

Part B: Reading

Achievement Test Readings and Questions

Grade 6 Achievement Test

1992

English Language Arts

Part B: Reading

Readings and Questions

I. Read the legend below and answer questions 1 to 6.

HOW GLOOSKAP FOUND THE SUMMER

Long ago a mighty tribe of Indians lived near the sunrise, and they called themselves Wawaniki—Children of Light. Glooskap was their master. He was kind to his people and did many great deeds for them.

- 5 Fires would not give enough warmth. The corn would not grow. His people were perishing from cold and famine.

Glooskap set forth for the far north where all was ice. Here in a wigwam he found the great giant Winter. It was Winter's icy breath that had frozen the land.

- 10 Glooskap entered the wigwam and sat down. Winter gave him a pipe, and as they smoked the giant told tales of olden times when he reigned everywhere and all the land was silent, white, and beautiful. His frost charm fell upon Glooskap and as the giant talked on, Glooskap fell asleep. For six months he slept like a bear, then the charm left him. He was too strong for it and awoke.

- 15 Soon now, Glooskap's talebearer, the Loon, brought him strange news. He described a country far to the south where it was always warm. There lived the all-powerful Summer who could easily overcome the giant Winter. To save his people from cold and famine and death, Glooskap decided to find her.

- 20 Far off to the southern seashores he went. He sang the magic song which whales obey and up came an old friend—a whale who served as his carrier when he wished to go out to sea.

Glooskap got on the whale's back and for many days they traveled together. Each day the water grew warmer and the air softer and sweeter, for it came from spicy shores. The odors were no longer those of salt, but of fruits and flowers.

- 25 The whale hurried on accordingly until she was close to land. Glooskap, leaping from her head, was able to walk ashore on dry land.

Far inland strode Glooskap and found it warmer at every step. In the forest he came upon a beautiful woman, dancing in the center of a group of young girls. Her long brown hair was crowned with flowers and her arms filled with blossoms. She was Summer.

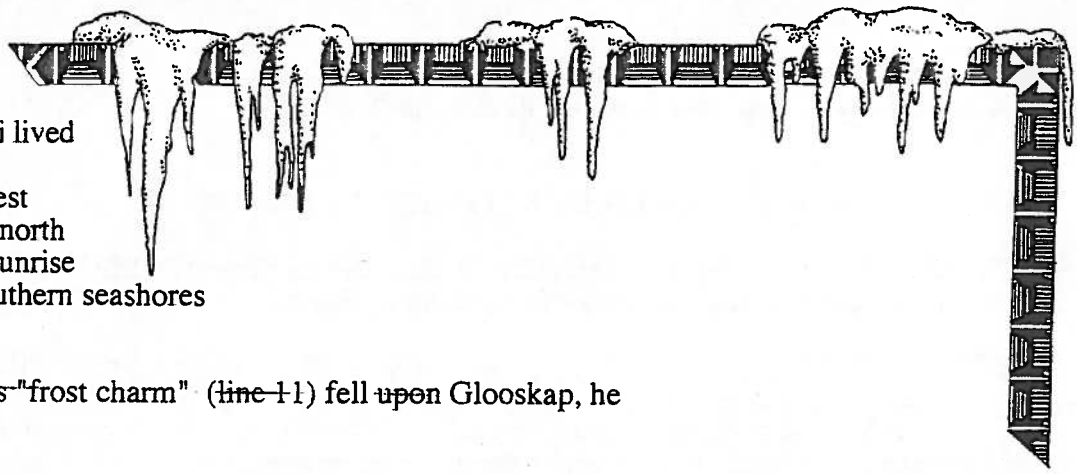
- 30 Glooskap knew that here at last was the one who by her charms could melt old Winter's heart. He leaped to catch her and would not let her go. Together they journeyed the long way back to the lodge of old Winter.

- 35 Winter welcomed Glooskap but he planned to freeze him to sleep again. This time, however, Glooskap did the talking. His charm proved the stronger one and soon sweat began to run down Winter's face. He knew that his power was gone and the charm of Frost broken. His icy tent melted away.

Summer now used her own special power and everything awoke. The grass grew green and the snow ran down the rivers, carrying away the dead leaves. Old Winter wept to see his power taken away.

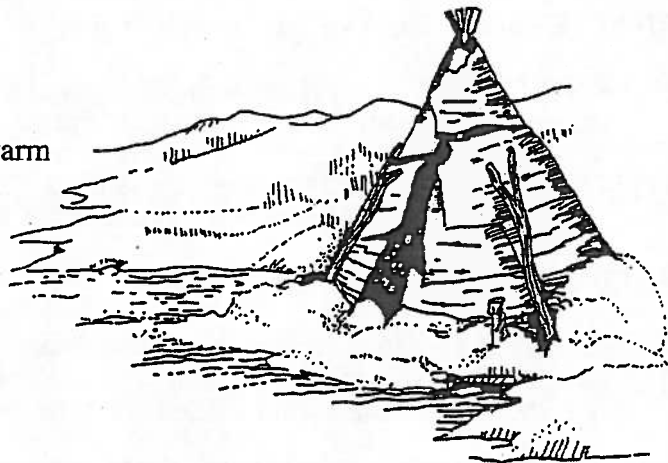
- 40 But Summer said, "Now that I have proved I am more powerful than you. I give you all the country to the far north for your own. and there I shall never disturb you. Six months of every year you may return to Glooskap's country and reign as before, but you are to be less severe with your power. During the other six months, I will come back from the South and rule the land."

