

## • Reading Comprehension 7 Level 10

**Directions:** Read the passage. Then answer the questions below.

The trees were not old, but they grew thickly round the glade: there was no outlook, except northeastward upon distant hill-tops, or straight upward to the sky; and the encampment felt secure and private like a room. By the time I had made my arrangements and fed Modestine, the day was already beginning to decline. I buckled myself to the knees into my sack and made a hearty meal; and as soon as the sun went down, I pulled my cap over my eyes and fell asleep.

Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof; but in the open world it passes lightly, with its stars and dews and perfumes, and the hours are marked by changes in the face of Nature. What seems a kind of temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains, is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afield. All night long he can hear Nature breathing deeply and freely; even as she takes her rest she turns and smiles; and there is one stirring hour unknown to those who dwell in houses, when a wakeful influence goes abroad over the sleeping hemisphere, and all the outdoor world are on their feet. It is then that the cock first crows, not this time to announce the dawn, but like a cheerful watchman speeding the course of night. Cattle awake on the meadows; sheep break their fast on dewy hillsides, and change to a new lair among the ferns; and houseless men, who have lain down with the fowls, open their dim eyes and behold the beauty of the night.

The stars were clear, colored, and jewel-like, but not frosty. A faint silvery vapor stood for the Milky Way. All around me the black fir-points stood upright and stock-still. By the whiteness of the pack-saddle, I could see Modestine walking round and round at the length of her tether; I could hear her steadily munching at the sward; but there was not another sound, save the indescribable quiet talk of the runnel over the stones. I lay lazily smoking and studying the color of the sky, as we call the void of space, where it showed a reddish gray behind the pines to where it showed a glossy blue-black between the stars. As if to be more like a peddler, I wear a silver ring. This I could see faintly shining as I raised or lowered the cigarette; and at each whiff the inside of my hand was illuminated, and became for a second the highest light in the landscape.

A faint wind, more like a moving coolness than a stream of air, passed down the glade from time to time; so that even in my great chamber the air was being renewed all night long. I thought with horror of the inn at Chasserades and the congregated night caps; with horror of the nocturnal prowess of clerks and students, of hot theatres, and passkeys and close rooms. I have not often enjoyed a more serene possession of myself, nor felt more independent of material aids. The outer world, from which we cower into our houses, seemed after all a gentle, habitable place; and night after night a man's bed, it seemed, was laid and waiting for him in the fields, where God keeps an open house.

### Questions

- 1) Which of the following literary devices does the author employ throughout the passage?
  - A. *Imagery*, characterized by using vivid or figurative language to appeal to the reader's senses.
  - B. *Biography*, characterized as an account of a person's life written by another person.
  - C. *Inversion*, characterized by the reversal of the usual order of words in order to add emphasis or character.
  - D. *Satire*, characterized by the use of ridicule to expose a vice, weakness, or flaw. Though satire may be humorous, its purpose is not to entertain but to derive a reaction of contempt from the reader.
  - E. *Symbolism*, characterized by the use of an object or action that contains several layers of meaning, often concealed at first sight. A symbol means something more than just its literal meaning.
  
- 2) The author contrasts sleeping indoors to sleeping outdoors in order to make the point that
  - A. sleeping outdoors is more freeing and satisfying than sleeping indoors
  - B. the sounds of nature and animal activity make the outdoors a poor environment for sleeping
  - C. under certain conditions, sleeping outdoors can be an enjoyable experience
  - D. animals are more active at night while humans are more active in the daytime
  - E. sleeping in an open field feels similar to sleeping in a room

