

GRADE

5




STUDY GUIDE

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Reading



A Student and Family Guide to Grade 5 Reading



TAKS STUDY GUIDE

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A Student and Family Guide

Dear Student and Parent:

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) is a comprehensive testing program for public school students in grades 3–11. TAKS replaces the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) and is designed to measure to what extent a student has learned, understood, and is able to apply the important concepts and skills expected at each tested grade level. In addition, the test can provide valuable feedback to students, parents, and schools about student progress from grade to grade.

Students are tested in mathematics in grades 3–11; reading in grades 3–9; writing in grades 4 and 7; English language arts in grades 10 and 11; science in grades 5, 8, 10, and 11; and social studies in grades 8, 10, and 11. Every TAKS test is directly linked to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum. The TEKS is the state-mandated curriculum for Texas public school students. Essential knowledge and skills taught at each grade build upon the material learned in previous grades. By developing the academic skills specified in the TEKS, students can build a strong foundation for future success.

The Texas Education Agency has developed this study guide to help students strengthen the TEKS-based skills that are taught in class and tested on TAKS. The guide is designed for students to use on their own or for students and families to work through together. Concepts are presented in a variety of ways that will help students review the information and skills they need to be successful on the TAKS. Every guide includes explanations, practice questions, detailed answer keys, and student activities. At the end of this study guide is an evaluation form for you to complete and mail back when you have finished the guide. Your comments will help us improve future versions of this guide.

There are a number of resources available for students and families who would like more information about the TAKS testing program. Information booklets are available for every TAKS subject and grade. Brochures are also available that explain the Student Success Initiative promotion requirements and the new graduation requirements for eleventh-grade students. To obtain copies of these resources or to learn more about the testing program, please contact your school or visit the Texas Education Agency website at www.tea.state.tx.us.

Texas is proud of the progress our students have made as they strive to reach their academic goals. We hope the study guides will help foster student learning, growth, and success in all of the TAKS subject areas.

Sincerely,



Lisa Chandler
Director of Student Assessment
Texas Education Agency

Contents

Reading

To the Parent	5
Introduction	7
Helping Your Child	9
Parent and Student—Working Together	13
Your Steps to Success Chart	15
What a Careful Reader Does	16
“Tornado Alley”	17
Help with Skills	20
Objective 1	20
Objective 2	29
Objective 3	33
Objective 4	43
“Tornado Alley” Again	51
Reading Selection	52
Practice with Reading Skills	55
“Inventing the Ride”	63
Reading Selection	65
Practice Questions	67
To the Student—Now It’s Your Turn	71
“Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and “Letter to Marta from Ling”	73
Reading Selections	74
Practice Questions	76
Parent and Student—Working Together Again	81
Reading Answer Key	83

TO THE PARENT

- Introduction
- Helping Your Child

Pages 5–12 are written for you, the parent. The purpose of this section is to provide you with specific information on how to help your child become a better reader.

READING

INTRODUCTION

How Is the Reading Study Guide Organized?

This study guide is organized in four parts. Each part will provide reading opportunities for your child. This study guide focuses on applying and understanding reading skills while your child is engaged in the process of reading.

Part one of the reading study guide is called “**To the Parent.**” This part suggests ways to help your child become a better reader.

Part two, “**Parent and Student—Working Together,**” provides information and practice for each of the learning objectives that will be tested on the TAKS test. This part is designed as a guide for a parent to use when reading with a child. Some of the reading selections in this guide have questions in the margins. Although the selections on the actual TAKS test do not include questions in the margins, questions are included in this guide to help students think about the stories as they read.

Part three, “**To the Student—Now It’s Your Turn,**” provides students with an opportunity to read and answer questions on their own. Your child should work independently and practice what he or she has learned.

Part four, “**Parent and Student—Working Together Again,**” includes the answer key for the practice questions found in this guide. The correct and incorrect answers are explained for your child. Reading these explanations is important because your child can learn how to think through each question.

What Are Objectives?

TAKS assesses each student’s ability by grouping reading skills under four objectives, or goals for learning. The objectives describe what fifth-grade students should know and be able to do in reading. The reading selections in this guide provide help and practice with all four learning objectives.

What Kinds of Selections and Questions Will Be on the Test?

When taking the TAKS test, your child will be asked to answer several multiple-choice questions about each selection that he or she reads. Various types of selections will be used, including short stories, newspaper and magazine articles, and textbook excerpts. Together, the questions chosen for each TAKS reading test will assess performance on the four reading objectives.



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Helping Your Child

How to Help—Every Day

Make sure your child sees *you* reading. You are your child’s first and most influential teacher.

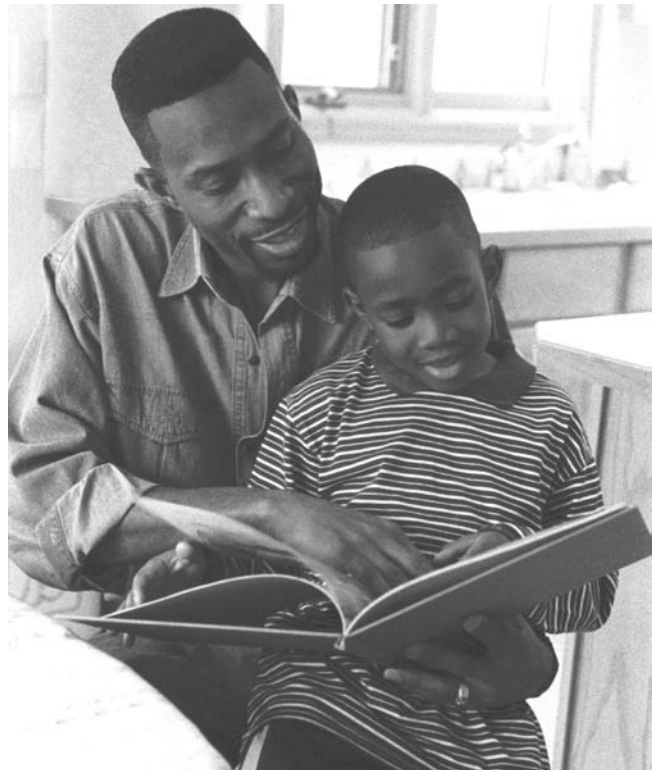
- Share interesting information, a funny story, or a joke you’ve just read.
- Read books, grocery labels, billboards, signs, recipes, comic strips, game directions, cereal boxes, newspapers, magazines, catalogs, mail, and anything else with words printed on it.

Choose a special time and place to read aloud to your child every day.

- Try to talk the way the story’s characters would talk. Make sounds and expressions that go along with the story (exciting, scary, or sad, for example). Help your child “hear” the excitement in a book.
- Ask your child questions when you read aloud. Ask questions, such as “Have you ever felt like that?” “What would you have done in a situation like that?” and “What do you think will happen next?”

Listen to your child read to you for 15–20 minutes every day.

- Look for and provide easy-to-read books that will be of interest to you and your child. Your child’s teacher should be able to help you find books that are not too difficult for your child to read.
- Encourage your child to read a variety of stories and books, as well as lists, newsletters, signs, and notes from you.
- If your child gets stuck at a difficult part, encourage him or her by saying:
 - “What could you try?”
 - “What do you think it could be?”
 - “What do you know that might help you?”
 - “Let’s read this part together.”
- If your child doesn’t stop to correct a mistake, let him or her finish the sentence or page. Then repeat the sentence and the error, saying:
 - “Does that sound right to you?”
 - “Does that make sense to you?”
 - “Do we say it that way?”
 - “Try reading that again and think about what would make sense.”



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- Don't feel the need to stop and have your child correct every mistake. Choose one or two that you think would be the most helpful to your child's understanding.

Make sure your child understands what is being read.

Before reading,

- read the title of the book or story to your child and ask, "What does the title make you think the story will be about?"
- have your child look at the pictures and talk about what he or she thinks is happening in the story based on the pictures.

During reading,

- ask your child questions that require more than a yes or no answer:
 - “Have you ever felt like that? When?”
 - “Why do you think that happened?”
 - “How do you think this problem will be solved?”
 - “What do you think will happen next?”
- find a good breaking point in the story to ask your child to retell what he or she has read.



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After reading,

- have your child retell the story. Encourage your child to use his or her own words to retell the story using the correct order of events.
- ask questions that help your child relate to the story in a personal way:
 - “Who was your favorite character? Why?”
 - “How is this character like you?”
 - “How is this character different from you?”
 - “How is your life the same as or different from the lives of the characters?”
 - “What would you have done in that situation?”
- ask questions that help your child relate the story to his or her own knowledge and learning:
 - “What did you already know about this subject?”
 - “What new things did you learn about this subject?”
 - “How is this subject similar to something else you have learned?”
 - “What questions do you still have about this subject?”
- extend the reading experience:
 - Ask your child to make up a new ending for the story.
 - Have your child continue the story with a sequel.
 - Look for other books about the same subject or a related subject.
 - Encourage your child to do an activity that may have been presented in the story.



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How to Help—Using Television and Movies

Many of the questions used to help children understand what they are reading can also be used to help them understand their favorite television show or movie. After all, television shows and movies are stories that have been created by an author to present a message. Make television watching worthwhile by talking with your child about what he or she is watching. The more children practice these thinking skills, the easier it will become for them to apply these skills to reading.

How to Help—Before the Test

- Focus on what your child is doing right.
- Let your child know that you are proud of his or her efforts and have confidence in what he or she can accomplish.
- Explain how important the test is but do not put undue pressure on your child.
- Make sure your child sleeps well for several nights before the test.
- Have your child eat a good breakfast.
- Make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and classroom climate to avoid discomfort during the test.
- Make sure your child arrives on time on the day of the test to avoid unnecessary stress.

Important Note

Make reading time enjoyable for both you and your child. Keep it positive and fun.

If at any time you or your child feels frustrated, join in and read the story together, take a break and try again later, or read the story to your child.

PARENT AND STUDENT— WORKING TOGETHER

- Your Steps to Success Chart
- What a Careful Reader Does
- “Tornado Alley”
- Help with Skills
- “Tornado Alley” Again
- “Inventing the Ride”

The purpose of pages 13–70 is to provide guided practice with the reading skills and strategies tested on the fifth-grade reading TAKS. Read through each part and practice with the examples.






Your Steps to Success Chart on page 15 will show you and your child the steps to follow in order to gain the most benefit from this study guide.

This section is not meant to be read all at once. Children most often benefit from working in short sessions that take place every day. If at any time you or your child feels frustrated, take a break and try again later.

Your Steps to Success Chart

Student's Name

Directions: When you finish working through each of the following steps, put a check mark next to that section on the chart.

READING		
1	<p style="text-align: center;">Getting Started</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read “What a Careful Reader Does” on page 16.● Now read “Tornado Alley” on pages 17–19.	
2	<p style="text-align: center;">Help with Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read “Help with Skills” on pages 20–50. You should review the skills and strategies presented here.	
3	<p style="text-align: center;">“Tornado Alley” Again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read “Tornado Alley” again on pages 51–54. Answer the questions in the margins of the story as you read.● Read “Practice with Reading Skills” on pages 55–62.	
4	<p style="text-align: center;">“Inventing the Ride”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read “Inventing the Ride” on pages 63–66. Answer the questions in the margins of the story as you read.● Answer the practice questions that follow. Check the answers in the answer key on pages 83–85.	
5	<p style="text-align: center;">“Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and “Letter to Marta from Ling”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read “Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and “Letter to Marta from Ling” on pages 73–75.● Answer the practice questions that follow. Check the answers in the answer key on pages 85–87.	

What a Careful Reader Does

BEFORE reading, a careful reader asks

Why am I reading this selection?

What does the selection seem to be about?

Is it about something or someone I already know?

Is it about something new I am learning?

Is it about something I want to learn?

What kind of reading will I do?

Will I read about characters in a story?

Will I read about how to do something?

Will I read to learn interesting facts?



DURING reading, a careful reader asks

Do I understand what I'm reading?

Do I need to slow down?

Can I figure out any words I don't know?

Do I need to look for clues?

Do I need to read some parts again?

How can I connect with what I'm reading?

Is it something I already know?

Is it something new I am learning?

Is it something I want to know more about?



AFTER reading, a careful reader asks

What do I remember about what I read?

Can I use my own words to tell others about it?

Can I name the most important ideas in it?