Charles G. Leland



1. The Wawaniki lived
 - A. in the forest
 - B. in the far north
 - C. near the sunrise
 - D. on the southern seashores
2. When Winter's "frost charm" (line 11) fell upon Glooskap, he
 - A. fell asleep
 - B. became angry
 - C. became frozen
 - D. left the wigwam
3. The word "talebearer" (line 14) means
 - A. pet bird
 - B. servant
 - C. teller of legends
 - D. information giver

4. Glooskap decided to find Summer because
 - A. Summer was beautiful
 - B. Loon told him to find her
 - C. he wanted to save his people
 - D. he wanted to live where it was always warm



5. Glooskap contacted the whale by
 - A. calling to her
 - B. singing a magic song
 - C. sending his talebearer
 - D. using his special powers
6. When Summer told Winter to be less severe with his power (lines 41-42), she meant that he should
 - A. share his power
 - B. go away for six months
 - C. not be so cold and harsh
 - D. agree with her decision

II. Read the play below and answer questions 7 to 12.

IS THERE LIFE ON OTHER PLANETS?

SETTING: *A conference room. The CHIEF SCIENTIST and other SCIENTISTS are seated at a conference table, their backs to the audience.*

CHIEF SCIENTIST (*Rising with back to audience*): Ladies and gentlemen. Please come to order. I have called you here today to make an important announcement. I am sorry to tell you that after exhaustive studies, we have come to the conclusion that there cannot possibly be any life on the planet nearest us.

- 5 **1ST SCIENTIST**: But what about the changes in color from white to green that have been observed on the planet's surface? Don't these indicate weather changes and some kind of atmosphere?

CHIEF SCIENTIST: All tests show that there is some atmosphere on the planet, but it is not enough to sustain life as we know it.

- 10 **2ND SCIENTIST**: Then how do you account for the ditches or canals that have been seen with our telescopes?

CHIEF SCIENTIST: Latest viewings indicate that these are merely natural ground formations, and there is no proof whatever that they are made by any living beings.

3RD SCIENTIST: Then we must conclude that the flying saucer stories are all hoaxes*?

- 15 **CHIEF SCIENTIST**: No, of course not. Most of these sightings have perfectly logical, scientific explanations, and the rest are the direct result of mass hysteria.

4TH SCIENTIST: Then all the strange sounds picked up on the radio receivers come from our own transmitters or are produced by atmospheric pressure?

CHIEF SCIENTIST: I'm afraid so.

- 20 **5TH SCIENTIST**: I, for one, am extremely disappointed. I've always been sure we had neighbours on other planets, or at least on the one nearest to us. Perhaps not life as we know it, but some kind of intelligent life, totally unknown to us.

- CHIEF SCIENTIST**: I am going to adjourn this meeting. I can see no point in discussing this matter further. The tests have been so conclusive** that any intelligent person must accept the fact that there is no life on—
25

ALL (*Turning to audience to reveal weird masks or makeup*): Earth! (*Curtain*)

*hoaxes—something false

**conclusive—definite

Marion Lane

7. The setting of a play

- A. outlines what will happen
- B. introduces all the characters
- C. tells where the action takes place
- D. tells what will happen at the beginning

8. The phrase "exhaustive studies" (line 3) means that the studies were

- A. complete
- B. scientific
- C. important
- D. interesting

9. The chief scientist concludes that the nearest planet cannot sustain life as we know it because she has evidence that

- A. the planet experiences extreme weather changes
- B. there is not enough atmosphere to sustain life
- C. the planet surface changes from white to green
- D. no strange sounds come from the planet over the radio receivers

10. The ditches and canals are thought to be

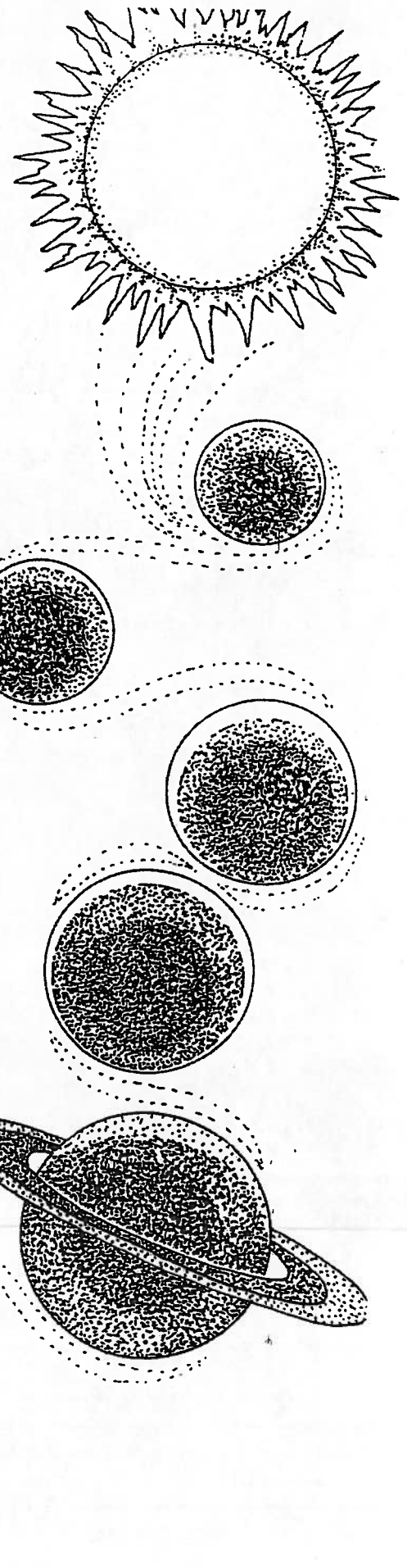
- A. false sightings
- B. transport systems
- C. natural formations
- D. man-made features