- 3) In paragraph 2, the author writes, "All night long he can hear Nature breathing deeply and freely; even as she takes her rest she turns and smiles." Which of the following literary devices is used in this sentence?
- A. *Simile*, characterized by the making of a comparison between two unrelated and dissimilar things, people, beings, places, or concepts. Similes allow the reader to better understand the sentiment the author wishes to convey. Similes are marked by the use of the words "as" or "like."
  - B. *Juxtaposition*, characterized by the placement of a person, concept, place, idea, or theme parallel to another. This usually works to highlight the contrast between the two or to compare them.
  - C. *Cliché*, characterized by a trite or overused expression or idea. This usually expresses a popular or common thought or idea that has lost originality, ingenuity, and impact by overuse.
  - D. *Hyperbole*, characterized by the use of specific words and phrases that exaggerate and overemphasize the core of the statement in order to produce a grander, more noticeable effect. This usually works to convey an action or sentiment that is generally not realistically possible or plausible but helps to emphasize an emotion.
  - E. *Personification*, characterized by the attribution of human traits or characteristics to non-human animals, inanimate objects, or abstract ideas.
- 4) Based on information in the passage, it can be inferred that Modestine could be any of the following animals except a
- A. donkey
  - B. dog
  - C. horse
  - D. llama
  - E. mule
- 5) According to the author, the encampment
- I. has a spacious view
  - II. is surrounded by pine trees
  - III. is near farms with herds of sheep and cattle
- A. I only
  - B. II only
  - C. I and II only
  - D. II and III only
  - E. I, II, and III
- 6) The author's tone can best be described as
- A. matter-of-fact
  - B. contented
  - C. nostalgic
  - D. joyous
  - E. weary
- 7) The primary purpose of the passage is to
- A. convince readers to experience nature by camping outdoors
  - B. report on animal activity that occurs only at night
  - C. describe the author's impressions of a night spent outdoors
  - D. enlighten those who are too afraid to sleep without a roof over their heads
  - E. justify the author's decision to leave the inn and sleep outdoors

## Answers and Explanations

1) **A**

Throughout the passage, the author uses vivid descriptions to recreate his experience in the mind of the reader. In paragraph 1, he describes the encampment: "The trees were not old, but they grew thickly round the glade: there was no outlook, except northeastward upon distant hill-tops, or straight upward to the sky; and the encampment felt secure and private like a room." This description helps the reader visualize the setting. In paragraph 3, his language creates more images for the reader: "The stars were clear, colored, and jewel-like, but not frosty. A faint silvery vapor stood for the Milky Way. All around me the black fir-points stood upright and stock-still." In paragraph 3, the author also describes the sounds he hears: "I could hear her steadily munching at the sward; but there was not another sound, save the indescribable quiet talk of the runnel over the stones." The author employs imagery, or these vivid descriptions, throughout the passage. Therefore **(A)** is correct. The author uses "I" throughout the passage, indicating that he is writing about his own life, not someone else's. This eliminates **(B)**. The author does not consistently reverse standard word order in the passage, so **(C)** is incorrect. The author does not use ridicule to expose human vice or weakness, so **(D)** is incorrect. The objects and ideas in the passage do not contain layers of meaning; their meanings are literal, not symbolic. Therefore **(E)** is incorrect.

2) **A**

In paragraph 2, the author writes, "Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof, but in the open world it passes lightly." He goes on to say, "What seems a kind temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains, is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afield." By using words like "dead," "monotonous," and "choked" to describe sleeping indoors, he depicts sleeping indoors as constrained and oppressive. By using words like "light," "open," and "living" to describe sleeping outdoors, he depicts this experience as being open, free, and satisfying. Furthermore, in paragraph 4, the author describes sleeping in an inn and associating with others in "close rooms" as horrifying when compared to the serenity he finds "waiting for him in the fields." Throughout the passage, he contrasts the freedom and satisfaction he finds sleeping outdoors with the constraint and oppression he felt sleeping indoors. This means that the author contrasts sleeping indoors to sleeping outdoors in order to make the point that sleeping outdoors is more freeing and satisfying than sleeping indoors. Therefore **(A)** is correct. In paragraphs 2 and 3, the author describes the sounds of nature and animal activity he hears while sleeping outdoors, but he does not indicate that these sounds are distracting or adversely affect his sleep. Rather, he describes them as factors that contribute to the "light and living slumber" of a man outside. This eliminates **(B)**. While the author would likely agree that under certain conditions, sleeping outdoors can be an enjoyable experience, he does not contrast it with sleeping indoors in order to make this point. Rather than focusing on certain necessary conditions, he focuses on how free and satisfying it is to sleep outdoors compared to how "choked" it feels to sleep indoors. This means **(C)** is not the best choice. Although the author describes animal activity at night, he does not make the point that this contrasts with humans, who are more active in the daytime. This makes **(D)** incorrect. In paragraph 1, the author compares sleeping in a glade or encampment to a "secure and private" room. However, we can infer from the description of the trees surrounding him and the lack of a view that a glade is not an open field. Moreover, this is one detail in the description rather than a larger point he makes in the passage. This means **(E)** is incorrect.

