

“The New School”

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories

Directions: Read the story. Then answer the questions below.

Tracey is starting a new school today.

She is very sad. She is very scared.

“I don’t want to go to school today,” Tracey tells her dad.

“I understand, sweetheart,” Dad says. “Starting a new school can be very scary.”

Tracey has moved to a new town. She has moved to a new house. She is starting a new school today. She has done all of this in a week!

“I feel sick,” Tracey says. “My stomach hurts. I can’t eat breakfast.”

“I think that is because you are **nervous**,” Dad says. He pats Tracey’s hair. He gives her a little hug. “Try drinking just a little juice. Then I will walk you to school.”

Tracey and her dad walk to school.

Tracey thinks about many things.

Will I make friends?

Will I like my teacher?

What if I don’t know the answer to a question?

Will kids laugh at me?

What if no one likes me?

“We’re here,” says Dad.

Tracey looks up at the big building. Her other school was small.

Tracey wishes she could run away.

She knows she cannot.

She takes a deep breath.

She walks up the steps to school.

She walks into her third grade classroom.

“That must be Tracey,” she hears a boy say.

“Hello, Tracey!”

“Welcome, Tracey!”

“Let me show you around.”



Everyone seems kind. Tracey feels a little better.

But she is still not happy. She is still a little scared. She cannot eat her lunch.

Dad picks Tracey up after school.

"How was your day?" he asks.

"Okay," she says.

"It will get better," Dad says. "Big changes are hard."

"I know," says Tracey. She reaches for her dad's hand to hold as they walk home.

Questions:

1) Why is Tracey sad and scared?

- A. She is moving to a new house today.
- B. She is moving to a new town today.
- C. She is starting a new school today.
- D. She is walking to school alone today.

2) What has Tracey done during the week?

- I. made a new friend
 - II. moved to a new town
 - III. moved to a new house
- A. I only
 - B. I and II
 - C. II and III
 - D. I, II, and III

3) What grade is Tracey in?

- A. second grade
- B. third grade
- C. fourth grade
- D. fifth grade

4) Why can't Tracey eat breakfast?

- I. She is nervous.
 - II. Her stomach hurts.
 - III. She is late for school.
- A. I only
 - B. I and II
 - C. II and III
 - D. I, II, and III

5) Why does Tracey's dad think she feels sick?

- A. because she is sleepy
- B. because she is nervous
- C. because she has a cold
- D. because she ate too much

6) As used at the beginning of the story, what does **nervous** mean?

- A. to be happy
- B. to be hungry
- C. to be mad
- D. to be scared

Questions (continued):

7) What does Dad tell Tracey to do before school?

- A. stop crying
- B. get her bag
- C. drink some juice
- D. put on her shoes

8) How do Tracey and Dad get to school?

- A. They drive.
- B. They walk.
- C. They run.
- D. They take the bus.

9) What does Tracey think about most as she walks?

- A. her math test
- B. answering questions
- C. having friends
- D. her teachers

10) When does Tracey seem to be brave?

- A. when she cannot eat
- B. when she feels better
- C. when she holds her dad's hand
- D. when she walks up the steps to the school

11) What is Tracey's new school like?

- A. big
- B. dirty
- C. loud
- D. small

12) How do the children in Tracey's class seem?

- A. kind
- B. smart
- C. funny
- D. different

Have you ever felt nervous about doing something new? Explain.