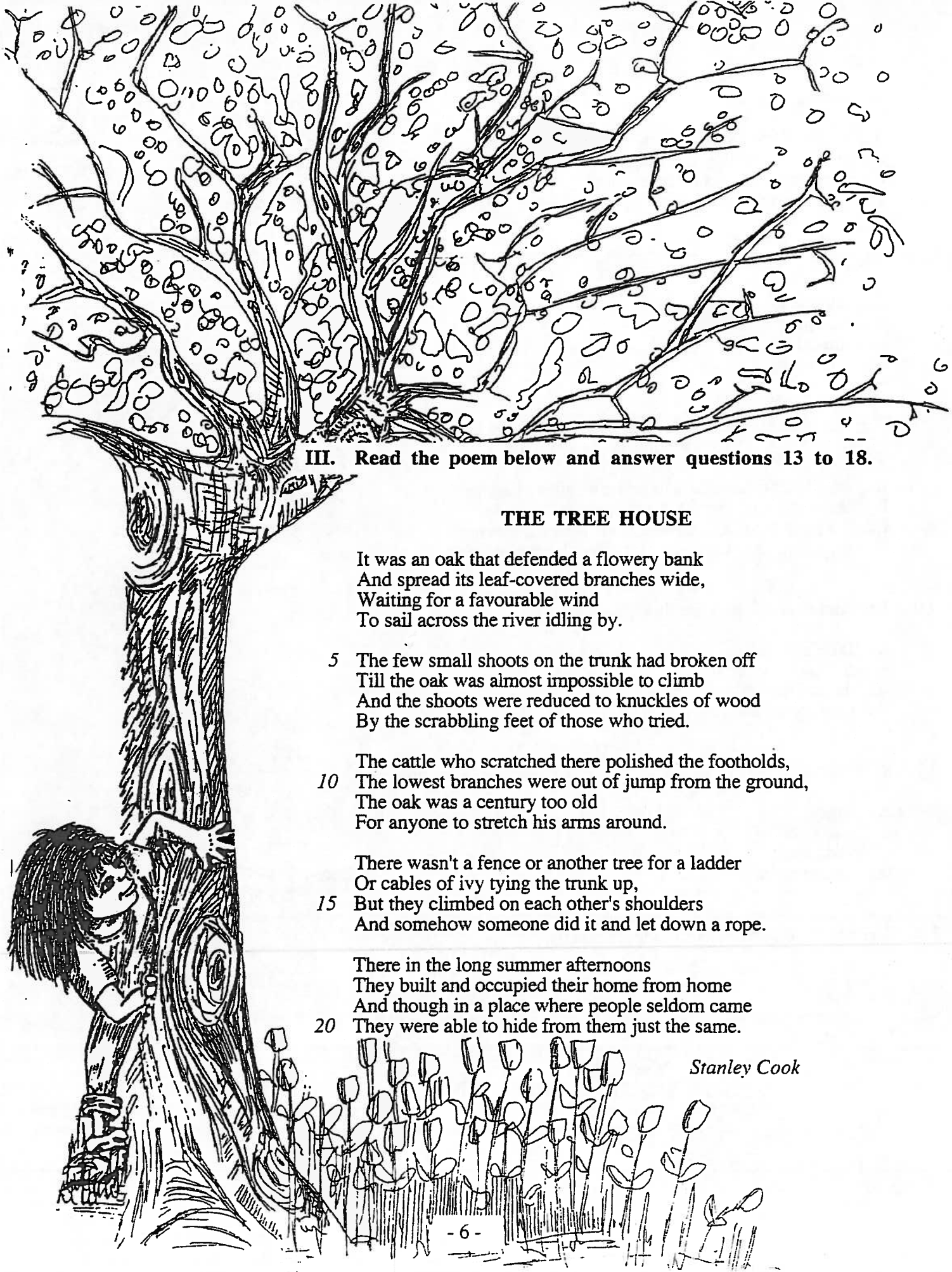
11. When the scientists cannot find life on the nearest planet, they feel

- A. angry
- B. uncertain
- C. frustrated
- D. disappointed

12. The word "adjourn" used in line 23 means

- A. end
- B. delay
- C. address
- D. continue





III. Read the poem below and answer questions 13 to 18.

THE TREE HOUSE

It was an oak that defended a flowery bank
And spread its leaf-covered branches wide,
Waiting for a favourable wind
To sail across the river idling by.

