born a slave.” (paragraph 6) **(What is the problem with this answer?** You can verify that this is true. This statement is a fact.)
- D. “President Johnson appointed Marshall to the Supreme Court.” (paragraph 6) **(What is the problem with this answer?** Marshall’s appointment to the Supreme Court can be verified in a biography of Marshall, in books about American history, or books about civil rights.)
- C. “Marshall’s career as a civil rights lawyer had been impressive.” (paragraph 3) **Correct. An opinion is one person’s idea, belief, or judgment. In this sentence, it is the author’s opinion that Marshall’s career was impressive. This is the best answer.**

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.1: Use comprehension strategies (e.g., sequencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, determining main ideas, summarizing, recognizing literary devices, paraphrasing) in contexts	19.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you to draw a conclusion about information that is not directly stated in the passage. This means that you have to consider the information you have, and decide what that information means. First, skim the passage to find the paragraph in which Marshall’s appointment to the Supreme Court is discussed. Then reread the paragraph carefully, checking what you read against the possible answer choices to determine which one is consistent with the information in the passage and is correct.</p>		

“An Uncommon Appointment”

If you answered A, B, or C, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Reread the part of the passage that has to do with Marshall’s appointment to the Supreme Court.

1. Thurgood Marshall thought that he might not be appointed to the Supreme Court because he
 - A. had grown up in an integrated neighborhood. (**What is the problem with this answer?** An answer may be true and yet not be the best answer. Growing up in an integrated neighborhood actually helped Marshall develop his beliefs against segregation, which in turn helped him to argue successfully in the case of *Brown vs. the Board of Education*.)
 - B. had been a civil rights lawyer. (**What is the problem with this answer?** Marshall was a civil rights lawyer, but he would have known that this would not have kept him from being appointed to the Supreme Court. What is the main focus of the 5th paragraph?)
 - C. was encouraged by his parents to do his best. (**What is the problem with this answer?** Marshall was a civil rights lawyer, but he would have known that this would not have kept him from being appointed to the Supreme Court.)
 - D. planned to stay true to his beliefs.
Correct. The clue to this answer can be found in the 5th paragraph: “He would stay true to his beliefs, even if that meant he would not be appointed.” This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.3: Analyze the effects of an author's purpose and point of view	19.2
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>An author does not need to make a direct statement for you to understand the author's attitudes and beliefs. Two ways an author reveals his or her attitude toward the subject are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by choosing certain words to describe the subject • by choosing certain kinds of supporting details and information to use to support assertions <p>An author may use flattering language that shows admiration, or critical language that shows that the author has a poor opinion of the subject. Supporting assertions with information and details that show the subject in a flattering light reveal that the author has positive feelings about the subject.</p>		

If you answered A, B, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let's talk about why. Think about the information the author has selected to tell the reader about Thurgood Marshall. According to the author, what kind of person is Thurgood Marshall? Understanding how the author intends the reader to feel about a subject will help you answer the question correctly.

2. Which **best** describes the writer's feelings toward Thurgood Marshall?
- A. relief (**What is the problem with this answer?** Think about the words the author uses to describe Thurgood Marshall. What do these words show about the writer's feelings toward Marshall?)
- B. surprise (**What is the problem with this answer?** Think about the tone of the passage.)
- D. disappointment (**What is the problem with this answer?** The passage describes Marshall's successful career, so this cannot be right.)
- C. admiration
Correct. Throughout the passages, the writer expresses admiration for Marshall, saying that Marshall was "no ordinary lawyer," and that "his career ... had been impressive." The last sentence of the passage, "Now Thurgood Marshall was one of the most powerful men in the country" sums up the author's attitude toward Marshall. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	6.2: Identify, compare, and respond to a variety of classic and contemporary literature from many genres (e.g., folktales, legends, myths, biography, autobiography, poetry, fiction, nonfiction, novels, drama)	20.1
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>This question asks you to identify the purpose of the passage. Writers produce different kinds of writing for different purposes. A poem might be written to celebrate the joy of a summer day. A dramatic story might be written to explore reasons people interact with others the way they do. A humorous story or a tall tale might be written simply as entertainment. How do you know the purpose of different types of text?</p> <p>Understanding the main idea can help you determine the purpose. For example, if the main idea of a passage is how to replace the batteries in a portable CD player, you know that the purpose of the writing is to give you instructions.</p>		

“An Uncommon Appointment”

If you answered B, C, or D, your answer is incorrect. Let’s talk about why. Think again about your experience with the passage. What is the main idea? Why might you read such a passage?

1. The purpose of the passage is to
 - B. persuade. **(What is the problem with this answer?** The writer does not use persuasive techniques in this passage, nor is the writer attempting to win the reader’s support or approval.)
 - C. instruct. **(What is the problem with this answer?** There are no instructions or directions in this passage.)
 - D. entertain. **(What is the problem with this answer?** Even though it is interesting to read about Thurgood Marshall, the main purpose of the passage is not to entertain.)
 - A. inform.
Correct. The passage informs the reader about the life and career of Thurgood Marshall, and how he became the first African American to serve on the Supreme Court. This is the best answer.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	7.2: Problem solve by using reasoning skills, life experiences, accumulated knowledge, and relevant available information	20.2

Introduction to Students:

This question has to do with both the author’s feeling toward his subject and the main idea of the passage.