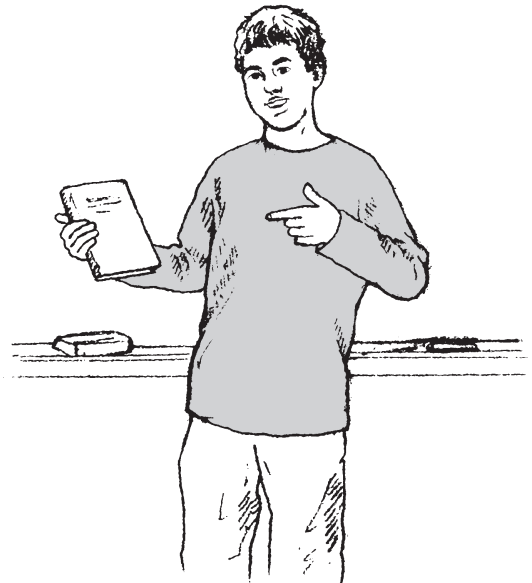
Can I think of other ways to show that I understand it?

What do I think about what I read?

Did it add to something I already knew?

Did it tell me something new?

Did it make me want to learn more?



“Tornado Alley”

Your child should read the following story aloud. If at any time your child becomes frustrated, join in and read the story together.

As you read, you may notice a number next to each paragraph. The paragraphs are numbered just as they will be on the TAKS test to help your child when answering questions.

Tornado Alley

- 1 Caleb looked out the window at the eerie green Texas sky. A blanket of humid air settled on the wildflowers that dotted the roadside. “I wish Dad would get home soon,” Caleb said to himself. As he watched, a steady downpour of rain began. “The weather’s getting worse.” Caleb’s thoughts were suddenly interrupted by an alarming beeping from the television, followed by an announcer’s urgent voice. Caleb and his mother turned toward the television.
- 2 “The National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning effective until 4:30 P.M. for the people in the following areas . . . ,” said the weather forecaster. Caleb didn’t need to look at the forecaster’s radar map to know that the conditions were just right for a tornado. He knew that thunderstorms form from lots of warm, humid air. When the humid air gets trapped under cooler air, a funnel cloud, or tornado, can form.
- 3 Caleb drew in a deep breath and watched the sky darken. His family lived in “Tornado Alley,” the area of the United States where tornadoes are most frequent. In fact, Caleb’s home was about a 20-minute drive east of the Texas town where an F-5 tornado had once touched down. Caleb had been only six at the time.
- 4 “It was like a big vacuum that sucked everything up,” his dad had told him later. “The destruction of the tornado was inescapable. Not much was left. Even the asphalt surface was ripped off the highway. F-5s are the worst type of tornado. Their winds are extremely fierce—between 250 and 300 miles an hour.”

Continued

5 Sitting on the edge of the windowsill, Caleb was anxious to see his father’s car come up the road. Heavy raindrops beat against the windows and carved deep rivers in the mud around the trees. As Caleb watched lightning split the sky, his dad pulled up in the driveway. “I made it!” Caleb’s dad said, panting when he came through the door. “They’re closing down most of Interstate 35. My windshield was cracked by baseball-sized hail.” Caleb’s mother handed each of them a flashlight but kept her eyes glued to the television, studying the weather map on the screen.

6 “Stay away from all windows and doors,” the weather forecaster warned. “If you are caught outside, seek shelter in a nearby building. As a last resort seek shelter in a ditch or low spot and cover your head. Do not stay in mobile homes or vehicles. People in or near the path of this storm should take immediate action to protect themselves and their property.”

7 “Quick, help me pull the mattress off the bed,” Caleb’s dad told him. “We can drag it into the family room, where there are no windows or doors.” The wind howled, and hail pounded the roof. CRACK! The bathroom window shattered under the weight of a fallen oak tree. Just then, the power went out. A lump formed in Caleb’s throat, and his heart beat wildly as he stood in the darkness.

8 “Don’t panic,” said Caleb’s mom. She switched on her flashlight, filling the room with light. Caleb and his parents quickly moved the mattress into the center of the room. They scrambled to the floor and pulled the mattress on top of them.

9 Just then Caleb heard a loud roar that sounded as if a freight train were coming closer and closer. Only it wasn’t a freight train. Caleb knew a tornado was directly over them. The walls shook, and the roof rattled. Caleb held his breath and listened intently. The sounds of breaking glass and splintering wood reached his ears before being swept away by the wind. Caleb shut his eyes and gripped the mattress as hard as he could.

Continued

10 Moments later there was silence. Slowly Caleb and his parents climbed out from under the rain-soaked mattress. Half of the roof had been torn off their home. They crept carefully through broken glass, debris, and their ruined belongings.

11 Caleb noticed that the empty trailer across the highway was completely gone. A twisted pile of metal lay in the road. Caleb thought it might have once been a tractor. Giant trees had been uprooted and blown into an open field, where they lay in a tangled pile.

12 Caleb studied the damage in awe of the tremendous power of the storm. He gave a deep sigh and then turned to look at the sky. Clouds, stained pink and orange by the setting sun, moved slowly across the sky. Caleb wondered how such a beautiful sunset could follow such a fierce storm.



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You have completed Step 1. Be sure to add a check mark to Your Steps to Success Chart on page 15.

Help with Skills

You have just read “Tornado Alley.” This new section, “Help with Skills,” on pages 20–50 presents the learning objectives, or goals, taught to fifth-grade students in Texas classrooms. These goals identify the skills fifth-grade students should know and be able to use when reading.

Read through each of the objectives and descriptions of the related skills. Then practice with the examples provided. Some of the examples will be linked to “Tornado Alley.”

Remember, this section is not meant to be done all at once. Take a break when you need one.

Objective 1: The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of culturally diverse written texts.

What is “a basic understanding”?

A basic understanding of culturally diverse written texts includes being able to do the following:

- Learn new words and their meanings that you encounter while reading
- Recognize how figurative language is used
- Recognize how a word may have a different meaning in different texts
- Learn parts of words and how they are used to help with meaning
- Find the main idea of a paragraph or a story
- Find the important details in a paragraph or a story
- Summarize a paragraph or a story you have read
- Retell the important parts of a story or a book

Context Clues

Sometimes when you read, you will see a word that you do not know. Don't worry. Often you can use the words you do know as clues to the meaning of a word you don't know. These clues are called context clues.

The clues for a word that is new to you can usually be found somewhere near that word. The clues might not always be in the same sentence, though. Sometimes clues will come before or after the sentence. The clues might even come before or after the paragraph.

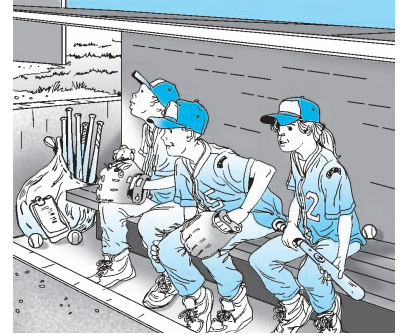
What are some examples of context clues?

Synonyms—Synonyms are words that share the same meaning. *Pretty* and *attractive* are synonyms, as are *mad* and *angry*.

Read the sentence below. Can you find a synonym for the word *energetic*?

The baseball players were as energetic as the lively crowd that cheered them on.

The word *lively* is a synonym for *energetic*.



Antonyms—Antonyms are words that mean the opposite of each other. *Dark* and *light* are antonyms, as are *neat* and *messy*.

Read the sentences below. Can you find an antonym for the word *interesting*?

Daniel hoped that the next speaker would be interesting. The last one was so dull that most of the audience fell asleep!

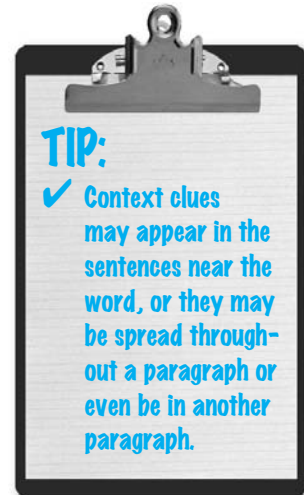
The word *dull* is an antonym for *interesting*.

Explanations, Definitions, and Descriptions—These explain, define, or describe the meaning of another word.

Read the sentences below. Can you find an explanation for the word *soloist*?

Tamyra liked performing as a soloist. She preferred playing alone rather than in a group.

The words *playing alone* explain the meaning of *soloist*.



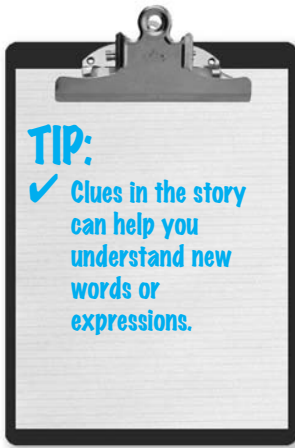


Examples—An example is something that is the same as the other things in a group. *Winter* is an example of a *season*. *Rap* is an example of *music*. *Macaroni* is an example of *pasta*.

Read the sentences below. Can you find an example of a type of *candy*?

Jason loves candy more than anyone I know. He begs his mother to bring him taffy whenever she goes to the store.

Taffy is an example of a kind of *candy*.



TIP:

✓ Clues in the story can help you understand new words or expressions.

Figurative Language

Sometimes a phrase might not make sense to you even if all the words are familiar. For example, you might know these words: *wrong*, *barking up*, *tree*, *the*. But you might be confused if someone tells you that you are barking up the wrong tree.

A phrase such as “barking up the wrong tree” is an expression. It is an example of **figurative language**. You can often use context clues to help you understand an unfamiliar expression, just as you do to understand unfamiliar words.

Look at the sentences below.

Barbara asked me if I could help her with math, but I told her she was barking up the wrong tree. Tom is much better at math than I am. I said she should ask him for help.

In the sentences above, Barbara is not really barking up a tree. She is asking the wrong person for help. You can tell from the context clues that *barking up the wrong tree* means “asking the wrong person.”



Multiple-Meaning Words

A word can have more than one meaning. The meaning can depend on how the word is used in a sentence. How can you tell a word's correct meaning? Usually there are other words in the sentence to help you out. Look at the other words in the sentence or in nearby sentences for clues about which meaning is being used.

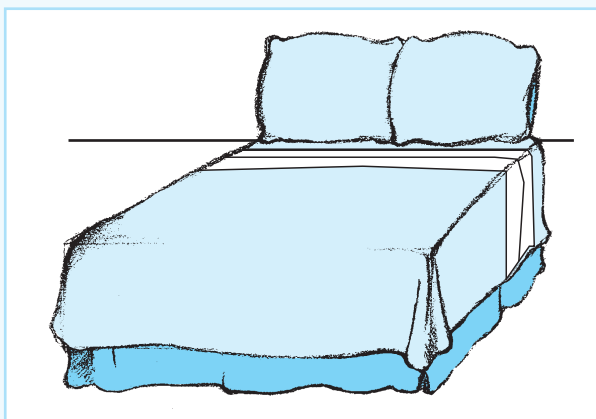
What does the word *sheet* mean in the sentence below?

When making your bed, be sure to tuck in the sheet.

If you look up the word *sheet* in a dictionary, you might see something like this:

sheet \shēt\ *noun* **1.** a large piece of cloth used on a bed **2.** a piece of paper **3.** a rope or chain attached to a boat's sail

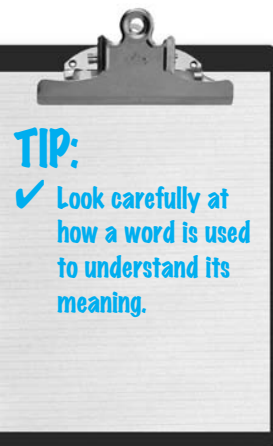
In the sentence, the words *bed* and *tuck in* help you know that *sheet* means “a large piece of cloth.”



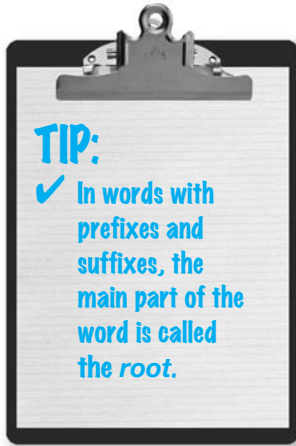
Now look at this sentence:

When you are through with the test, turn in your answer sheet.

In this sentence, the word *test* helps you know that *sheet* means “a piece of paper.”