5 The few small shoots on the trunk had broken off
Till the oak was almost impossible to climb
And the shoots were reduced to knuckles of wood
By the scrabbling feet of those who tried.

10 The cattle who scratched there polished the footholds,
The lowest branches were out of jump from the ground,
The oak was a century too old
For anyone to stretch his arms around.

15 There wasn't a fence or another tree for a ladder
Or cables of ivy tying the trunk up,
But they climbed on each other's shoulders
And somehow someone did it and let down a rope.

20 There in the long summer afternoons
They built and occupied their home from home
And though in a place where people seldom came
They were able to hide from them just the same.

Stanley Cook

13. In line 1, the oak tree is indirectly compared with a

- A. tower
- B. guard
- C. friend
- D. windmill

14. The oak tree was beside a

- A. lake
- B. river
- C. fence
- D. garden

15. The phrase "knuckles of wood" (line 7) refers to the tree's

- A. twigs
- B. knobs
- C. stumps
- D. branches

16. The word "scrabbling" (line 8) **MOST CLEARLY** means

- A. sliding
- B. climbing
- C. jumping
- D. struggling

17. The oak was very hard to climb **MAINLY** because the

- A. branches were too high
- B. trunk was too large
- C. bark was too rough
- D. tree was too old

18. The girls and boys used the tree **MAINLY** for

- A. shelter
- B. privacy
- C. climbing
- D. competition

IV. Read the story below and answer questions 19 to 25.

from HATCHET

Brian is on his way to visit his father when his airplane crashes in a remote wooded area. He is the only survivor. He is able to construct a makeshift camp.

So there were things to do.

With the camp squared away he brought in more wood. He had decided to always have enough on hand for three days. After spending one night with the fire for a friend, he knew what a staggering amount of wood it would take. He worked all through the morning at the wood, breaking down dead limbs and breaking or chopping them in smaller pieces, storing
5 them neatly beneath the overhang. He stopped once to take a drink at the lake and in his reflection he saw that the swelling on his head was nearly gone. There was no pain there so he assumed that had taken care of itself. His leg was also back to normal, although he had a small pattern of holes—roughly star-shaped—where the quills had nailed him, and while he
10 was standing at the lake shore taking stock he noticed that his body was changing.

He had never been fat, but he had been slightly heavy with a little extra weight just above his belt at the sides.

This was completely gone and his stomach had caved in to the hunger and the sun had cooked him past burning so he was tanning, and with the smoke from the fire his face was
15 starting to look like leather. But perhaps more than his body was the change in his mind, or in the way he was—was becoming.

I am not the same, he thought. I see, I hear differently. He did not know when the change started, but it was there: when a sound came to him now he didn't just hear it but would know the sound. He would swing and look at it—a breaking twig, a movement of air—
20 and know the sound as if he somehow could move his mind back down the wave of sound to the source.

He could know what the sound was before he quite realized he had heard it. And when he saw something—a bird moving a wing inside a bush or a ripple on the water—he would truly see that thing, not just notice it as he used to notice things in the city. He would see all
25 parts of it; see the whole wing, the feathers, see the color of the feathers, see the bush, and the size and shape and color of its leaves. He would see the way the light moved with the ripples on the water and see that the wind made the ripples and which way that wind had to blow to make the ripples move in that certain way.

None of that used to be in Brian and now it was a part of him, a changed part of him, a
30 grown part of him, and the two things, his mind and his body, had come together as well, had made a connection with each other that he didn't quite understand. When his ears heard a sound or his eyes saw a sight his mind took control of his body. Without his thinking, he moved to face the sound or sight, moved to make ready for it, to deal with it.

There were these things to do.

35 When the wood was done he decided to get a signal fire ready. He moved to the top of the rock ridge that comprised the bluff over his shelter and was pleased to find a large, flat stone area.

More wood, he thought, moaning inwardly. He went back to the fallen trees and found more dead limbs, carrying them up on the rock until he had enough for a bonfire. Initially he
40 had thought of making a signal fire everyday but he couldn't—he would never be able to keep the wood supply going. So while he was working he decided to have the fire ready and if he heard an engine, or even thought he heard an engine, he would run up with a burning limb and set off the signal fire.

Things to do.

