

## • Reading Comprehension 7 Level 6

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

Arrowheads, which are ancient hunting tools, are often themselves “hunted” for their interesting value both as artifacts and as art. Some of the oldest arrowheads in the United States date back 12,000 years! They are not very difficult to find. You need only to walk with downcast eyes in a field that has been recently tilled for the spring planting season, and you might find one.

Arrowheads are tiny stones or pieces of wood, bone, or metal which have been sharpened in order to create a tipped weapon used in hunting. The material is **honed** to an edge, usually in a triangular fashion, and is brought to a deadly tip. On the edge opposite the tip is a flared tail. Though designs vary depending on the region, purpose, and era of the arrowhead’s origin, the tails serve the same purpose. The tail of the arrowhead is meant to be strapped onto a shaft, which is a straight wooden piece such as a spear or an arrow. When combined, the arrowhead point and the shaft become a lethal **projectile** weapon to be thrown by arm or shot with a bow at prey.

Indian arrowheads are important artifacts that give archeologists (scientists who study past human societies) clues about the lives of Native Americans. By analyzing an arrowhead’s shape, they can determine the advancement of tool technologies among certain Native American groups. By determining the origin of the arrowhead material (bone, rock, wood, or metal), they can trace the patterns of travel and trade of the hunters. By examining the location of the arrowheads, archeologists can map out hunting grounds and other social patterns.

Arrowheads are commonly found along riverbanks or near creek beds because animals drawn to natural water sources to sustain life were regularly found drinking along the banks. For this reason, riverbeds were a prime hunting ground for the Native Americans. Now, dry and active riverbeds are prime hunting grounds for arrowhead collectors.

Indian arrowheads are tiny pieces of history that fit in the palm of your hand. They are diary entries in the life of a hunter. They are museum pieces that hide in the dirt. They are symbolic of the eternal struggle between life and death.

### Questions

- 1) According to the passage, which of the following is not a material from which arrowheads were made?
  - A. wood
  - B. glass
  - C. bone
  - D. stone
  
- 2) As it is used in paragraph 2, which is the best antonym for **honed**?
  - A. flattened
  - B. chopped
  - C. dulled
  - D. baked

- 3) As used in paragraph 2, which is the best definition for **projectile**?
- A. shaped like a triangle
  - B. no longer in use
  - C. unsophisticated in form
  - D. designed to be thrown
- 4) Which of the following subjects would not be something an archeologist would study?
- A. the plants that humans used for food and medicine before refrigeration
  - B. the effects on fish of pollution caused by modern-day companies
  - C. the materials used for clothing and shelter in North America prior to contact with the English colonists
  - D. the rate at which technology advanced between the years 10,000 BC and 100 BC
- 5) Which of the following best summarizes the main idea of paragraph 3?
- A. Archeologists can determine many things about Native American societies simply by looking at an arrowhead.
  - B. Archeologists are scientists who study a range of events that have already occurred.
  - C. Arrowheads represent the only way to determine how Native Americans lived in the past.
  - D. Archeologists know so much about ancient societies because they have conducted extensive research about them.
- 6) Which of the following would be the best title for this passage?
- A. Native American Foods and Hunting
  - B. The Significance of the Arrowhead
  - C. How an Archeologist Finds Artifacts
  - D. Spring Hobbies: 5 Ways to Spend Your Day Outside
- 7) In the final paragraph, the author writes, "They are museum pieces that hide in the dirt. They are symbolic of the eternal struggle between life and death." Which of the following is the best way to combine these two sentences, while keeping their original meaning?
- A. They are museum pieces that hide in the dirt, **so** are symbolic of the eternal struggle between life and death.
  - B. They are museum pieces that hide in the dirt, **but** are symbolic of the eternal struggle between life and death.
  - C. They are museum pieces that hide in the dirt, **or** are symbolic of the eternal struggle between life and death.
  - D. They are museum pieces that hide in the dirt, **and** are symbolic of the eternal struggle between life and death.

## Answers and Explanations

1) **B**

In paragraph 2, we learn that "Arrowheads are tiny stones or pieces of wood, bone, or metal which have been sharpened in order to create a tipped weapon used in hunting." In paragraph 3, the author again mentions arrowhead material as being "bone, rock, wood, or metal." Since glass is not mentioned in the passage, we can infer that arrowheads were not made from glass. This means that **(B)** is correct. Based on the information in paragraph 2, we know that arrowheads were made from wood, bone, and stone. This makes choices **(A)**, **(C)**, and **(D)** incorrect.