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Prefixes and Suffixes

Knowing the meanings of prefixes and suffixes can help you figure out the meaning of words.

A **prefix** is a letter or a group of letters that is added to the beginning of a word to make a new word. Here are some prefixes and their meanings:

dis- means “the opposite of”

pre- means “before”

un-, *im-*, and *in-* mean “not”

Can you figure out the meaning of the underlined word in the sentence below? Use what you know about prefixes.

I dislike having to wake up early.



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dis- (the opposite of) + *like* (enjoy) = does not enjoy or like



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A **suffix** is a letter or a group of letters that is added to the end of a word to make a new word. Here are some suffixes and their meanings:

-able and *-ible* mean “able to” or “can do”

-ful means “full of”

-less means “without”

Can you figure out the meaning of the underlined word below? Use what you know about suffixes.

The firefighter was fearless.

fear (a feeling of being afraid) + *-less* (without) = without being afraid; without fear

Try It

The following sentence is from paragraph 4 of “Tornado Alley.” Can you figure out what the underlined word means? Use what you know about prefixes and suffixes.

The destruction of the tornado was inescapable.

The prefix *in-* means _____.

The root word *escape* means “to get away from.” (Note that the final *e* in “escape” was dropped before the suffix was added. Sometimes root words undergo changes before suffixes are added.)

The suffix *-able* means _____.

So the word *inescapable* means _____

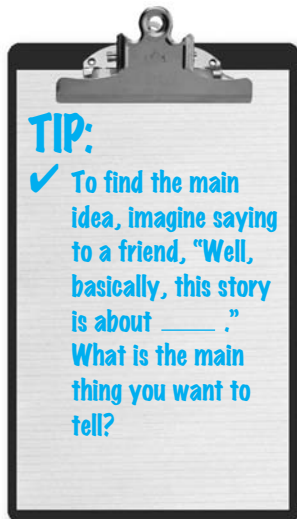
The prefix *in-* means “not.”

The root word *escape* means “to get away from.”

The suffix *-able* means “able to or can do.”

So the word *inescapable* means “not able to get away from” or “cannot escape.”

in- (not) + *escape* (get away from) + *-able* (able or can) = not able to get away from



Main Idea, Important Details, and Summary

The **main idea** of a story or paragraph answers the question "What is the story or paragraph mainly about?"

Sometimes the main idea is stated clearly in the paragraph, making it easy to find. Sometimes the writer does not state the main idea directly in a story or paragraph. That means you have to pay attention to the supporting details in a story or paragraph to figure out the main idea.

Important details in a story work together with the main idea. The main idea is the most important idea in a paragraph or reading selection. Important details tell more about the main idea. They can explain an idea or make it clearer. Details that tell how something looks, feels, sounds, smells, or tastes can bring a story to life. Such details usually tell *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, *Why*, and *How*.

Another way to think about important details is to imagine a bicycle. A bicycle has a frame, a seat, brakes, and two wheels. Think of this bicycle as the main idea.

Now think of a few "extras" that make the bicycle more appealing—15 speeds, an adjustable seat, metallic paint, racing stripes, and off-road tires. Think of these extras as important details that support the main idea. Just as extras can make a bicycle look and perform better, details can make a story more interesting and fun to read.

A **summary** is a way to briefly restate the main idea and the most important details and show how they are connected. A good summary tells what the whole story is about.



Photo courtesy of ©Cannondale Corp.

Read “Julio’s Challenge.” When you read a story, much of what you read is details. Remember that important details usually tell *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, *Why*, and *How*. Only the important details should be included in a summary.

Julio’s Challenge

“Just a little bit farther,” thought Julio as he pedaled his bicycle. “I know I can make it up this hill.” Every muscle in his body felt tired. The hilltop had to be getting closer, but he did not want to waste the energy to look. He told himself to ignore the pain and push toward the goal. Panting, he nearly stood up on the bicycle pedals to work the bike up the hill. “Walking would be faster,” he thought. Then suddenly the effort got easier. He had reached the level ground of the hilltop. He sighed and relaxed, ready to coast down the hill.

Main Idea of “Julio’s Challenge”

A bike rider works hard to make it to the top of a steep hill.

Important Details of “Julio’s Challenge”

Who is this story about?	Julio.
What is Julio doing?	He is riding his bicycle.
Where is Julio?	He is on a hillside.
Why is Julio tired?	He has been riding up the hill.
How does Julio get up the hill?	He works harder and harder.
How does the story end?	He reaches the top of the hill.

Summary of “Julio’s Challenge”

Julio struggles to ride his bicycle up a steep hill. He feels like giving up, but he keeps going. Finally he reaches the top and can coast down.



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Now read the following article. Think about the main idea and important details. Then read the summary that follows.

Local Gymnastics Show: A Gold-Medal Performance

If you went to see our Parkstown Panthers beat the Huntersville Hawks last Friday in the Parkstown High gymnasium, you saw much more than a great basketball game. Our city's Young Athletes Club put on a gymnastics show during halftime that was much more than entertaining. It was a gold-medal performance!

Yolanda Álvarez amazed the crowd with her graceful moves on the balance beam. On the rings, Malcolm Washington showed he had the strength and power that this event requires. Then young Deirdre Stein got the crowd clapping with her toe-tapping music and great tumbling.

Parkstown should be proud of its young athletes and should not be surprised to see them in a future Olympics.

Main Idea

The Young Athletes Club has several members who are talented in gymnastics.

Important Details of "Local Gymnastics Show"

WHO?	Parkstown's Young Athletes Club
WHAT?	Gymnastics show
WHERE?	Parkstown High gymnasium
WHEN?	Last Friday
WHY?	Entertainment during halftime

Now read the summary for the article. Notice that the summary includes the main idea and the answers to WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, and WHY questions.

Summary: Last Friday at the Parkstown High gymnasium, the Young Athletes Club put on a gymnastics show during halftime of the high school basketball game. The talented performers demonstrated their skills in several gymnastics events. The crowd was amazed by the young athletes.

Important Note

Readers sometimes get confused when they talk about important details, main ideas, and summaries, so here's a simple explanation of all three. The answers to questions such as *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, *Why*, and *How* are important details in the story. The main idea is the single most important idea in the story. It can often be stated in one sentence. If you put the main idea and the important details together in your own words, you are creating a summary. It usually takes several sentences to write a good summary.

Objective 2: The student will apply knowledge of literary elements to understand culturally diverse written texts.

What are “literary elements”?

Literary elements are the basic parts that an author uses to create a story. These parts include the characters, the setting (time and place of a story), the plot (events that happen in a story), and the main problem in the story.

Developing an understanding of literary elements includes being able to do the following:

- Analyze characters, including their personalities, motivations, and feelings
- Analyze characters’ relationships
- Analyze why characters do what they do
- Analyze the changes that characters go through, both personally and in their relationships with others and the world around them
- Identify a story’s setting and its effect on the meaning of the story
- Recognize the story problem(s) or plot
- Recognize how a story’s problem is resolved

Analyzing Characters

Characters are the people (or animals) in stories. You can tell a lot about how characters feel by thinking about what they say and do in a story. What a character says and does can also tell you a lot about the character’s personality.

Ask these questions as you read a story:

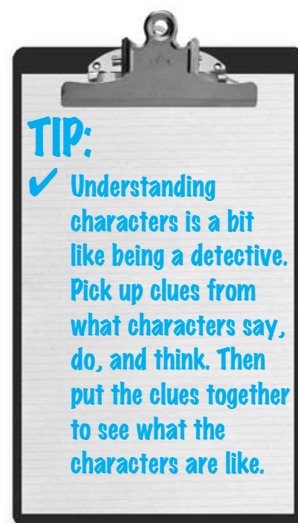
What does the character do?

Why does the character act a certain way in the story? (motivation)

What does the character say?

How does the character change during the story?

How does the character feel?



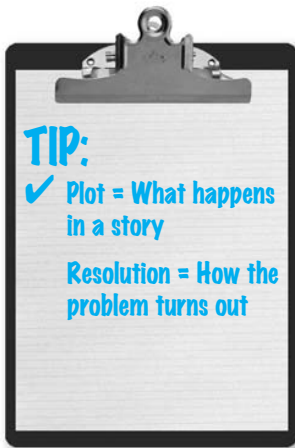
Read the story below. What is Kayla like? How does she feel? How can you tell?

A Soothing Song

Kayla stood and stared into the box at her feet. The puppy she had found had been crying for an hour. Now Kayla was ready to cry, too. Kayla knew her parents were tired of listening to the noise. She had tried everything she could think of—chew toys, food, a warm blanket. Nothing made the puppy happy. She wanted to keep him, and her parents had said he could stay if he behaved. So Kayla didn't cry. She wouldn't give up! She sat down on the floor and began to sing. The puppy stopped howling. Kayla smiled and sang some more. Maybe this would work after all.

How does Kayla feel at the beginning of the story? She feels sad and frustrated. How can you tell? She wants to cry.

What can you tell about Kayla? She works hard to get what she wants. How can you tell? She tries many things to make the puppy happy; she doesn't give up.



Story Plot and Problem Resolution

The **plot** is the series of events that happen in a story. These events are usually arranged around a conflict, or problem, that the characters must try to solve. You can often find the problem in a story by asking, “What’s going wrong for the main character?”

As one or more characters try to solve the problem, events build to a **climax**, or turning point. Then comes the **resolution**, in which the reader learns how the problem turns out.

In “Tornado Alley,” Caleb and his family face two problems. The first problem, Caleb’s dad being away from home, is solved in paragraph 5 of the story. The problem is resolved when Dad makes it home safely.

Try It

Now think about the second (and bigger) problem in “Tornado Alley.”

1. What is this problem?

2. How do you know this is a big problem?

3. What is the climax of the story?

4. What’s the resolution of this problem?

1. The problem in the story is that a tornado may hit Caleb’s house.
2. You know that this is a big problem in the story because the characters are worried about it.
3. The climax of the story is when the tornado actually hits Caleb’s house.
4. Caleb’s family makes it safely through the storm, and the storm passes, resolving the problem.



Setting and Its Importance

The **setting** of a story is where and when the story takes place. Sometimes knowing the setting can help you understand what happens and why the characters act as they do. The setting can also help you understand the plot (or the events) in a story. When you read, look for clues that tell you about the setting.

Look back again at “Tornado Alley.” The author tells you the setting of the story: on the night of a big storm in a part of Texas that is called Tornado Alley. The setting of the story helps you understand why Caleb and his parents act the way they do. Because they live in a place where tornadoes happen a lot, they are worried about their family and their home. They have seen the damage a tornado can cause.

In some stories the author might not tell you the setting of the story. You will have to use clues to figure it out.

Read the sentences below.

When Dan got off the bus, he saw his friends waiting by the classroom door.

This sentence tells where something happens. You can use clues to tell that the action takes place at school.

Gina watched the clouds swirling overhead. Instead of their usual pink and orange colors, they were turning an ugly green. The streetlights began to pop on, earlier than usual.

These sentences tell when something happens. You can use the clues *clouds swirling overhead* and *ugly green* to tell that the action takes place at the beginning of a storm.

Important Note

Objectives 3 and 4 both require students to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

What does analyzing a text mean?

Analyzing a text means recognizing the way an author organizes information in order to understand the author's purpose. By analyzing a text, careful readers move beyond reading the words on a page and begin to think critically about the information presented. Analyzing a text is how careful readers are able to read a wide variety of texts in order to learn more about the world around them.

Objective 3: The student will use a variety of strategies to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

What are reading strategies, and how do they help students analyze a text?

Reading strategies are plans for how to think about stories, articles, or books. Careful readers use strategies to help gain a deeper understanding of the information they are reading. Strategies help students analyze a text by providing a structure, or framework, for looking at the text in different ways: sometimes as a whole piece, sometimes in its smaller parts, and sometimes in relation to the type of text and its purpose or its relationship with other texts. This process allows readers to understand how ideas are connected and why the author might have presented those ideas in a particular way.

Reading strategies help students:

- Use the text's structure, such as cause and effect or chronology, to locate and recall information
- Compare how two different selections are alike and how they are different
- Use outlines, time lines, and graphic organizers to organize information from a story or a book
- Make judgments about the logic and consistency of a selection, including the motivations of characters and how characters might typically act in a variety of situations
- Identify an author's purpose for writing
- Recognize how an author's perspective or point of view on a subject affects what is written

Using the Text's Structure to Locate and Recall Information

Authors put the events of a story in a certain order so that the events will make sense. When you read, look for patterns in the way events have been organized and how these events relate to one another. You can use patterns of organization to help you locate information in a selection.