Gary Paulsen

19. The phrase "fire for a friend" (line 3) suggests that Brian
- A. had built a signal fire
 - B. was protected by the fire
 - C. was comforted by the fire
 - D. had built a fire for other survivors
20. The small pattern of holes in Brian's leg (line 9) was **MOST LIKELY** caused when he
- A. fell on some nails
 - B. came upon a porcupine
 - C. scratched it on dead tree limbs
 - D. was hurt in the plane crash
21. Brian thinks that he is "not the same" (lines 17-21) **MAINLY** because he
- A. has lost weight
 - B. hears and sees better
 - C. has skin that looks like leather
 - D. is more aware of his surroundings
22. Brian's shelter is
- A. under a rock ridge
 - B. under a fallen tree
 - C. on a large, flat stone
 - D. in the remains of the plane
23. Brian changes his mind about lighting a signal fire every day because he
- A. cannot gather enough wood
 - B. does not need a fire during the day
 - C. cannot get the damp wood to burn
 - D. does not expect planes to fly over every day
24. Brian can **BEST** be described as being
- A. cunning
 - B. intelligent
 - C. resourceful
 - D. imaginative



25. The phrase "things to do" is repeated throughout the story to indicate that Brian is
- A. bored with his routine
 - B. frustrated by his situation
 - C. trying to forget his surroundings
 - D. trying to keep his body and mind active

V. Read the journal entries below and answer questions 26 to 31.

I'VE BEEN TO THE TOP OF THE WORLD

These are personal journal entries written by Jason Wissink, aged 12, the youngest person to reach the North Pole.

DAY ONE: RESOLUTE

When all 14 members of our tour group met at Resolute airport, our arctic gear was piled halfway to the ceiling. We weren't the only Pole-bound travellers leaving Resolute that day. A second group planned to fly to the north end of Ellesmere Island and then take two months to walk to the Pole! The intrepid group that my Dad led flew there—in three days. That's more my style!

DAY TWO: NORTH MAGNETIC POLE

We flew out of Resolute in a ski-shod Twin otter. Destination: Eureka, with a detour to the North Magnetic Pole. It's not the same as the North Pole. It's the spot on the earth where compasses point, and it's always moving. Someone jokingly said that the North Magnetic Pole is a huge mountain of iron and that's why compasses all point there. But when we flew over it, all I could see was rough ice—too rough to land on.

The plan was to fly to Eureka on Ellesmere Island, spend the night at the weather station and get more fuel for our plane before flying on to the Pole the next day. But guess what? The walking expedition got to Eureka before us. No, they didn't walk there! While we were having fun flying circles around the North Magnetic Pole, they'd flown straight to Eureka and grabbed all the beds! Our group had to fly back to Resolute.

DAY THREE: EUREKA

Finally, after cooling our heels all day while a storm blew itself out, we flew back to the Eureka weather station. After dinner, we followed a wolf trail from the bunkhouse to the garbage dump. Soon three wolves were circling us, trying to get downwind so they could catch our scent. Dad told us they weren't sizing us up for food, they were just being wary.

It was midnight by the time we finished our walk. The sun was still up and I was too excited to sleep. North Pole Day was almost here!

DAY FOUR: THE NORTH POLE

Not one, but two Twin Otters were sitting on the runway this morning. Each plane had to carry seven people and extra drums of fuel in case of an emergency.

At last, the co-pilot yelled over his shoulder, "The North Pole is directly below."

There were many water-filled leads* below us and I was afraid that the plane would break through the ice when it landed. To take my mind off this, Dad joked that each time we'd circled the Pole looking for a place to land, we'd flown around the world. If that's the case, I've been around the world seven times!

We found a place to land not far from the Pole. I was second off the plane, clutching my big Canadian flag. I planted the flag and Dad took some photographs of us all. He said our group was special because it included the youngest person (me) and the oldest person (an 89-year-old man from Japan) to ever reach the Pole.

Jason Wissink

*lead—a channel in an ice field

26. The North Magnetic Pole is different from the North Pole because the North Magnetic Pole is
- A. very cold year-round
 - B. a huge mountain of iron
 - C. hard to find with a compass
 - D. a constantly changing location
27. Jason and his group could not stay in Eureka on Day Two because
- A. their plane ran out of fuel
 - B. all their equipment had not arrived
 - C. the bad weather forced them to turn back
 - D. other Pole-bound travellers got there first
28. The phrase "cooling our heels" (line 19) means that the group was
- A. spending time waiting
 - B. walking in the snow
 - C. finding it hard to stay warm
 - D. pacing nervously before the flight
29. The wolves were circling the group (line 21) because they were
- A. starving for food
 - B. getting ready to attack
 - C. trying to catch the people's scent
 - D. looking for shelter from the storm
30. The word "wary" (line 22) means
- A. timid
 - B. cautious
 - C. aggressive
 - D. bothersome
31. On the trip, Jason was afraid when he thought that the
- A. plane would run out of fuel
 - B. plane would break through the ice
 - C. group had nowhere to stay the first night
 - D. other travellers would get to the Pole first



VI. Read the poem below and answer questions 32 to 37.



SOUTHBOUND ON THE FREEWAY

A tourist came in from Orbitville,
parked in the air, and said:

The creatures of this star
are made of metal and glass.

5 Through the transparent parts
you can see their guts.

Their feet are round and roll
on diagrams or long

10 measuring tapes, dark
with white lines.

They have four eyes.
The two in back are red.

