

“The Interview”

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories

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

Jethro gets ready for his job interview.

He takes a shower.

He shaves.

He brushes his teeth.

He cuts his fingernails.

He combs his hair.

He puts on the new suit he bought just for today.



Jethro feels **confident**. He is also very **nervous**.

Here is why. Jethro graduated at the top of his class in college. Still, Jethro knows the economy is bad. His dad just lost his job at the bank a few weeks ago! Many people are interviewing for the very same job. There is a lot of **competition**.

Jethro is still **positive**. He thinks he has a good chance of getting the job at the technology company.

Jethro arrives at his interview at 9:45. He is 15 minutes early. He realizes the importance of being **prompt**. He does not want to be late.

“Have a seat. Mr. Stone will be right with you,” the receptionist says.

Jethro sits. He thinks about what he has learned to do in an interview.

Look people in the eye.

Give a firm handshake.

Speak clearly.

Jethro feels ready.

“Mr. Stone is ready to see you now,” the receptionist says.

Jethro takes a deep breath and walks into Mr. Stone’s office.

“Good to meet you, sir,” Jethro says and gives Mr. Stone a firm handshake and a smile.

Questions:

- 1) What kind of job is Jethro interviewing for?
- A. a college job
 - B. a banking job
 - C. a technology job
 - D. a receptionist job
- 2) What is one thing Jethro does to get ready?
- I. He talks to his dad.
 - II. He calls Mr. Stone.
 - III. He combs his hair.
- A. I only
 - B. I and II
 - C. III only
 - D. I, II, and III
- 3) What time is Jethro's interview?
- A. 9:30
 - B. 9:45
 - C. 10:00
 - D. 10:15
- 4) What does it mean to be **confident**?
- A. to be early
 - B. to be sure
 - C. to be worried
 - D. to be nervous
- 5) Why might Jethro be **nervous**?
- A. He did not do well in school.
 - B. He is not a very good speaker.
 - C. He does not like to wear suits.
 - D. Many others are interviewing for the same job.
- 6) What is **competition**?
- A. when people get ready to go out
 - B. when people go for a job interview
 - C. when people feel they are not good enough
 - D. when many people are going after the same thing
- 7) Why is it good that Jethro gets to his interview early?
- A. It gives Jethro time to think.
 - B. It helps Jethro speak clearly.
 - C. Mr. Stone likes people to be early.
 - D. The receptionist asks him to be there early.
- 8) What has Jethro learned to do in an interview?
- A. be positive
 - B. tell good jokes
 - C. talk about his college experience
 - D. look people in the eye

Answers and Explanations

1) **C**

In the middle of the story we learn that Jethro believes “he has a good chance of getting a job at the technology company.” Therefore **(C)** is the correct answer. The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

2) **C**

The story does not say that Jethro talked to his dad. This eliminates **option (I)**. The story does not say that Jethro called Mr. Stone. This eliminates **option (II)**. In the beginning of the story, we learn that Jethro takes a shower, shaves, brushes his teeth, cuts his fingernails, combs his hair, and puts on a new suit. This supports **option (III)**. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

3) **C**

In the middle of the story we are told that Jethro arrives at the interview at 9:45 and is 15 minutes early. That lets us know that the interview is at 10:00. Therefore **(C)** is the correct answer.

If the interview was at 9:30, Jethro would have been 15 minutes late for the interview. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. If the interview was at 9:45, Jethro would have been on time for the interview. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. If the interview was at 10:15, Jethro would have been 30 minutes early. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

4) **B**

confident (*adjective*): sure of oneself; having no uncertainty about one’s own abilities, correctness, successfulness, etc.

In the middle of the story we learn that Jethro is confident. The reason for this is that “Jethro graduated at the top of his class in college.” Because he graduated at the top, he must have done well. If he did well, he is sure of his abilities. Confident means sure of oneself. Therefore **(B)** is the correct answer.

While being early might help one feel confident, it is not the same as feeling confident. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. Being nervous or worried means the opposite of being confident. Therefore answer choices **(C)** and **(D)** are both incorrect.

5) **D**

In the middle of the story, we learn that Jethro is nervous because “many people are interviewing for the same job.” Therefore **(D)** is the correct answer.

We know that Jethro graduated at the top of his class. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. The story does not tell anything about Jethro’s speaking ability. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. The story does not tell us how Jethro feels about wearing a suit. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

6) **D**

competition (*noun*): the rivalry offered by a competitor for supremacy, a prize, etc.

In the middle of the story it says, “Many people are interviewing for the very same job. There is a lot of competition.” When people all want the same job, they are going after the same thing. Therefore **(D)** is correct.

Jethro is getting ready to go out, but that is not related to the statement that “there is a lot of competition.” Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. Jethro is going to a job interview, but that is more specific than the idea of competition. There can be competition in many other things, such as sports. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. Jethro does feel he is good enough, because he believes he has a “good chance” of getting the job. Still, the fact that many other people want the same job means there is competition. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

7) **A**

At the end of the story, it says that after Jethro arrives early, he sits and “thinks about what he has learned to do in an interview.” When Jethro is called in to Mr. Stone’s office, he successfully does the things he has thought about while waiting. Therefore **(A)** is the correct answer.

While Jethro waits to see Mr. Stone, he does think about what he has learned to do in an interview, and one of these things is “speak clearly.” However, getting there early does not help him speak clearly. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(C)** and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

8) **D**

At the end of the story, it says that Jethro has learned to: “*Look people in the eye. Give a firm handshake. Speak clearly.*” Therefore **(D)** is the correct answer.

In the middle of the story, we learn that Jethro is positive, because he thinks he has a good chance of getting the job. However, this is not something he has learned to do in an interview. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(B)** and **(C)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

9) **B**

In the middle of the story we learn that Jethro, “graduated at the top of his class in college.” Using this information, we can understand that Jethro did well in school. Therefore **(B)** is the correct answer.

A bad economy is a reason to be negative. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. Jethro’s dad losing his job is also a reason to be negative. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect. The story does not tell us whether or not Jethro knows Mr. Stone. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

10) **D**

We know that Jethro wants to have a successful interview, so we can infer that all of the things he does in preparation are intended to make a good impression on the interviewer. Towards the end of the story it says that Jethro has learned to look people in the eye during an interview. This supports **option (I)**. He also puts on a new suit. This supports **option (II)**. At the beginning of the story, we learn what Jethro has done to groom himself for his interview: he showers, shaves, brushes his

teeth, cuts his fingernails and combs his hair. This supports **option (III)**. Therefore **(D)** is the correct answer.

11) **A**

The more clearly a person speaks, the easier he or she is to understand. At the end of the story we learn that Jethro has learned to “speak clearly” in an interview. Therefore **(A)** is the correct answer.

Answer choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)** are all things that might help make a good impression on the interviewer, but they do not help the interviewer understand what the person is saying. Therefore they are incorrect.

12) **C**

prompt (*adjective*): done, performed, delivered, etc., without delay; on time.

In the middle of the story, it says that Jethro arrives for the interview early because “he realizes the importance of being prompt.” Jethro “does not want to be late.” From this we can understand that the meaning of prompt must be related to being on time. Therefore **(C)** is the correct answer.

Answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(D)** are not related to time. Therefore they are incorrect.