Cause and Effect—One way to understand a story is to look for causes and effects. A **cause** is an event or action that makes something happen—the reason something else happens. An **effect** is what happens—the result. Causes lead to effects in a story or selection. When you read, you should look for causes and effects.

Read the story below. Can you find a cause-and-effect relationship?

Another Rainy Saturday

Janet's ears were still ringing from the thunder and lightning that had just passed, shaking her windows and lighting up the gray and gloomy sky for a brief moment. "Why does it always have to rain on the weekends?" she thought. Just then Janet heard a faint whimper. "Shellie!" she thought, alarmed. Shellie, her dog, really didn't like storms. She heard a muffled whimper again and followed it to her bed. Kneeling down, she peered underneath and saw Shellie's worried face looking back at her. Gently she coaxed Shellie out from under the bed and began petting the dog, trying to comfort her. It looked like Janet would be spending another Saturday inside with Shellie.



These are just two possible cause-and-effect relationships from the story:

Cause = thunder
 Effect = The dog hides under the bed.

or

Cause = Shellie's whimper
 Effect = Janet looks for Shellie under the bed.

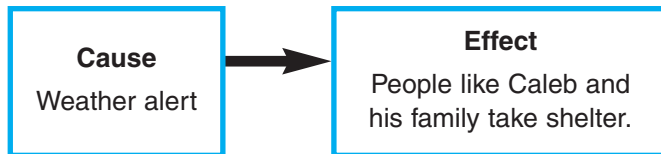
Try It

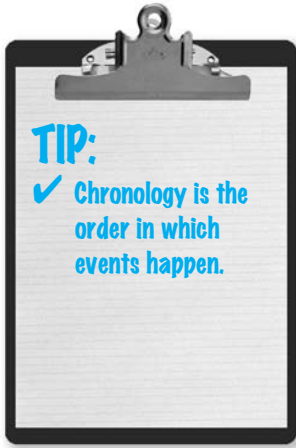
In “Tornado Alley,” what causes Caleb and his family to take shelter?

What is the effect of the weather forecaster’s special broadcast?

In “Tornado Alley,” Caleb and his family take shelter because they hear the weather alert. They also hear and see the storm getting worse.

The effect of the weather forecaster’s special broadcast is that people like Caleb and his family take action to protect themselves.





Chronology—Authors also present events or ideas in a time-sequence order. **Chronology** is the order or sequence in which events occur in time. Many authors choose to write stories beginning with the first event that occurs and ending with the last event. Other authors like to start with the most exciting event, or climax, and then tell about the events that lead up to the climax. Either way, authors will often use clue words to help you see the order clearly.

Read the story below. Pay careful attention to the order of events.

In a Hurry

Marisa parked her bike in the rack outside the school. She took off her helmet, grabbed it by the straps, and headed to the door. Halfway there she stopped, and a feeling of panic began to creep up her spine. Had she put her homework folder back in her backpack? Or was it still sitting on the counter at home? She yanked her backpack off and pulled it open. Yes! The blue folder was stuffed between two notebooks. Marisa ran to the door as the first bell rang.

In this story, what happens first? Marisa parks her bike.

What happens after Marisa heads to the door? She stops.

What does Marisa do next? She looks in her backpack.



Sometimes the story does not tell you everything that happened, but you can use story clues to figure it out.

What does Marisa do before she leaves her house? She puts her homework folder in her backpack. What clues help you know this? In the story, Marisa is trying to remember whether she had put her homework folder in her backpack or whether it was still on the counter at home. When she checks in her backpack, she learns that *Yes! The blue folder was stuffed between two notebooks.*

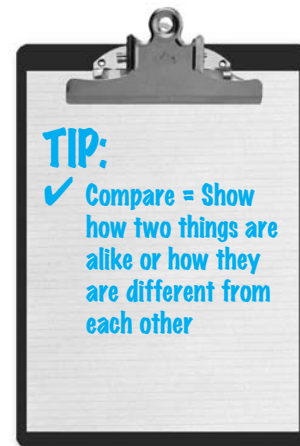
Comparing Two Selections or Stories

Have you ever watched a movie or a television show and thought, “Hey, that was kind of like another show I saw”? If you have, then you already know how to compare two stories.

No two stories are exactly alike. However, sometimes two pieces of writing can have a lot in common. Here are some ways in which two pieces of writing might be alike or different:

- **Main idea:** Two stories might be about different characters in different settings but still have the importance of friendship as the main idea.
- **Subject:** You might read a narrative story about a skateboarder, a nonfiction essay about a real skateboarder, an article about the history of skateboarding, or a poem about the thrill of skateboarding. Each of these would have the same subject or topic (skateboarding), but each would be presented in a different way.
- **Setting:** Stories might be set in the same place and time but be about different characters.
- **Characters:** You might read two stories about the same characters, or you might read the same story as told by two different characters.
- **Plot:** A story might have a plot you have read before. Even if the setting and the characters are different, you can recognize the action as being the same in each story.
- **Conflict:** Two stories might have the same basic conflict, such as people struggling against nature.
- **Organization:** Two writers might choose to organize their writing in similar ways, such as in time order.

At times the fifth-grade TAKS test will have two stories that are meant to be read together. These are called paired selections. When reading paired selections, you must be able to recognize how the two stories are similar or different.



Take a look at this story:

The Captain

The ship crashed up and down in the huge waves as the captain tried to control the wheel. A wave broke over his head, but he held on and turned the wheel again. Slowly the ship began to move into the cove. The crew rushed to drop the sails. The captain had saved them from the storm.



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Now look at this story:

Just in Time

I watched the clouds swirling. As the hail started to fall, I rushed to the horses' pen. The wind tore at my skirts as I struggled with the gate. I grabbed my bonnet before it could fly away and flapped it at the horses. I rushed after them into the barn and slammed the doors shut.

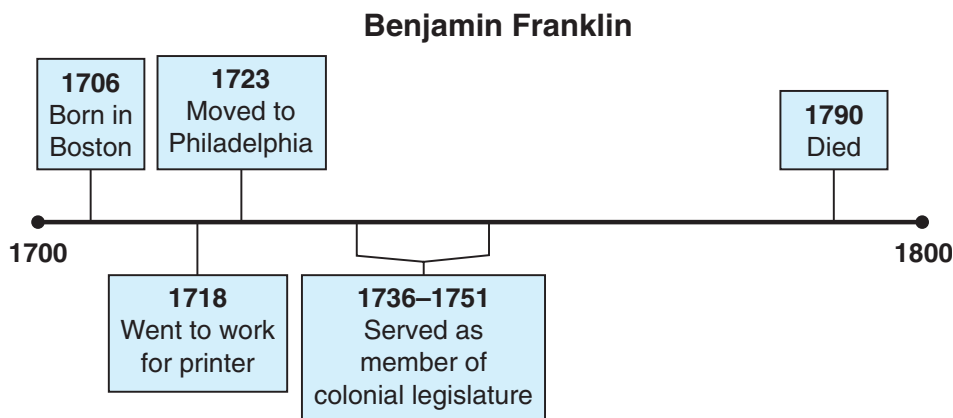
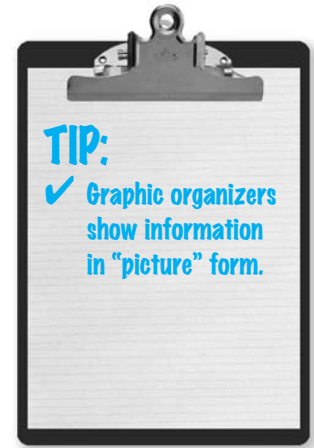
How are these two stories alike? They both tell about a person who is fighting against a storm to save something. They both tell the events in time order.

How are these stories different? The stories have different settings and characters. One is set on a ship at sea. The other is set on a farm. One has a man as the main character, and the other has a woman.

Representing Information in Different Ways

One way to keep track of information you read is to make notes. Another way is to make a time line or an outline of the information. **Graphic organizers** such as charts and graphs can also help you keep track of what you are reading. Making a “picture” of what you are reading can help you better understand a story. Story maps, webs, and clusters are also types of graphic organizers.

Suppose you read an article about the life of Benjamin Franklin. The story includes several important dates. At the end of the article, the information is presented as a time line. A **time line** is a type of graph that shows the order in which events take place and the amount of time that passes between each event. Marks on a time line show dates.



You can use the time line to answer questions about the article. You can also use information from the article to complete the time line. Look at the time line and answer the questions below.

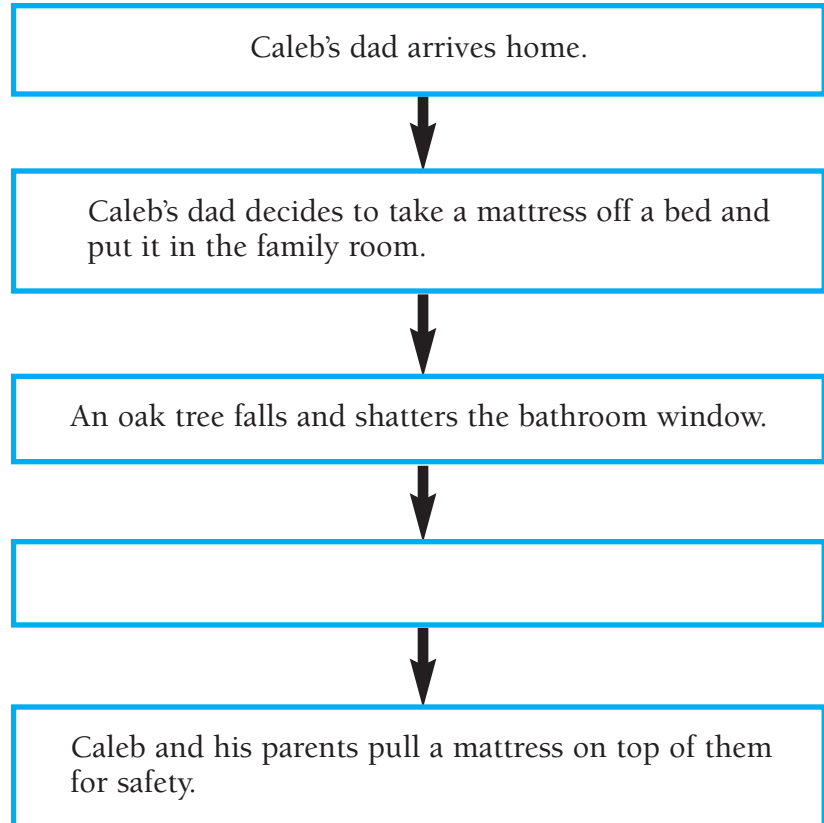
When was Benjamin Franklin born? 1706.

What was his first job? Working for a printer.

Franklin helped write the Constitution in 1787. Where would you put this information on the time line? Between 1751 and 1790.

Try It

A sequence chart is shown below. To make a sequence chart, put story events in the order that they take place. Some significant events of “Tornado Alley” appear in the sequence chart. As you read the chart, think about the event that belongs in the empty box.



Which event belongs in the empty box?

You might have written, “The power goes out.” This is one of the significant events that happen after the bathroom window shatters and before Caleb and his parents pull a mattress on top of themselves for safety. There are other possible answers. You might have written, “Caleb becomes more anxious, but his mother tells him not to panic” or “Caleb’s mother uses a flashlight to light up the family room.”

Logic and Consistency Within a Text

As you read a story, you learn about the characters and how they usually think and act. You can judge whether a character is acting in a way that you expect based on what the character has already done and what you know about how people act in general.

Think back to “Tornado Alley.” Caleb and his mother hear the National Weather Service tornado warning on television. When Caleb’s father comes in from the storm, Caleb’s mother hands each of them a flashlight but keeps her eyes on the television.

Do you think Caleb’s mom is acting in a way that makes sense? You probably think she is. She wants her family to be prepared, so she hands them flashlights. She also wants to hear what else the announcer says about the storm warning.

TIP:

✓ As you read, ask yourself, “Does this make sense with what I’ve learned about the character?”