2) **C**

**honed** (*adjective*): made sharp or pointed.

This question asks us to find the best antonym. Antonyms are words that have opposite meanings. In paragraph 2, we learn that "Arrowheads are tiny stones or pieces of wood, bone, or metal which have been sharpened in order to create a tipped weapon used in hunting. The material is honed to an edge, usually in a triangular fashion, and is brought to a deadly tip." Honing forms the edge of the arrowhead, and eventually the "deadly tip." Because we know from the first sentence that arrowheads have been "sharpened," we can infer that *honed* means something similar to sharpened. The opposite of sharpened, or honed, is dulled. Therefore **(C)** is correct. *Flattened* means to have made flat. This is different from sharpened, but it is not opposite, so **(A)** is incorrect. *Chopped* means to have cut off. This is different from sharpened, but not opposite, so **(B)** is incorrect. *Baked* means to have cooked or dried out. This is not related to sharpened. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

3) **D**

**projectile** (*adjective*): capable of being thrown or hurled forward.

In paragraph 2, we learn how an arrowhead is made and used. Once it has been sharpened, "the tail of the arrowhead is meant to be strapped onto a shaft, which is a straight wooden piece such as a spear or an arrow. When combined, the arrowhead point and the shaft become a lethal projectile weapon to be thrown by arm or shot with a bow at prey." From these sentences, we can infer that the arrowhead is strapped onto something long and straight, like a spear or an arrow. This new object, with both "the arrowhead point and the shaft," becomes a "lethal projectile weapon to be thrown..." Because this weapon must be thrown by someone's arm or else shot by a bow, we can infer that *projectile* means capable of being thrown through the air. This means that **(D)** is the best answer. An arrowhead is sharpened to a triangular point, but the "projectile weapon" is the combination of the arrowhead and the shaft, which is not shaped like a triangle. Also, we know from context that what makes the weapon a "projectile" is the fact that it is thrown. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. Archeologists do study arrowheads to learn about past Native American societies, but the passage does not contain information to make us think this weapon is no longer in use. Plenty of people today who are not Native Americans still shoot arrows from a bow, which is an example of a projectile weapon. This means **(B)** is incorrect. The passage does not provide information to suggest that this weapon is unsophisticated in form. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

4) **B**

In paragraph 3, we learn that "Indian arrowheads are important artifacts that give archeologists (scientists who study past human societies) clues about the lives of Native Americans." From the definition in parentheses, we can understand that archeologists are scientists who study past human societies. So the best answer to this question will be something that is not related to past human societies. The effects on fish of pollution caused by modern-day companies are a problem for modern-day society, so it is not related to the past. This means **(B)** is correct. The plants that humans used for food and medicine before refrigeration are related to the past, since they were used "before refrigeration." This eliminates **(A)**. The materials used for clothing and shelter in North America prior to contact with the English colonists are related to the past, since these materials were used hundreds of years ago. This eliminates **(C)**. The rate at which technology advanced between the years 10,000 BC and 100 BC is very much a thing of the past. This eliminates **(D)**.

5) **A**

We often learn the main idea of a paragraph by examining its topic sentence (usually the first sentence). In paragraph 3, the first sentence is: "Indian arrowheads are important artifacts that give archeologists (scientists who study past human societies) clues about the lives of Native Americans." The rest of the paragraph gives details about these clues, telling us what archeologists learn. For example, they learn about "tool technologies," "patterns of travel and trade," and "hunting grounds and other social patterns." From these details, we can understand that the main idea of paragraph 3 is that archeologists can determine many things about Native American societies simply by looking at an arrowhead. Therefore **(A)** is correct. While it is true that archeologists are scientists who study a range of events that have occurred, the definition of archeologists is only a minor detail of paragraph 3, not the main idea. This means **(B)** is incorrect. Arrowheads are one way to determine how Native Americans lived in the past, but the paragraph does not say that they are the only way. This makes **(C)** incorrect. While it may be true that archeologists know so much about ancient societies because they have conducted extensive research about them, paragraph 3 does not give us this information. Therefore this cannot be the main idea of paragraph 3. This means that **(D)** is incorrect.

6) **B**

A good title lets readers know what to expect should they continue reading further. It also incorporates the main idea of the passage without being too broad or too narrow. Paragraphs 1 and 2 describe arrowheads and how they were used. Paragraphs 3 and 4 detail what archeologists have learned about past Native American societies based on studying arrowheads. The conclusion, in paragraph 5, offers a good summary of the main idea of the passage: "Indian arrowheads are tiny pieces of history that fit in the palm of your hand." Since the passage is primarily concerned with the significance of arrowheads, **(B)** is correct. Although the passage does describe a Native American hunting technique, it does not describe foods at all. Since "Native American Foods and Hunting" is too broad a title, **(A)** is incorrect. The passage mentions archeologists and artifacts, but it does not contain information

about how an archeologist finds artifacts. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect. In paragraph 1, the author says that looking for arrowheads is one way to spend a spring day outside, but there are no other ways mentioned in the passage. This makes **(D)** incorrect.

7) **D**

It is grammatically correct to combine two sentences (also known as independent clauses) with a comma and a conjunction. Combining the final two sentences of this passage in such a way means we must choose the proper conjunction. The first sentence, *They are museum pieces that hide in the dirt*, is a description of arrowheads. The second sentence, *They are symbolic of the eternal struggle between life and death*, is another description of arrowheads. These two descriptions carry equal weight and therefore should be given the same emphasis as two related, equally important ideas. "And" is the best conjunction to show the relationship between these two ideas. Therefore **(D)** is correct. "So" suggests that the second idea is a result of the first idea, but that is not the case here. This means **(A)** is incorrect. "But" suggests a contrast between the first idea and the second idea. Since no contrast exists here, **(B)** is incorrect. "Or" suggests a choice between the first idea and the second idea, but there is no choice here. This means **(C)** is incorrect.