Sometimes you can see a five-eyed
one, with a red eye turning

15 on the top of his head.
He must be special—

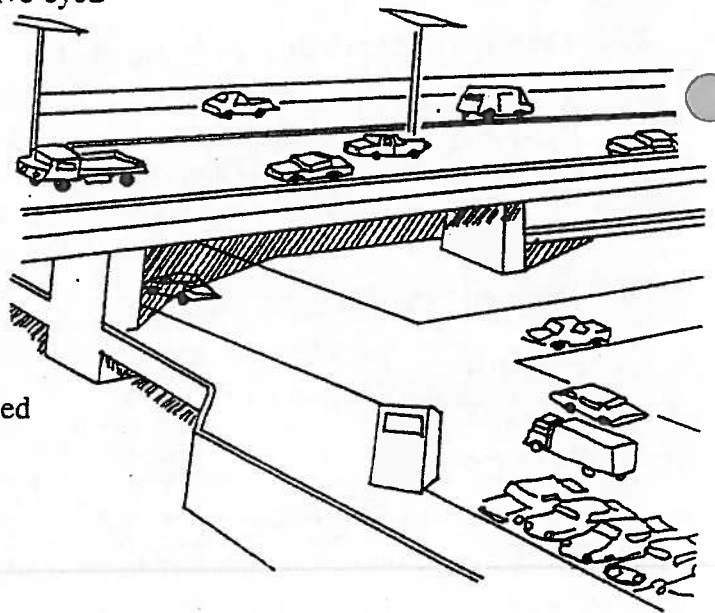
the others respect him
and go slow

20 when he passes, winding
among them from behind.

They all hiss as they glide,
like inches, down the marked

tapes. Those soft shapes,
shadowy inside

25 the hard bodies—are they
their guts or their brains?



May Swenson

32. The tourist (line 1) was **MOST LIKELY** travelling in a
- A. hovercraft
 - B. airplane
 - C. spaceship
 - D. helicopter
33. The "creatures" (line 3) the tourist is talking about are
- A. space vehicles
 - B. huge robots
 - C. motor vehicles
 - D. glass buildings
34. What does the "star" (line 3) refer to?
- A. Sun
 - B. Earth
 - C. Moon
 - D. Galaxy
35. The long "measuring tapes" (line 9) are
- A. skyways
 - B. runways
 - C. railways
 - D. roadways
36. The "five-eyed one" (lines 13-14) **MOST LIKELY** is a
- A. police car
 - B. tow truck
 - C. sanding truck
 - D. delivery van
37. The "soft shapes" referred to in line 23 are
- A. seats
 - B. pillows
 - C. humans
 - D. astronauts

VII. Read the article below and answer questions 38 to 43.

THIS HURTING MUST STOP

In 1977 Terry Fox was practicing hard for the basketball season when a sharp pain in his knee one morning made it impossible for him to get up. Tests showed his right leg was riddled with bone cancer! Three days later the leg was amputated above the knee.

5 Terry, a young man who had wanted to be a physical education teacher, had to begin the building of new dreams.

Inspired by an article on Dick Traum, a one-legged athlete who ran in the New York City Marathon, Terry started thinking, "I can do that." But there would be long, hard months ahead. The courage of other people with cancer gave him strength, and the pain that lined their faces provided the seed for Terry's dream—to end that suffering! One way he could do
10 this, he thought, was to raise money to fight the ravaging disease.

Almost from the beginning, the idea to run across Canada was clear in Terry's mind.

In a symbolic act which marked the beginning of his run from coast to coast, Terry dipped his artificial leg into the Atlantic Ocean. When he reached the Pacific, he said he would end his journey with the same ceremony.

15 Terry started in Newfoundland, and it wasn't long before his "run for cancer" became a hot news item. The Canadian Cancer Society had set up a busy itinerary for Terry, and this, combined with interviews for newspapers and television, took nearly every spare moment he had. Becoming a popular news item, however, did not necessarily ensure support for his cause. Terry was discouraged.

20 "People seem to forget what I'm doing this for," he said to The Halifax Mail Star. "They think I am running across Canada on some kind of ego trip. It is a personal challenge, but I'm trying to raise as much money as I can . . . I need their support."

It was May 21, 1980. Terry's dream of one dollar from every person was a long way off.

25 More and more, people opened their eyes to what was really happening—and they opened their hearts. Thousands followed his run in the newspapers and on television. By seeing Terry as an individual, as a kid with a great deal of courage, the public was seeing, closer than ever, a victim of cancer. And the more real Terry became, the more real was the threat of cancer. As Terry continued on his run, donations poured in.

30 Terry had hoped to reach the west coast by September, but it was late August when he began to feel exhausted. It was with the greatest force of will that he plodded on. Finally, just outside Thunder Bay, Ontario, fatigue and a blunt pain in his chest forced Terry to stop.

X-rays confirmed that Terry had cancer of the lungs.

35 He had a dream to see one dollar from every Canadian donated toward cancer research. Before he died, he would realize that dream. Although Terry had been forced to stop the run, Canadians took up where he left off. Terry watched from his hospital room as the CTV network gave tribute to him in a five-hour campaign for donations.

Each year, as cities and towns across Canada hold the "Terry Fox Run," Canadians continue to fight for Terry's dream.

Stef Donev et al.