Purposes of Text

As you read, ask yourself, “Why did the author write this?” Authors write stories and articles for different reasons, or purposes. Some of these reasons include:

To inform—Some types of writing are created to inform readers about topics or events. You read them to find out factual information. Newspapers, encyclopedias, and textbooks are all written to inform. An article about tornadoes and how they form is an example of informative writing.

To influence—If a writer wants to make you feel a certain way about something, he or she is trying to influence or persuade you. The writer uses powerful words to make the reader feel a certain way. For example, an advertisement for a weather radio might use words to make you feel that you will be safer if you buy the radio for your home.

To explain—Some pieces of writing are created to give the reader specific instructions or directions. For example, you might have read a list of instructions for how to protect yourself from a fire or a tornado. You might also have read a set of directions for how to build something.

To entertain—Many stories and books are written to entertain readers by telling a good story.

TIP:

✓ As you read, think about why the author wrote the selection.

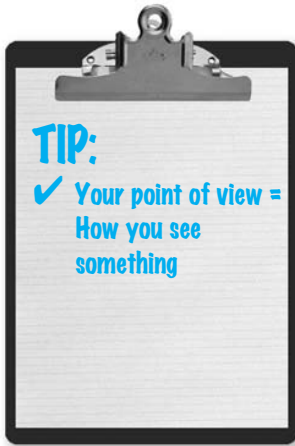
Try It

Why do you think the author wrote “Tornado Alley?”

“Tornado Alley” is a narrative about a family facing a tornado, but it also gives factual information about tornadoes. It is written both to entertain and to inform.

Author’s Perspective or Point of View

A **point of view** is how a person sees something. An author’s point of view affects the way he or she writes about a subject.



Look below at the ways two writers feel about a new shopping mall.

Point of View 1

A shopping mall is a great idea for our community. We will be able to find everything we need in one place. The mall will bring many new jobs to our town. It will be a safe place for people to shop and have fun.

Point of View 2

A shopping mall is a bad idea for our community. Roads will be clogged with cars trying to reach the mall. The mall will cause many of our smaller stores to close. The mall will be an ugly, noisy place that is too crowded.

How would you describe the first writer’s attitude or point of view about the mall? You would probably describe the first writer’s attitude as positive. The writer sees the mall as a good thing. You know this by the author’s use of words such as *great idea*, *new jobs*, and *fun*.

How would you describe the second writer’s point of view? You would probably describe the second writer’s attitude as negative. The writer sees the mall as a bad thing. You can tell this by the author’s choice of words such as *bad idea*, *clogged*, and *ugly, noisy place*.

Both writers tell how they feel about the shopping mall and how it might affect the community. But they have different points of view—they see the shopping mall in different ways.

Objective 4: The student will apply critical-thinking skills to analyze culturally diverse written texts.

What are critical-thinking skills, and how do they help students analyze texts?

Good readers understand that reading requires them to make connections between what they have read and what they already know. Critical-thinking skills are the way good readers think about the information they are reading in order to develop an understanding that goes beyond the lines of the text. Reading in this way is an important tool for thinking and learning in daily life.

Thinking critically about a text includes:

- Understanding when deeper meanings are implied rather than directly stated in a selection
- Making reasonable predictions about what might happen next
- Forming conclusions based on the information within a selection
- Distinguishing between facts and opinions in selections such as newspaper editorials and advertisements, which are written to persuade the reader about a specific topic
- Supporting conclusions and interpretations with ideas and sentences from the selection
- Determining how ideas, themes, and issues relate within and across texts
- Recognizing how an author chooses to organize information



Making Predictions

When you read a story and try to guess what might happen next, you are **making a prediction**. Making predictions gets you involved in what you are reading. You can make good predictions by using clues from the story and from your own experiences.

Look at the picture below. What will probably happen next?



Prediction: The man will get stung by the bee.

How did you make the prediction? By looking carefully at the picture and using clues. The man is holding the flower close to his nose. The man's eyes are closed. He doesn't see the bee.

As you are making predictions, think carefully about:

- How the characters behave
- What the characters say
- What has happened in the story

Making predictions while you read can be fun. You can stop during the story and guess what might happen next. At the end of the story, you can make a prediction about what will happen.

Clues in the story can help you make predictions. These clues can be:

- What the characters in the story do
- What the characters say
- What has already happened in the story

Read the story below. What will probably happen next? Use clues from the story to help you make a prediction.

A Spring Surprise

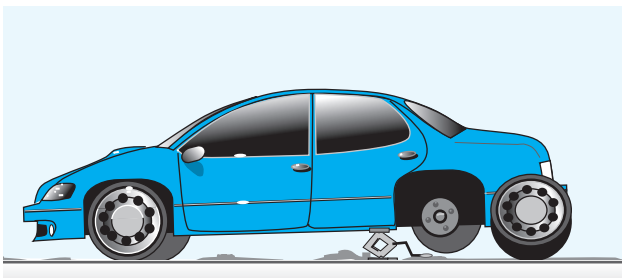
Scott and Jenny had not been in their tree house since last fall. Now that spring had come, they could hardly wait to get back up the ladder. As they climbed, a bird flew out of the branches, chirping loudly. The higher they climbed, the louder and more angry the chirping became. Jenny looked around and spotted the reason. The bird had built its nest on a nearby branch, and in it were three blue eggs. Jenny pointed out the nest to Scott, and they began to climb quietly down the ladder. They moved carefully so they would not disturb the nest. When they reached the ground, Scott said, "Well, I guess the tree house is closed for the spring. Let's go spread the word."

What do you think will happen next? Scott and Jenny will probably tell their friends not to play in the tree house. They will stay away so they won't bother the nest.

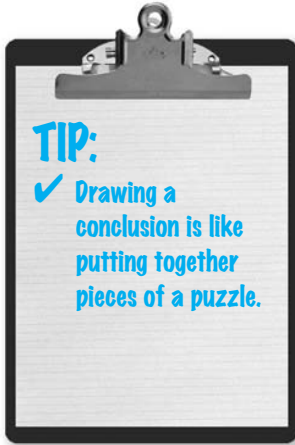
What clues helped you make this prediction? Scott and Jenny climb quietly down the ladder. They try not to disturb the nest or the bird. Scott says the tree house is closed for the spring. Scott suggests they *spread the word*.

Drawing Conclusions

Sometimes you can figure out things even if you don't have all the information in front of you. For example, when you see a car on the side of the road and one of its tires has been taken off, you know that the car probably has had a flat tire. No one told you this. You just put together the new information with what you already know about cars. This is called **drawing a conclusion**.



Sometimes when you read a story, you might have to draw a conclusion to figure things out. The story might not give you all the information, but you can use what it does give you.

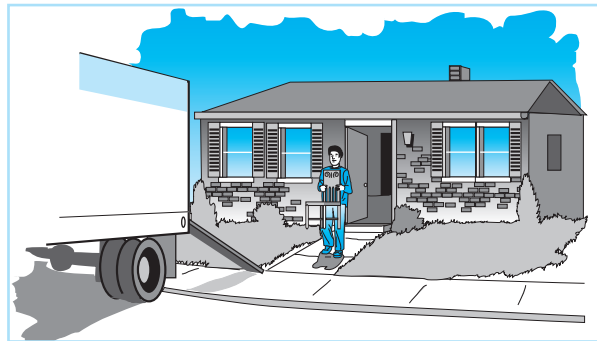


Try It

Read the story below. What conclusion can you draw?

Moving Day

Mr. Reyna slowly backed a large truck into his driveway. He slid a long ramp from the back of the truck and lowered it to the ground. Everyone in the family began carrying items from the house and loading them into the truck. The grown-ups carried the heavy pieces of furniture. The children carried pillows, small boxes, and toys. Finally everything was packed into the truck. Mr. Reyna and his family climbed into the truck and pulled out of the driveway. They stopped in front of the house for one last look at their old home.



1. What conclusion can you draw?

2. How do you know?

1. The Reyna family is moving.

2. You know this because they are putting their belongings into a truck; they stop for *one last look*.

Fact and Opinion

A **fact** is something that can be proved true. An example of a fact is *The sun is shining today*. You can prove this statement by looking out the window.

An **opinion** is a statement that tells what a person thinks, feels, or believes. An example of an opinion is *Swimming is the best way to spend a sunny day*. You might agree with this statement, but not everyone shares this belief.

Read the sentences below. Which sentence states a fact? Which states an opinion?

Sentence 1: A chameleon can change color.

Sentence 2: A chameleon is an interesting creature.

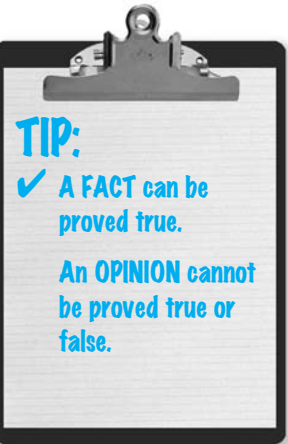


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Sentence 1 is a fact. It has been proved by scientists.

Sentence 2 is an opinion. It tells what one person thinks or feels about a chameleon.

Certain words can help you recognize an opinion. Some of these are *I think* and *I believe*. Other clues to opinions are words such as *best*, *prettiest*, *worst*, and *wonderful*. In the sentence *A chameleon is an interesting creature*, the word *interesting* helps you know the statement is an opinion. It is important to remember that people can have different opinions. Some people may not think chameleons are interesting.





Supporting Interpretations and Conclusions

Think about a time when you have answered a question and somebody has said, “How do you know that?” The person wanted you to support, or back up, what you said.

When teachers ask you to support your answer in class, they are asking you to tell how you figured out your answer. They are asking for evidence that supports your answer.

On the TAKS test, you will be asked to support answers using sentences or ideas from a reading selection. A question might ask you to choose the sentence from a story that best supports a conclusion or a prediction about a character or an event. You can do that by finding sentences from what you have read to back up the statement.

Read the following article. Think about how the Parkstown people might feel about their young athletes.

Local Gymnastics Show: A Gold-Medal Performance

If you went to see our Parkstown Panthers beat the Huntersville Hawks last Friday in the Parkstown High gymnasium, you saw much more than a great basketball game. Our city’s Young Athletes Club put on a gymnastics show during halftime that was much more than entertaining. It was a gold-medal performance!

Yolanda Álvarez amazed the crowd with her graceful moves on the balance beam. On the rings, Malcolm Washington showed he had the strength and power that this event requires. Then young Deirdre Stein got the crowd clapping with her toe-tapping music and great tumbling.

Parkstown should be proud of its young athletes and should not be surprised to see them in a future Olympics.

What sentence would you choose to support the idea that the Parkstown people feel proud of their athletes?

You probably chose the sentence *It was a gold-medal performance!* This sentence supports the idea that the athletes’ performance was one of great skill and talent, worthy of a valuable award, something that a hometown crowd would be proud of. Can you locate any other support for the town’s pride?

Connecting Ideas Across a Text or Texts

Sometimes on the TAKS test you will be asked to connect two pieces of writing. Or you may be asked to tell how one piece of writing connects several themes or ideas.

You have already learned about finding similarities and differences between two pieces of writing. (Look back at page 37 to review what you know.)

When you look at two pieces of writing, think about how they are alike and how they are different. Do they present the same idea but in different ways? Do they present the same issue from two different points of view? (See page 42 for more about point of view or perspective.)

Suppose you read “Tornado Alley” and a nonfiction selection about how a tornado forms. You could say that the two pieces are connected because they both give you information about tornadoes.

Now suppose you read two pieces of writing about recycling. One is titled “Things You Can Recycle.” The other is titled “Why Recycling Is Important.”

How are these two pieces alike? They are both about recycling.

Which one would you read to find out what you can put in the recycling bin at your school? The first one, “Things You Can Recycle.”

The two pieces are connected by the same topic, but they present different information.

Patterns of Organization

You already know that authors organize information in their stories in specific ways. They arrange and link ideas in a pattern. If you recognize and understand the pattern, you will have a better understanding of the information the author is trying to present.

An author might use one of these patterns of organization:

Time sequence (also called *chronological*)—presents ideas in the order in which they occur

Comparison and contrast—tells how two things are alike and how they are different

Cause and effect—tells what happened and why it happened

Read the story below and try to figure out what pattern of organization the author has used.