3) **E**

In paragraph 2, the author writes, "All night long he can hear Nature breathing deeply and freely; even as she takes her rest she turns and smiles." The author attributes to Nature, the "she" in the sentence, such human characteristics as breathing, resting, turning, and smiling. Therefore **(E)** is correct. Although Nature is given human characteristics in this line, there is no direct comparison between Nature and a human being. This means **(A)** is incorrect. The passage does not provide information to support choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

4) **B**

In paragraph 3, the author can see Modestine "by the whiteness of the pack-saddle." A dog does not carry a pack or wear a saddle. Using this information, we can infer that Modestine could be any of the following animals except a dog. Therefore **(B)** is correct. Donkeys, horses, llamas, and mules can all carry packs and be saddled, so Modestine could be any of these animals. This means that **(A)**, **(C)**, **(D)**, and **(E)** are incorrect.

5) **B**

In paragraph 1, the author states that the trees "grew thickly round the glade: there was no outlook, except northeastward upon the distant hill-tops, or straight upward to the sky; and the encampment felt secure and private, like a room." Based on this information, it can be inferred that the encampment did not have a spacious view. This eliminates **option (I)**. The author describes the encampment as having trees that "grew thickly round the glade" in paragraph 1. Then the author describes the sky as being a "reddish gray behind the pines" in paragraph 3. Based on this information, it can be determined that the encampment was surrounded by trees and that these trees were pines. The title of the passage, "A Night in the Pines," supports this conclusion. This supports **option (II)**. In paragraph 2, the author imagines the activity of animals and nature that one "can" hear in the "outdoor world" in the hour before dawn. However, by studying the language closely, it is clear that these are not necessarily the sounds he hears in his encampment. He writes: "Cattle awake on the meadows; sheep break their fast on dewy hillsides, and change to a new lair among the ferns; and houseless men, who have lain down with the fowls, open their dim eyes and behold the beauty of the night." The use of plural words and phrases like "the meadows" and "hillsides" and "houseless men" indicate that the author is speaking of a universal, hypothetical experience that "men" can have outdoors. His own experience is described in paragraph 3, when the only sounds he can hear are those of Modestine "munching" and the "quiet talk of the runnel over the stones." This means that the passage does not provide evidence to support the conclusion that the setting is near farms with herds of sheep and cattle. This eliminates **option (III)**. Therefore **(B)** is correct.

6) **B**

In the passage, the author describes what he calls “the beauty of the night” as seen outdoors. The author appreciates his experience in the outdoors, especially when he compares it in the final paragraph to his experiences at an inn, in “hot theatres,” and in “close rooms.” In the final paragraph, he also states, “I have not often enjoyed a more serene possession of myself, nor felt more independent of material aids.” Based on this information, we can infer that the author is deeply satisfied and contented with his experience. Therefore **(B)** is correct. A matter-of-fact tone is objective and impartial, presenting information with little emotion. In this passage, the author expresses strong feelings of gratitude and contentment, so **(A)** is incorrect. A nostalgic tone conveys a sense of longing for the past. The author seems content with the present, and even recalls some of his past experiences “with horror.” This means **(C)** is incorrect. A joyous tone conveys extreme happiness. Although the author seems satisfied, he does not express joy so much as contentment. This means **(D)** is not the best choice. The author describes a night spent outdoors. Although he may be weary or tired because it is nighttime, he does not have a weary attitude towards his experience outdoors. A weary tone would convey being tired of an experience, but the author is contented with his experience. This eliminates **(E)**.

7) **C**

The purpose of a passage is directly related to the content of the passage. In paragraph 1, the author describes the setting where he chooses to sleep. In paragraph 2, the author reflects on the benefits of sleeping outdoors as compared to sleeping indoors. In paragraph 3, the author describes what he sees and hears during the night. In the final paragraph, the author reflects upon the serenity and contentment he feels outdoors and the “horror” with which he recalls some of his past nights spent indoors or in the company of others. Based on this overview, we can determine that the primary purpose of the passage is to describe one man’s account of his impressions, gained from both observation and reflection, during a night spent camping outdoors. Therefore **(C)** is correct. Although the author presents his experience camping outdoors in a positive light, he does not attempt to convince readers that they should seek the same experience. This means **(A)** is incorrect. In paragraph 2, the author notes some common animal activity in the night. However, the rest of the passage is devoted to his own experiences and reflections, not to animal activity, so **(B)** is incorrect. Although the information in this passage could enlighten those who are too afraid to sleep without a roof over their heads about the benefits of sleeping outdoors, the author’s purpose is to describe his own experiences, not necessarily to enlighten others. His tone is personal and reflective, and he does not address the issue of readers who might be too afraid to sleep outdoors. This means **(D)** is incorrect. While it does seem that the author has chosen to sleep outdoors over sleeping at an inn, the passage does not specifically discuss this decision and the author does not express a need to justify it. His focus is on the description of his surroundings, not the justification of his actions. This eliminates **(E)**.