Answers and Explanations

1) **C**

In paragraph 1, the story says, “Tracey is starting a new school today.” In paragraph 2, the reader learns that “she is very sad. She is very scared.” In paragraph 3, Tracey tells her dad, “I don’t want to go to school today.” We can understand that Tracey is “sad and scared” because she is starting a new school today. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

At the beginning of the story we learn, Tracey “has moved to a new house.” It has already happened, so she is not moving to a new house today. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. At the beginning of the story we learn, “Tracey has moved to a new town.” It has also already happened, so she is not moving to a new town today. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. Near the middle of the story we learn that “Tracey and her dad walk to school.” Since Tracey walks with her dad, she is not alone. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

2) **C**

The story does not say that Tracey has made a new friend. This eliminates **option (I)**. In paragraph 5, the reader learns that “Tracey has moved to a new town.” This supports **option (II)**. Later in paragraph 5, the reader finds out that Tracey “has moved to a new house.” This supports **option (III)**. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

3) **B**

In the middle of the story it says, “She walked into her third grade classroom.” This lets us know that Tracey is in third grade. Therefore **(B)** is correct. The story does not contain information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

4) **B**

nervous (*adjective*): highly excitable; unnaturally or acutely uneasy or apprehensive.

Tracey cannot eat breakfast. In the middle of the story, Tracey’s dad says, “I think that is because you are nervous.” As Tracy walks to school, she worries about “many things,” most of which involve life at her new school. We can understand that she is nervous. This supports **option (I)**. Near the beginning of the story, Tracey says, “My stomach hurts. I can’t eat breakfast.” This supports **option (II)**. The story does not say that Tracey is late for school. This eliminates **option (III)**. Therefore **(B)** is correct.

5) **B**

Near the beginning of the story, Tracey tells her dad, “I feel sick.” Next, Tracey’s dad tells her, “I think that is because you are nervous.” Therefore **(B)** is the correct answer. The story does not contain information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

6) **D**

At the beginning, the story tells us that Tracey is “scared” of starting a new school. Then, Tracey tells her dad that she feels “sick,” her “stomach hurts,” and she “can’t eat breakfast.” Later, Tracey’s dad says, “I think that is because you are nervous.” Tracey’s dad is telling her that she feels this way because she is *nervous*. Using this information we can understand that nervous can mean *scared*. Therefore **(D)** is correct. The story does not contain information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

7) **C**

In the middle of the story, Tracey’s dad tells her, “Try drinking just a little juice.” Therefore **(C)** is correct. The story does not contain information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

8) **B**

In the middle of the story, the author writes, “Tracey and her dad walk to school.” Therefore **(B)** is correct. Tracey wishes she could run away, but she does not run. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect. The story does not contain information to support answer choices **(A)** and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

9) **C**

In the middle of the story, it says, “Tracey thinks about many things.” Tracey does not think about her math test. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. She thinks about answering questions. She also thinks about her teachers. But she thinks *most* about having friends. She thinks, “Will I make friends?” She also thinks, “What if kids laugh at me?” and “What if no one likes me?” Both of these ideas are related to having friends. Your friends do not laugh at you. Your friends like you. Tracey thinks about having friends more than she thinks about any other subject. Therefore **(B)** and **(D)** are incorrect, and **(C)** is the correct answer.

10) **D**

At the beginning of the story, the reader learns that Tracey is “scared” because she is starting a new school. Near the end of the story, Tracey “walks up the steps to school” even though she is scared. Doing something even when you are scared is *brave*. Therefore **(D)** is correct.

Tracey cannot eat because she is scared. It is not brave to not eat. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. Tracey feels better because she was brave, but feeling better is not the action that made her seem most brave. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. Tracey holds her dad’s hand for comfort. This does not make her seem brave. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

11) **A**

Near the end of the story, the author writes, "Tracey looked up at the big building." Because we know Tracey is walking to school, we can understand that the "big building" is where she will go to school. This lets us know that Tracey's new school is big. Later in the same paragraph we learn that "her other school was small." Tracey's other school was small, but her new school is big. Therefore **(A)** is the correct answer.

The story does not contain information to support answer choices **(B)** and **(C)**. Therefore they are incorrect. Tracey's other school was small, but not her new school. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

12) **A**

Near the end of the story, the author says, "Everyone seems kind." At school other children have said, "Hello, Tracey;" "Welcome, Tracey;" and "Let me show you around." This behavior tells us that at the new school everyone seems *kind*. Therefore **(A)** is correct.

The story does not contain information to support answer choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.