38. The word "riddled" (line 3) means

- A. filled
- B. tested
- C. covered
- D. crooked

39. The "seed for Terry's dream" (line 9) was

- A. his loss of a leg
- B. his own suffering
- C. the suffering of other people with cancer
- D. the encouragement from Dick Traum

40. The word "ravaging" in the phrase "the ravaging disease" (line 10) means that the disease is

- A. common
- B. mysterious
- C. frightening
- D. destructive

41. Terry's "symbolic act" (line 12) was to

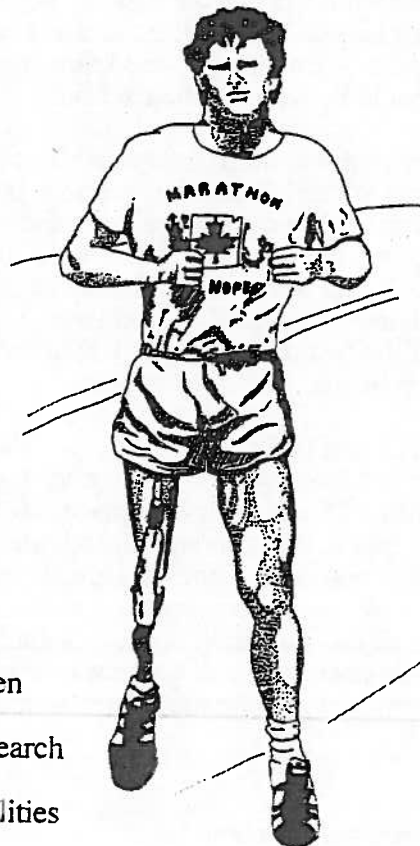
- A. complete a personal challenge
- B. continue to believe in his dream
- C. dip his artificial leg into the Atlantic Ocean
- D. raise one dollar from each Canadian

42. Terry was able to run from Newfoundland to

- A. the Pacific Ocean
- B. the Atlantic Ocean
- C. Halifax, Nova Scotia
- D. Thunder Bay, Ontario

43. This article suggests that Terry's dream was realized when

- A. Canadians donated millions of dollars for cancer research
- B. he was the first to try to run across Canada
- C. Canadians became more aware of people with disabilities
- D. he became very famous



VIII. Read the story below and answer questions 44 to 48.

from A PRAIRIE BOY'S SUMMER

In June, which Westerners regard as the beginning of summer, school was drawing to a close. William half regretted it, for summer always meant a lot of farm work, a lot more than in winter. At school there were three play recesses. True, it was also exam time; but he was always top of his class and the teacher sometimes even let him do his studying out in the grass by his lonesome.

One thing about June that William didn't look forward to was the last day of school-field day-when his school got together with two others in the district to decide which of the three would win The Shield that year for athletic strength and skill. In the last two weeks, training for it got really serious, and the teacher took time off to direct and record her pupils' progress.

There was no way to hide the fact kids even younger than William could run faster and jump farther and higher than he could. So he preferred the novelty races like the sack race, the three-legged race or the wheelbarrow race. He even liked the undignified peanut race in which the contestants had to get down on all fours and push a peanut along the ground with their noses. But William had one consolation. His school rivals during the rest of the year were now on his side. He knew they wanted him to do well in the competitions so The Shield could be won for their school.

William couldn't escape it. The last day of school-field day-came. If his school was competing at one of the other schools, they were driven there in the back of a farm truck. The officials were usually teachers and school trustees, and competition was by age or sex or grade. A starting line was made in the grass with lime, and the finish line was a tightly held string. All toes were on the line as the official called out "One for the money. Two for the show. Three to get ready. And four to GO!" And away they went. William could see the backs of the fast runners pulling away from him. If he heard some slower unfortunate clomping behind, he took comfort.

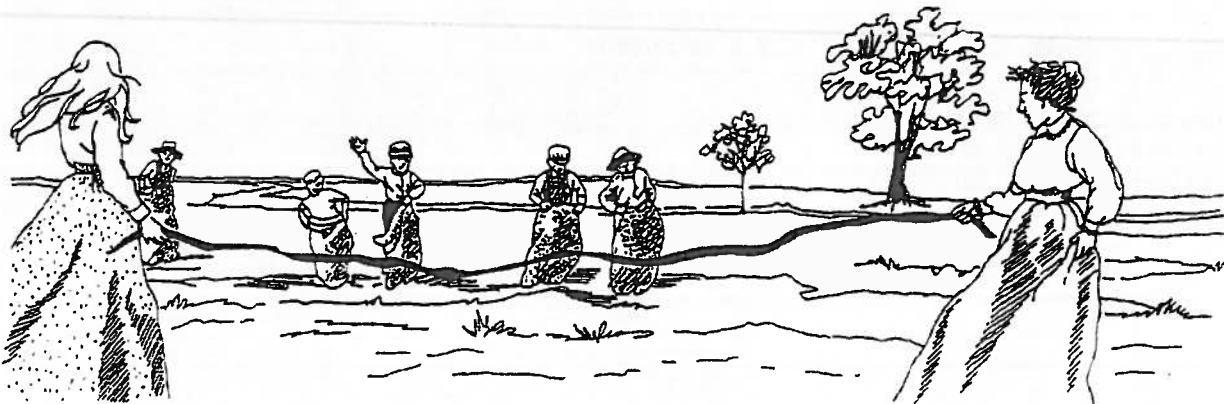
A lot of parents came and there was a picnic in the shade behind the school. The jumping and novelty races came after lunch. Winners earned points and money for themselves: 15 cents for first place, 10 cents for second, and 5 cents for third. Losers, like William, had to bring money from home to spend in the confection* booth which had been built out of poplar branches against the outside wall of the school barn.