The title of a passage often reveals the main idea and other important information, or may emphasize a feeling or a detail that is symbolic or otherwise important to the writer. In the case of this passage, the word “uncommon” could apply to Marshall’s personal traits, his career, his persistence in remaining true to his beliefs, and, of course, the fact that he was the first African American to be appointed to the Supreme Court.

This question asks you to do two things:

- **interpret why the author chose the title “An Uncommon Appointment”**
- **support your interpretation with information from the passage**

Think about what the word “uncommon” means and how it might apply to Thurgood Marshall and his career. What evidence from the passage may be used to show that Thurgood Marshall’s appointment was “uncommon”?

2. Give **two** reasons the writer considers Thurgood Marshall’s appointment “uncommon” based on information in the passage.

Sample answer: Not only was Marshall the first African American Supreme justice, he was an uncommon man who would not give up his own beliefs because he had been brought up to stand up for himself.

This answer gives two reasons that the writer considers Marshall’s appointment “uncommon.” Both reasons are based on information from the passage.

Grade/Subject	Content Standard	Lesson No.
8 ELA	6.1: Identify, compare, and respond to United States and world literature that represents the experiences and traditions of diverse ethnic groups	21
<p>Introduction to Students:</p> <p>When you respond to an essay question, it is very important that you have a clear understanding of the question and what the question asks you to do. For this question, you are asked to write an essay about what both the poem and the article have to say about the concept of “separate but equal.”</p> <p>Here are some steps you might follow to make sure your writing meets all of the requirements of the task:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the question carefully. 2. Make sure you understand what the question asks you to do. 3. Organize your ideas. Jot down notes, write an outline, map your ideas—you can organize your ideas in many different ways. The most important thing is that you figure out a way to present your ideas in a logical way that makes sense. 4. Choose supporting examples from the poem and the article. 5. If you have time, write a rough draft. 6. Check your writing, using a writer’s checklist. Correct errors, revise any problems in style or focus, and write a final draft. 		

“An Uncommon Appointment” and “We the People, Reply”

This question asks you to discuss what the two passages imply about the “separate but equal” policy that was the foundation of segregation in America. From reading the passages, you know that the concept of “separate but equal” resulted in injustice and was eventually rejected by Americans.

Think of one sentence that sums up your ideas about how the two passages treat the concept of “separate but equal.” This sentence (or thesis statement) can form the foundation for your essay. You can build from this foundation, explaining what you mean and using quotes and examples from the passage.

- 1. Explain what “We, the People, Reply” and Thurgood Marshall in “An Uncommon Appointment” suggest about the concept of “separate but equal.” Give **two** examples from each as support.**

Before you begin writing, it is a good idea to take a few minutes to plan your writing. You may even want to make some notes or write an outline. An outline is especially helpful when you have a limited amount of time in which to write.

(Teachers may want to make transparencies of the following pages to discuss with students.)

One way to plan your writing might be to write notes like the following:

<p>What the Poem Says about Separate but Equal</p>	<p>What Thurgood Marshall Said about Separate but Equal</p>
<p>Separate means not equal</p>	<p>Separate but equal caused more problems between people & was not fair</p>
<p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Equal means getting the same thing at the same time and in the same place” 2. to be educated “not in the same place/not in the same way/not by the same teachers” was not equal! 	<p>Examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peace between races would come from integration, not segregation 2. Marshall grew up in an integrated neighborhood. 3. Marshall won the <i>Brown vs. Board of Education</i> case.

Sample Essay for Lesson 21

The concept of “separate but equal” is a policy that was used to keep the races apart in the United States after the Civil War until the policy was challenged by the civil rights movement. “Separate but equal” meant that African American children were educated in a different place and by different teachers than white children, but they were supposed to receive the same education. Both the poem and the biographical article about Thurgood Marshall point out that the policy is unfair, and that it causes problems rather than solving them.*

One problem with the “separate but equal” policy is that forbidding one group to be in the same place with another group creates an inequality. In the poem, Thurgood Marshall is quoted as saying that “equal means getting the same thing at the same time and in the same place.” To be educated “not in the same place/not in the same way/not by the same teachers” was not equal. In the poem, Marshall fights the policy by marching “into battle, armed with a briefcase and sheaves of legal papers.”

Another problem with the policy of keeping races apart was that it led to misunderstanding and not getting along. It is clear from the article that Thurgood Marshall, who grew up in an integrated neighborhood, felt strongly that peace between races would come from integration, not segregation. Marshall’s strong feelings about the need for integration probably helped him in his victory when he went to court on the *Brown vs. Board of Education* case.

Both the poem and the article suggest that “separate but equal” may have kept the races apart, but it did nothing to make sure there was equality. Only by getting rid of the policy could the United States start moving toward equality for all.

* The thesis statement is underlined; this is the idea that is explained and supported in the remaining paragraphs.