Planet Facts

Venus and Earth are almost the same size. Both planets have an atmosphere, which is made up of a layer of gases that surround the planet. The atmosphere of Earth is made up mainly of nitrogen and oxygen, but Venus's atmosphere is made up mostly of carbon dioxide. From the surface of Venus, the sky would look orange rather than blue like Earth's sky. The thick clouds that cover Venus make the heat on the planet intense. The temperature on Venus is around 900° Fahrenheit.



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The author has told you how two things, Earth and Venus, are alike and how they are different. The pattern of organization the author has used is comparison.

Fantastic! You have completed Step 2. Be sure to add a check mark to Your Steps to Success Chart on page 15.

“Tornado Alley” Again

Now you will read “Tornado Alley” for a second time. This time you will see questions written in the margins next to the story. These questions will help guide your thinking as you read and will help you understand the story better.



“Tornado Alley” is a narrative. It is something you might read for fun. When you read a narrative, look for these things:

- **Characters**, such as people or animals
- A **place** where the story happens
- A **time** when the story happens
- A **problem** that a character has
- A **solution**, or end, to the problem

“Tornado Alley” is also informational. It teaches you something about a particular kind of weather. Look for this information as you read the story.

Turn the page and read “Tornado Alley.”

Reading Selection

Read “Tornado Alley” again. As you read, think about the questions in the margins of the story. These questions will help guide your thinking as you read. Use what you learned from the “Help with Skills” section to answer these questions.

Tornado Alley

(Question 1)
Why is Caleb worried about his father?

(Question 2)
What does the word urgent mean in the first paragraph?

(Question 3)
Where does Caleb’s family live? Why is this important to the story?

(Question 4)
Why has Caleb’s father told Caleb so much about tornadoes?

- 1 Caleb looked out the window at the eerie green Texas sky. A blanket of humid air settled on the wildflowers that dotted the roadside. “I wish Dad would get home soon,” Caleb said to himself. As he watched, a steady downpour of rain began. “The weather’s getting worse.” Caleb’s thoughts were suddenly interrupted by an alarming beeping from the television, followed by an announcer’s urgent voice. Caleb and his mother turned toward the television.
- 2 “The National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning effective until 4:30 P.M. for the people in the following areas . . . ,” said the weather forecaster. Caleb didn’t need to look at the forecaster’s radar map to know that the conditions were just right for a tornado. He knew that thunderstorms form from lots of warm, humid air. When the humid air gets trapped under cooler air, a funnel cloud, or tornado, can form.
- 3 Caleb drew in a deep breath and watched the sky darken. His family lived in “Tornado Alley,” the area of the United States where tornadoes are most frequent. In fact, Caleb’s home was about a 20-minute drive east of the Texas town where an F-5 tornado had once touched down. Caleb had been only six at the time.
- 4 “It was like a big vacuum that sucked everything up,” his dad had told him later. “The destruction of the tornado was inescapable. Not much was left. Even the asphalt surface was ripped off the highway. F-5s are the worst type of tornado. Their winds are extremely fierce—between 250 and 300 miles an hour.”

Continued

5 Sitting on the edge of the windowsill, Caleb was anxious to see his father’s car come up the road. Heavy raindrops beat against the windows and carved deep rivers in the mud around the trees. As Caleb watched lightning split the sky, his dad pulled up in the driveway. “I made it!” Caleb’s dad said, panting when he came through the door. “They’re closing down most of Interstate 35. My windshield was cracked by baseball-sized hail.” Caleb’s mother handed each of them a flashlight but kept her eyes glued to the television, studying the weather map on the screen.

(Question 5)
Why does the weather forecaster tell viewers to stay inside, away from windows and doors?

6 “Stay away from all windows and doors,” the weather forecaster warned. “If you are caught outside, seek shelter in a nearby building. As a last resort seek shelter in a ditch or low spot and cover your head. Do not stay in mobile homes or vehicles. People in or near the path of this storm should take immediate action to protect themselves and their property.”

(Question 6)
What words can be used to describe Caleb’s parents as they react to the storm?

7 “Quick, help me pull the mattress off the bed,” Caleb’s dad told him. “We can drag it into the family room, where there are no windows or doors.” The wind howled, and hail pounded the roof. CRACK! The bathroom window shattered under the weight of a fallen oak tree. Just then, the power went out. A lump formed in Caleb’s throat, and his heart beat wildly as he stood in the darkness.

(Question 7)
How do you know that Caleb is frightened by the storm?

8 “Don’t panic,” said Caleb’s mom. She switched on her flashlight, filling the room with light. Caleb and his parents quickly moved the mattress into the center of the room. They scrambled to the floor and pulled the mattress on top of them.

(Question 8)
What does Caleb see that tells him that the winds were very strong?

9 Just then Caleb heard a loud roar that sounded as if a freight train were coming closer and closer. Only it wasn’t a freight train. Caleb knew a tornado was directly over them. The walls shook, and the roof rattled. Caleb held his breath and listened intently. The sounds of breaking glass and splintering wood reached his ears before being swept away by the wind. Caleb shut his eyes and gripped the mattress as hard as he could.

10 Moments later there was silence. Slowly Caleb and his parents climbed out from under the rain-soaked mattress. Half of the roof had been torn off their home. They crept carefully through broken glass, debris, and their ruined belongings.

Continued

11 Caleb noticed that the empty trailer across the highway was completely gone. A twisted pile of metal lay in the road. Caleb thought it might have once been a tractor. Giant trees had been uprooted and blown into an open field, where they lay in a tangled pile.

(Question 9)
How does Caleb probably feel about what has happened to his house?

12 Caleb studied the damage in awe of the tremendous power of the storm. He gave a deep sigh and then turned to look at the sky. Clouds, stained pink and orange by the setting sun, moved slowly across the sky. Caleb wondered how such a beautiful sunset could follow such a fierce storm.

(Question 10)
Now that you have read the story, can you tell a friend what conditions can cause a tornado? Can you describe the damage a tornado can cause?



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Practice with Reading Skills

The following questions are the same as the ones you answered as you read “Tornado Alley.” Read the questions again and the answer explanations that follow.

Did you get the same answers? If not, the explanations will show you how to get to the correct answer.

Question 1: Why is Caleb worried about his father?

Reread paragraphs 1 and 2 to see why Caleb is worried about his father. Caleb and his family have a big problem in “Tornado Alley.” Notice these details:

- The sky is an *eerie green*, and rain is falling in a *steady downpour*.
- Caleb’s father is on his way home, and Caleb is afraid that the bad weather will keep his father from getting home. *I wish Dad would get home soon. . . . The weather’s getting worse.*
- Caleb learns that there is a tornado warning.

You can guess that Caleb is worried about his father being hurt by the bad weather. Reading a little more will help you decide whether Caleb is worried for a good reason. In paragraph 5, you learn that the weather does threaten Caleb’s father, whose car is damaged by large hail.



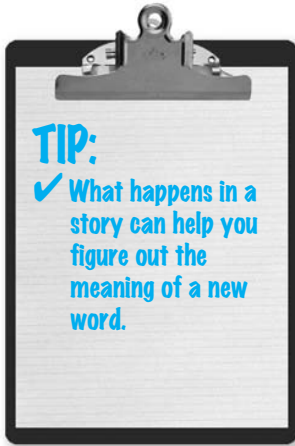
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The first problem of the story is resolved, or taken care of; Caleb’s father gets home safely. The larger problem, the dangerous weather, still threatens the family. That problem will not be resolved until the end of the story.

Turn to page 30 for more help with understanding story plot and problem resolution.

Question 2: What does the word urgent mean in the first paragraph?

In paragraph 1 of the story, you learn that the weather is bad. You read of an interruption—an *alarming beeping from the television*. Caleb is tense and worried. Then the *announcer’s urgent voice* is heard. You probably know from experience that bad weather can be dangerous, and you have probably seen a television announcer break in with an important message. So you can guess that someone using an *urgent* voice is trying to tell you something important.



You can often check to see whether your guess is correct by reading a little more of the story. Look at paragraph 2, where the announcer says, *The National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning. . . . A tornado warning is important news that needs immediate action, so you can guess that the word urgent means “needing immediate attention or action.”*

Turn to page 20 for more help with context clues.

Question 3: Where does Caleb’s family live? Why is this important to the story?

This question asks you to think about the story’s setting. You learn in the first line of the story that Caleb lives in Texas. Paragraph 3 then tells you a lot more about the setting of the story. The author does not give specific details about Caleb’s house. But the author does give a lot of details about the part of the country Caleb lives in:

- His family lives in Tornado Alley, where tornadoes are frequent.
- His family lives near a small town where a powerful tornado touched down once before and did a great deal of damage.

Why are these setting details important to the story? Violent storms happen all over Texas from time to time, but tornadoes are rare—except where Caleb lives (Tornado Alley). Therefore, his home is at greater risk of being struck by a tornado, and the tornado is the major problem of the story. The details about the setting let you know that Caleb is right to worry about the weather and the possibility of a tornado forming near him and his family.

Turn to page 32 for more help with setting and its importance.

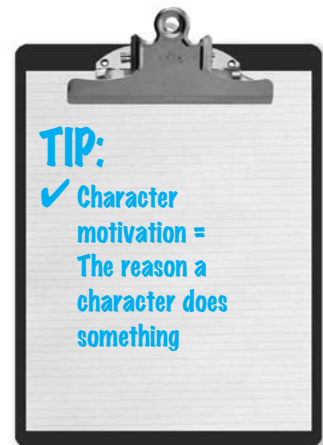
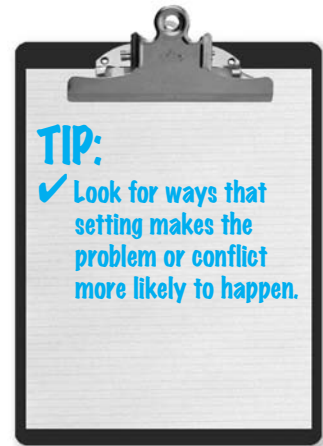
Question 4: Why has Caleb’s father told Caleb so much about tornadoes?

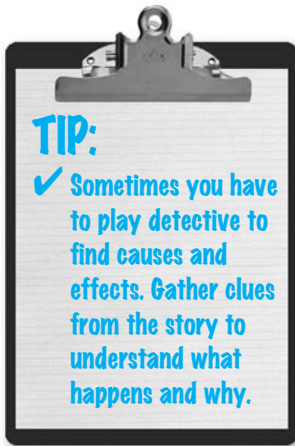
Question 4 asks about the motivation of Caleb’s father in giving his son scary information. To answer the question, you have to put together some clues from the story to determine why Caleb’s father tells his son so much.

- Caleb’s family lives in a place where tornadoes happen frequently. Look in paragraph 3.
- Caleb and his father care about each other. That’s why Caleb is worried in paragraphs 1 and 5.

Because Caleb’s father wants to keep him safe from tornadoes, he tells Caleb how destructive the storms can be. Caleb’s father doesn’t want to scare Caleb, but he wants his son to know how dangerous tornadoes can be, especially since they live in Tornado Alley.

Turn to page 29 for more help with analyzing characters.





Question 5: Why does the weather forecaster tell viewers to stay inside, away from windows and doors?

Question 5 asks about a cause-and-effect relationship. Let’s see what clues in the story explain the forecaster’s advice.

- Paragraph 1: A steady downpour
- Paragraph 2: A tornado warning
- Paragraph 3: A darkening sky
- Paragraph 4: Details about what tornadoes can do
- Paragraph 5: Lightning, baseball-sized hail, and highway closings

All these clues add up to one answer: the weather is so dangerous that it’s risky to be outside. The hail or debris pushed by strong winds can easily break a window. This is why the forecaster tells people to take shelter.

Turn to page 34 for more help with cause-and-effect relationships.

Question 6: What words can be used to describe Caleb’s parents as they react to the storm?

This question, like Question 4, is about analyzing characters. However, this question asks you to focus on the characters’ personalities, or traits. To answer this question, you have to look at what Caleb’s parents do during the storm.

- Paragraph 5 tells you that Caleb’s mother watches the special weather reports and gets flashlights ready in case the power goes out.
- Paragraph 7 shows how Caleb’s father moves the family into a safer room and gets a mattress to protect them from flying debris.
- In paragraph 8, Caleb’s mother urges him to stay calm when the tornado is near. She tells Caleb not to panic as she turns on her flashlight and takes shelter under the mattress.
- Finally, in paragraph 10, both parents move carefully through their ruined home.