The day ended with two baseball games. If a school won both games it usually took The Shield because a ball game was worth the most points. William's school won it most often because it had the most pupils. It didn't seem exactly fair.

William Kurelek

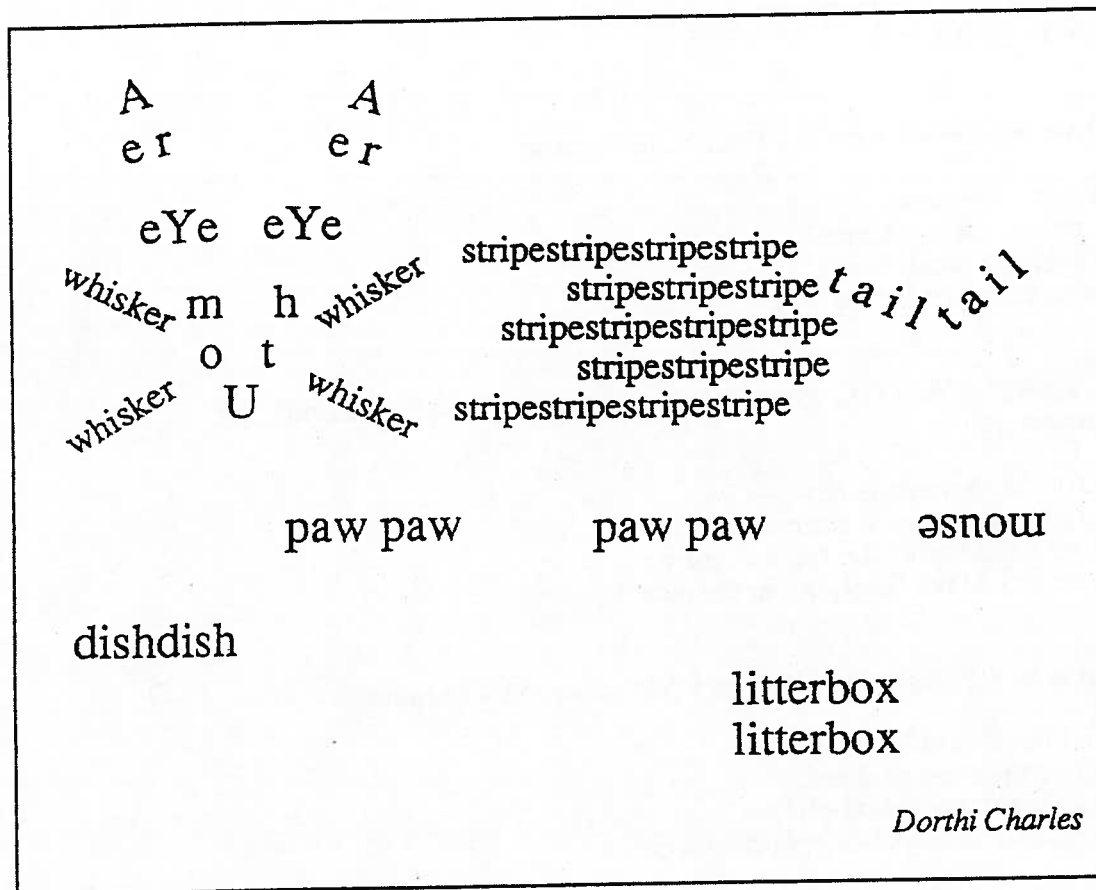
*confection-refreshment

44. William's "one consolation" (line 15) was that
- A. he enjoyed the undignified peanut race
 - B. his school would win the novelty races
 - C. he would have to run or jump with younger kids
 - D. this was one time he fit in
45. William had to bring spending money from home because
- A. the truck ride cost money
 - B. he likely would not win a race
 - C. he did not bring a picnic lunch
 - D. there was an entry fee for the races
46. William took comfort if "he heard some slower unfortunate clomping behind" him (lines 24-25) because he
- A. felt sorry for the slower runners
 - B. was ahead of some of the fast runners
 - C. knew that he would cross the finish line first
 - D. knew that he would not finish last in the race
47. The Shield was won most often by William's school **MAINLY** because
- A. the girls and boys liked baseball best
 - B. his school had the most students
 - C. baseball was worth the most points
 - D. most of the girls and boys were good athletes
48. The writer **MOST LIKELY** wrote this story to show
- A. what kind of athlete William was
 - B. how much William enjoyed school
 - C. how William felt about the school field day
 - D. that girls and boys liked to compete during field day



IX. Consider the poem below and answer questions 49 and 50.

CONCRETE CAT



49. Some of the letters are capitalized to

- A. show the mood of the cat
- B. show the actions of the cat
- C. draw the reader's attention to the cat
- D. accent the shape of some parts of the cat

50. The mouse is upside down MOST LIKELY because it

- A. has been caught in a trap
- B. has been killed by the cat
- C. is hiding from the cat
- D. is playing with the cat