

• Reading Comprehension 6 Level 4

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

In India, people celebrate the festival of Holi (pronounced “hoh-lee”) in March. This festival occurs after the wheat harvest. Wheat is used to make many important foods in India. Holi celebrates the triumph of good over evil.

Holi is a very bright celebration. People light bonfires, tell stories, and cover each other in a variety of colored powders. These powders are called gulal (pronounced “goo-lahl”). People are then sprayed with water, and everyone becomes a beautiful, brightly colored mess. This custom of coloring people comes from a legend about a **trickster** who loved to trick his friends by pouring colored water on them.

Questions

- 1) The festival of Holi occurs after
 - A. the month of March
 - B. the wheat harvest
 - C. people are sprayed with water
 - D. people are covered with colorful powders

- 2) The custom of coloring people during Holi comes from
 - A. a legend about a trickster
 - B. stories that are told around a bonfire
 - C. the triumph of good over evil
 - D. harvesting wheat in March

- 3) Which word best describes the festival of Holi?
 - A. colorful
 - B. tricky
 - C. flavorful
 - D. wet

- 4) As used in paragraph 2, which of the following best illustrates the actions of a **trickster**?
 - A. For Tony’s birthday, Mike brings him a soccer jersey signed by his favorite player.
 - B. Micah invites Delea to work with his group for a school project, and then he asks his mom to bake brownies when the group meets to work.
 - C. Jill excitedly convinces Mae to come see a rabbit outside, but it turns out that the rabbit is a stone statue Jill placed in the garden.
 - D. Robert refuses to let Travis play basketball at lunch, because Travis is just learning to play.

Answers and Explanations

1) **B**

To answer this detail question correctly, we need to find where the author discusses the basic background of the festival of Holi in the passage. A good way to do this is to scan the topic sentence of each paragraph, since this sentence will likely tell us what information can be found in the rest of that paragraph. The topic sentence of the first paragraph reads: "In India, people celebrate the festival of Holi (pronounced 'hoh-lee') in March." This lets us know that the details we are looking for can likely be found in the first paragraph. In the first paragraph, after introducing the festival of Holi, the author writes, "This festival occurs after the wheat harvest." Using this information, we can tell that the festival of Holi occurs after the wheat harvest. This means **(B)** is correct. In the first paragraph, the author writes, "people celebrate the festival of Holi (pronounced 'hoh-lee') in March." Since this festival is celebrated in March, we can understand that Holi does not occur after the month of March. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. In paragraph 2, the author writes, "People are then sprayed with water, and everyone becomes a beautiful, brightly colored mess." This detail explains one part of the celebration of the festival of Holi. Because it happens during Holi, we can understand that the festival of Holi does not occur after people are sprayed with water. This means choice **(C)** is incorrect. In paragraph 2, the author writes, "People light bonfires, tell stories, and cover each other in a variety of colored powders." This detail explains one part of the celebration of the festival of Holi. Because it happens during Holi, we can understand that the festival of Holi does not occur after people are covered with colorful powders. This means **(D)** is incorrect.

2) **A**

To answer this detail question correctly, we need to find where the author discusses the history behind the custom of coloring people during Holi. A good way to do this is to scan the passage for words like "custom," "history," or "from," since these words will likely tell us the location of the information we want. The last sentence of paragraph 2 reads: "This custom of coloring people comes from a legend about a trickster who loved to trick his friends by pouring colored water on them." This lets us know that the details we are looking for can likely be found in this part of the passage. In paragraph 2, the author writes, "This custom of coloring people comes from a legend about a trickster who loved to trick his friends by pouring colored water on them." From this, we can tell that the custom of coloring people during Holi comes from a legend about a trickster, so **(A)** is correct. In paragraph 2, the author writes, "People light bonfires, tell stories, and cover each other in a variety of colored powders." From this, we can tell that stories are told around a bonfire during the festival of Holi, but the author never says that all of these stories that are told explain the custom of coloring people. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. In the first paragraph, the author writes, "Holi celebrates the triumph of good over evil." This lets us know what the festival of Holi celebrates, but it does not explain the custom of coloring people. The author never writes that the custom of coloring people comes from the triumph of good over evil. This means **(C)** is incorrect. In the first paragraph, the author explains that the "festival occurs after the wheat harvest," in March. This fact does not, however, explain how the custom of coloring people came about. Using this information, we can tell that the custom of coloring people during Holi does not come from harvesting wheat in March. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

3) **A**

In paragraph 2, the author writes, "Holi is a very bright celebration." If we read on—searching for context clues—we can find out what the author means by "bright" here. The author goes on to describe how people "cover each other in a variety of colored powders," and "everyone becomes a beautiful, brightly colored mess." This lets us know that bright must mean something like colorful since everyone becomes a "brightly colored mess" from the powders used during the festival of Holi. Using this information, we can tell that being colorful is an important part of this celebration. This lets us know that the word that best describes the festival of Holi is colorful, and **(A)** is correct. In paragraph 2, the author writes, "This custom of coloring people comes from a legend about a trickster who loved to trick his friends by pouring colored water on them." From this, we can see that the custom of coloring people during Holi comes from a trickster who played tricks on his friends. While it might seem like the word tricky is involved in the festival of Holi, the author provides this background detail about the trickster and his tricks to explain a more important aspect of the festival—the reason why people become so colorful. Using this information, we can tell that the word tricky is not the best word to describe the festival of Holi. This means **(B)** is incorrect. The passage does not provide any information to support choices **(C)** or **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

4) **C**

trickster (*noun*): a person who plays tricks.

In paragraph 2, the author writes, "This custom of coloring people comes from a legend about a trickster who loved to trick his friends..." We can use context clues—hints from words or phrases we understand around the unknown word—to help figure out a close definition for trickster. The selection says that a trickster "loved to trick his friends," so this lets us know that a trickster must be a person who plays tricks on people. If Jill pretends to be excited about a "rabbit" outside to get Mae to come look, but it turns out the rabbit was a stone statue that Jill placed in the garden, we can tell that Jill is playing a trick on Mae. This makes Jill a person who plays tricks, or a trickster. Using the above information, we can understand that the example of Jill and Mae best illustrates the actions of a trickster, so choice **(C)** is correct. If Mike presents Tony with a signed soccer jersey for Tony's birthday, this would be a kind gesture. Mike would not be tricking Tony, since he is giving him a real birthday gift. This lets us know that the example of Tony and Mike does not best illustrate the actions of a trickster, so we can eliminate **(A)**. If Micah invites Delea to work with his group for a school project, he is being nice by including his classmate. There is no information here that would lead us to believe Micah is playing a trick on Delea. If Mike asks his mother to bake brownies when the group meets to work, we can see that this is not a trick, it is just a favor he asks of his mom. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. Robert's refusal to let Travis play basketball at lunch—because Travis is just learning to play—is not a nice thing to do. There is no trick involved in what Roberts does when he refuses, so Roberts' actions are not like a trickster's. This lets us know that the example of Robert and Travis does not best illustrate the actions of a trickster, so **(D)** is incorrect.