By their actions and words, you can tell what kind of people Caleb’s parents are as they face this crisis. You could describe them with words such as *calm*, *prepared*, and *careful*.

Turn to page 29 for more help with analyzing characters.

Question 7: How do you know that Caleb is frightened by the storm?

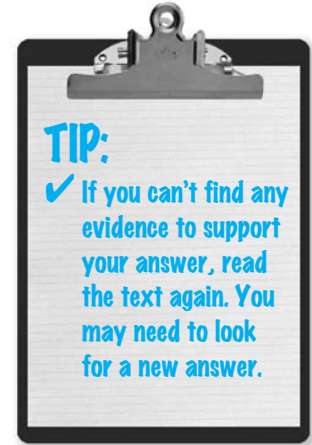
If Question 7 were “Is Caleb frightened by the storm?” it would take you about two seconds to respond “Yes!” But how do you know? The best way to support your answer is to go back to the story and look for the details that tell you how scared Caleb is. You already know he is worried about his dad driving home. Look closely at paragraph 7 for additional details:

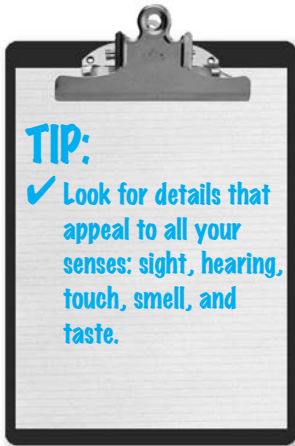
- First the wind begins to howl, and hail pounds the roof.
- Next an oak tree breaks the bathroom window.
- Then the power goes out, and the house becomes dark.

What are Caleb’s physical responses to these events? The story says *A lump formed in Caleb’s throat, and his heart beat wildly as he stood in the darkness.* These responses tell you just how frightened Caleb is.

Remember that you can often check your answers by reading a bit farther. Look at paragraph 8, and you will find more evidence that Caleb is really frightened. When his mother sees how he feels, she tells him not to panic.

Turn to page 48 for more help with supporting your responses with evidence from the text.





Question 8: What does Caleb see that tells him that the winds were very strong?

Look again at paragraphs 10 and 11. Caleb has already listened to the tornado passing overhead. Now he sees the damage it has done. Each detail, from his house’s missing roof to the uprooted trees across the highway, supports the main idea about a tornado’s power. Without these details, you might not be able to imagine what the storm left behind. Details make a story more interesting and help you picture what you are reading.



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Turn to page 26 for more help with important details.

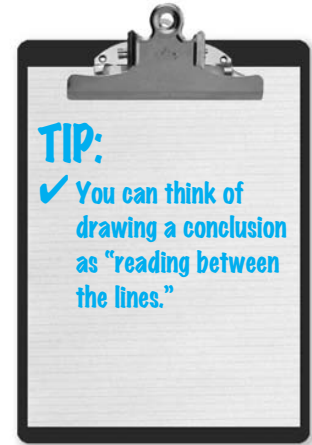
Question 9: How does Caleb probably feel about what has happened to his house?

Question 9 asks you to draw a conclusion. If you read paragraphs 10, 11, and 12 again, you will notice that the author never tells you how Caleb feels about what has happened to his house. You have to look at the clues and draw a conclusion about how he feels. Put these sentences together like a puzzle:

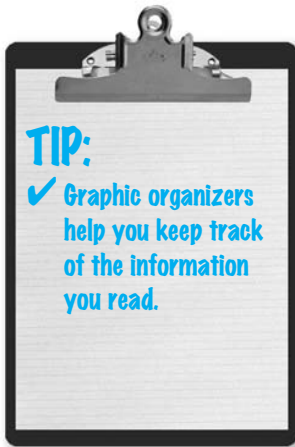
- *They crept carefully through broken glass, debris, and their ruined belongings.*
- *Caleb studied the damage in awe. . . .*
- *He gave a deep sigh. . . .*

Add your own experience to these puzzle pieces, and you will probably draw this conclusion: Caleb is shocked and saddened by what the tornado has done to his home.

Turn to page 45 for more help with drawing conclusions.

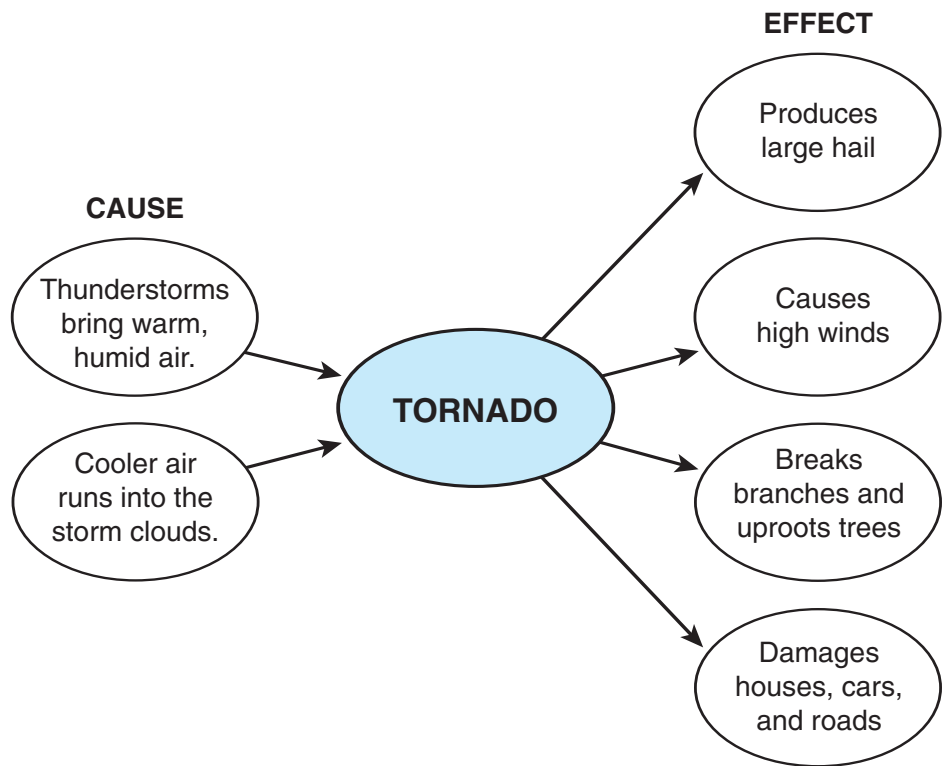


Question 10: Now that you have read the story, can you tell a friend what conditions can cause a tornado? Can you describe the damage a tornado can cause?



Making a web can help you answer Question 10.

You have already answered some questions about a tornado’s causes and effects. Imagine making a web to help you remember and organize what causes a tornado and what a tornado can do. It might look something like this:



Turn to page 39 for more help with representing information in different ways and to page 34 for more help with cause and effect.

You have completed Step 3. Good job! Be sure to add a check mark to Your Steps to Success Chart on page 15.

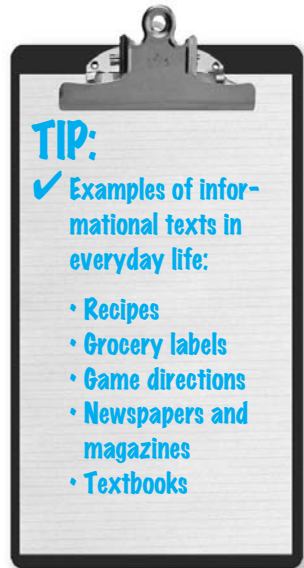
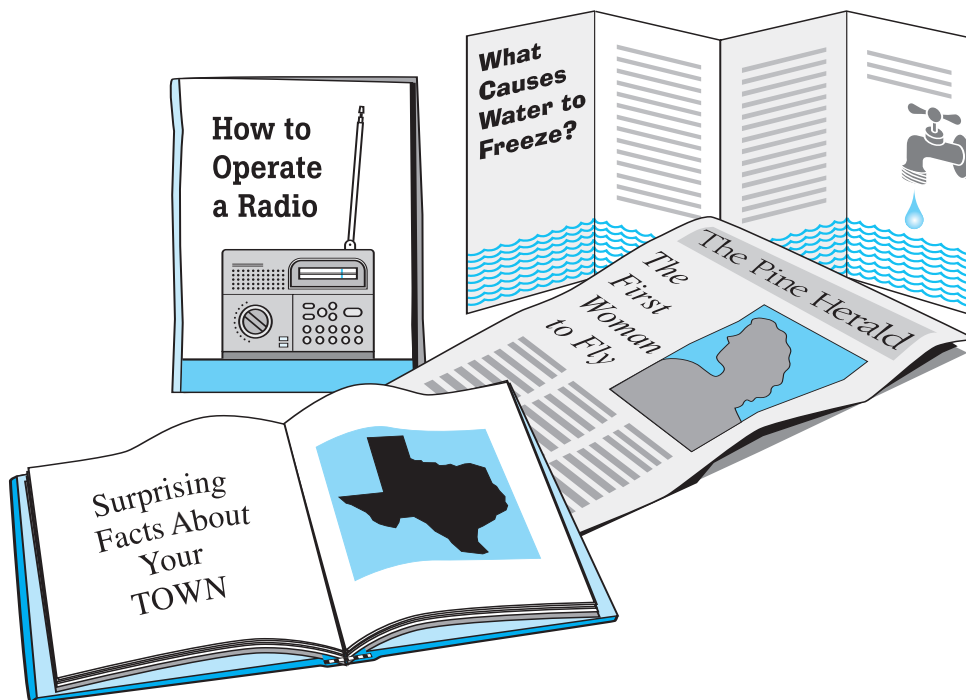
“Inventing the Ride”

Next you will read an informational article called “Inventing the Ride.” An informational article contains facts. It can describe someone or explain something. It might also tell how to do something.

When you read an informational article, look for these things:

- Facts about the real world
- Information about . . .
 - what something is like
 - how to do something
 - what happened long ago
 - an interesting person or place
- Examples to help readers understand the topic
- New words to learn

Informational reading will help you learn more about the world. You may want to read an informational article more slowly than you read a narrative. An informational article can give you a lot to think about.



“Inventing the Ride” is a type of informational article called a biography. A biography is a story about a person’s life. Sometimes the events are told in chronological order, which is the order in which they actually happened. Other times the author describes events out of order to make the story more dramatic or to emphasize certain events. When you read a biography, look for these things to help you understand the sequence of events:

- Specific dates
- References to **certain times** in the subject’s life

Examples:

When he was a child . . .

As a teenager . . .

At age 35 . . .

- **Key words** that indicate the order of events

Examples:

first, next, last

before, after

today, yesterday

earlier, later

You may wish to create a time line to help you better understand the order of events in a biography.

When you read “Inventing the Ride,” you will see questions written next to the article. Try to answer each question as you read. These questions will help you understand the information in the article.

Inventing the Ride

How can you tell that the author admires Tony Hawk?

1 Ask any skateboard fan about the sport's greatest performers, and Tony Hawk's name will be at the top of the list. Hawk has spent a lot of his time promoting the sport of skateboarding. His work has helped win worldwide acceptance for this extreme sport. Although he retired from professional competition in 1999, Hawk still inspires young skaters today.



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2 From the beginning people knew there was something special about Hawk. Born in 1968, he was always full of energy. His baby-sitters and preschool teachers could barely keep up with him. His parents allowed his active and energetic behavior because they saw the drive that would one day make him a champion.

What does redirect mean in paragraph 3?

3 Young Hawk was very bright. He enjoyed going to school and learning to play the violin. Once he began skateboarding, though, he began to redirect the amount of time he spent doing these other things. Hawk's new interest began to take up so much of his day that he had little time for anything else.

How does the author organize paragraphs 3 through 6?

4 Hawk's older brother Steve was a surfer. Sometimes Steve and other surfers couldn't get to the ocean to ride waves. During those times they practiced surfing moves on their skateboards. One day when Hawk was nine years old, Steve gave him an old skateboard and rolled Hawk through his first lessons. Steve modeled many of his water-surfing moves for Hawk. The boy mastered the basic moves quickly. Soon Hawk's father built a small ramp in the driveway for practicing jumps. Hawk also skated at Oasis, a local skate park, whenever he could find someone to take him there.

How did Steve help Hawk become a good skater?

5 Hawk did not become a champion overnight. He entered his first skateboard contest at the age of 11. He now jokes that he finished in about 99th place. Hawk was a skinny kid. He had to use elbow pads on his knees because regular-sized knee pads would not stay on his thin legs.

Continued

How did Hawk solve his problem of being too thin to wear regular-sized knee pads?

What did Hawk accomplish at age 15?

6 At first Hawk did not have the muscle to skate well, but he had the willpower. He slowly learned the tricks he saw more-experienced skaters doing. As his skill increased, he invented his own difficult moves. When he was 13, Hawk gained support from businesses to help pay for his training and travel to competitions. At the age of 15, he became a professional skater. By 16 he was being called the best skater in the world. Even a short list of his awards proves his skill and talent. Just before he retired, Hawk became the first skater to perform a trick called the “900.” Many skaters have found only injury and frustration trying this two-and-a-half mid-air flip. The trick is still a challenge for Hawk, who continues to skate for show and his own pleasure.

How is the Tony Hawk Foundation helpful to skaters?

7 Today Hawk is married and has children of his own. Perhaps they are the reason for the Tony Hawk Foundation. Hawk started this nonprofit foundation in 2000. The foundation helps cities plan and build skate parks for young skaters. Companies give money to the foundation. That money helps cities pay for land and materials for new skate parks. Just as young baseball and basketball players have their fields and courts, Hawk believes that young skaters should have a place to practice their sport. Without a place of their own to skate, young skaters tend to go to malls, parking lots, school campuses, and other places where skateboarding is not safe. The Tony Hawk Foundation also works to build positive relationships between skaters and the communities that may see skaters as troublemakers.

What information tells you that Hawk thinks skateboarding can benefit young people?

8 For Hawk and many other skaters, skateboarding is the opposite of troublemaking. Skating at Oasis helped keep Hawk out of trouble when he was young. He believes that the sport can give young skaters today a way to focus their energy, build their physical and mental skills, and learn to believe in themselves.

How would you summarize this article?

9 Hawk’s career has shaped the skateboarding world. He has achieved more than just becoming a great skater. Hawk helped design one of the hottest-selling video games, *Tony Hawk’s Pro Skater*. He has written a book about his life and early skating career. In addition, he is a businessman, running Birdhouse Projects, which sells skateboards, clothing, and gear.

Among Hawk’s Many Awards Are . . .

- 1983, 1st in Summer World Series
- 1986, 1st in Transworld Skateboard Championships
- 1992, 1st in National Skateboard Association
- 1997, 1st in vert (vertical half-pipe) at X Games
- 1998, 1st in vert (vertical half-pipe) at Goodwill Games
- 1999, 1st in best trick (the “900”) at X Games

What can you tell about skaters from reading this article?

Practice Questions


The questions below are similar to the ones you answered as you read “Inventing the Ride.” The questions are not in the same order as you saw them as you read. On TAKS, test questions are presented in random order. Each of the questions below has four answer choices. See whether one of the choices matches the answer you thought of as you were reading. If not, think about the four choices again and choose the best one. Mark your answers below.

Question 1

Which idea from this article shows that Hawk thinks that the sport of skateboarding can benefit young people?

- A Hawk spent a great deal of time and energy learning how to skateboard.
- B Hawk created a foundation to help cities build parks where skaters could practice.
- C Hawk started competing in skateboarding contests when he was 11 years old.
- D Hawk wrote a book about his experiences as a skater.

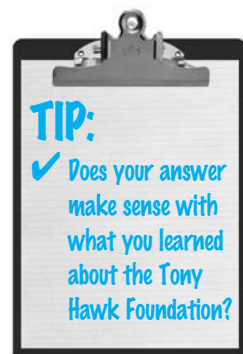



 Answer Key: page 83

Question 2

Which of the following would the Tony Hawk Foundation be most likely to do?

- A Start a business for profit
- B Encourage young skaters not to play other sports
- C Help young skaters show adults how skating can benefit children and communities
- D Sell skateboard equipment and clothing to young skaters




 Answer Key: page 83

Question 3

What did Hawk do because he was too thin to wear regular-sized knee pads?

- A He created tricks that would build up his leg muscles.
- B He wore elbow pads on his knees.
- C He did not wear any pads on his knees.
- D He asked some businesses to design special knee pads for him.

 Answer Key: page 83

Question 4

How did Hawk’s brother Steve help Hawk become a good skater?


- A Steve built Hawk a small ramp for practicing.
- B Steve took Hawk with him to a skate park.
- C Steve showed Hawk how to surf.
- D Steve gave Hawk his first skateboard lesson.

 Answer Key: page 83

Question 5

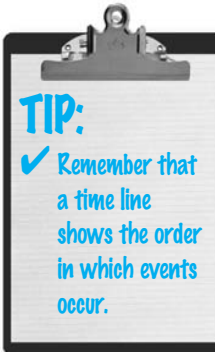
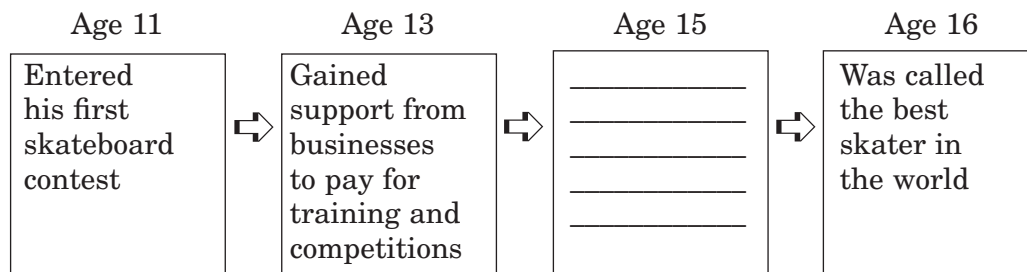
The author organizes paragraphs 3 through 6 by —

- A telling the events of Hawk’s life in the order they happened
- B explaining why Tony Hawk chose skating over playing the violin
- C describing all the skating moves Hawk learned and created
- D comparing skating to surfing to show that Hawk thinks skating is better

 Answer Key: page 83

Question 6

Look at this time line about Tony Hawk’s life.



TIP:
✓ Remember that a time line shows the order in which events occur.

Which of these belongs on the blank lines?

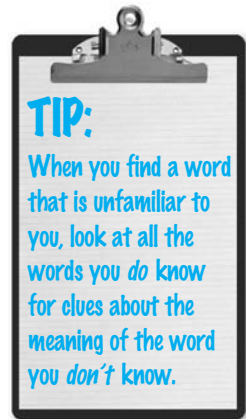
- A Learned to play the violin
- B Performed the “900”
- C Became a professional skater
- D Helped design a video game

 Answer Key: page 84

Question 7

In paragraph 3, the word redirect means to —

- A quit
- B change
- C offer
- D collect



 **Answer Key: page 84**

Question 8

How can the reader tell that the author admires Tony Hawk?

- A The author describes what Hawk’s life was like before Hawk became a skateboarder.
- B The author tells about the influential people who helped Hawk become a champion.
- C The author describes the challenges that Hawk overcame to become a successful skateboarder and businessman.
- D The author lists every award and honor that Hawk received in his professional career as a skateboarder.

 **Answer Key: page 84**

Question 9

Read the beginning of the summary below.


Tony Hawk is one of the world’s greatest athletes in the sport of skateboarding. Even as a child he directed his energy into practicing this sport.

Remember!

A good summary will include the main idea and the most important details.

Which of these best completes the summary?

- A Hawk got his first skateboard from his older brother Steve, who was a surfer. Hawk practiced skating at a local skate park. He practiced jumping using the ramp that his father had built on the driveway.
- B From the time Hawk was born, people knew there was something special about him because he was always full of energy. He worked hard to increase his skill and to invent his own tricks so that he could become a professional skater.
- C Hawk was the first skater to perform a two-and-a-half mid-air flip. He helped design one of the hottest-selling video games, *Tony Hawk’s Pro Skater*.
- D From the time he was a teenager, Hawk won awards for his skateboarding skill and talent. Today he continues to skateboard, helps build parks where young skaters can practice, and runs a skateboard business.

 Answer Key: page 84

Question 10

What can readers tell about skaters from reading this article?

- A Even the best skaters have to work hard to learn the sport.
- B Skating is fun only for teenagers and young people.
- C Skaters who practice a lot will be able to do the “900.”
- D Skaters become successful in business after they retire.

 Answer Key: page 85

Did you remember to check your answers with the answer key? Well done! You have now completed Step 4 in Your Steps to Success Chart! Be sure to add a check mark to Your Steps to Success Chart on page 15.

TO THE STUDENT— NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

- “Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and “Letter to Marta from Ling”

Pages 73–80 are provided for you, the student, to practice what you have learned. You may want to use “What a Careful Reader Does” on page 16 to help you remember what types of questions you should ask yourself as you read.

Take your time as you work through these selections and the questions that follow them.

“Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and “Letter to Marta from Ling”

Now you will read two selections together. “Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” is an advertisement in the form of a flyer. An advertisement is intended to persuade the reader to think a certain way or take a certain action. Look for opinions and facts in the advertisement. **Opinions** are intended to persuade the reader. **Facts** can be proved true and are often used to support opinions. The second selection, “Letter to Marta from Ling,” is a friendly letter. A friendly letter may also include facts and opinions. It is important to be able to tell the difference between facts and opinions.

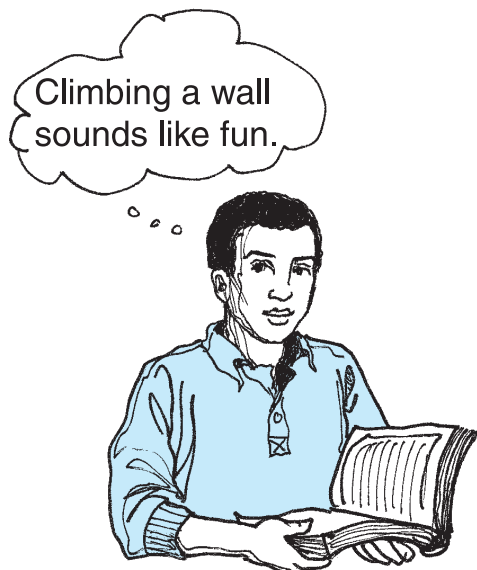
Both selections are about a place called Tall Walls. The flyer tells about Tall Walls, and the letter tells about one girl’s experience there. Together they provide you with a more complete picture of Tall Walls.

When you read “Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and “Letter to Marta from Ling,” remember what you have learned so far about being a careful reader. That means putting to work all the skills you have learned so far. Remember to ask *Who? What? When? Where? Why?* and *How?* as you read. If you come across a word that is new to you, remember to use the context clues and your experience to figure out the meaning.

As you read, also think about the ways in which the two selections are alike and the ways in which they are different. At times, the TAKS test will also include two selections that are meant to be read together. These are called paired selections. Paired selections will have three groups of questions: one set of questions about the first selection in the pair, another set of questions about the second selection, and a final set of questions that will require you to use **BOTH** selections to determine the correct answer.



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Reading Selections

Read the next two selections. Then answer the questions that follow.

Opens
June 4

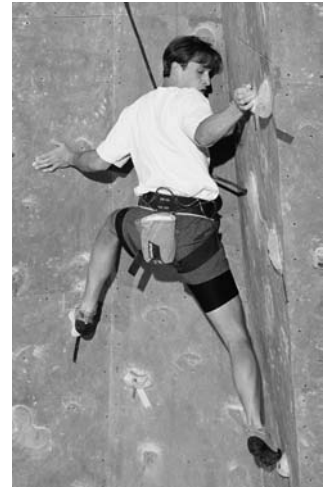
Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!

1819 Jefferson Avenue

In the Texas Panhandle there are few natural cliffs to climb. So come to Tall Walls, Flatland's new rock-climbing gym. Tall Walls has six huge walls with climbing routes that range from easy to difficult. Whether you're a beginner or an expert climber, Tall Walls is fun for everyone!

Tall Walls will also give you an excellent workout. Climbing builds strong muscles, including your heart. Climbing also exercises your brain. You will learn to concentrate and make decisions. Our instructors are some of the most skilled climbers in Texas. In just one lesson you will experience the thrill of rock climbing.

During June there are several special events that you won't want to miss. Mark these dates on your calendar or cut out the four announcements below and post them as reminders.



©Duomo/CORBIS

June 4
9:00 A.M.—9:00 P.M.

Celebrate our opening day! The first 100 visitors will be given a free Tall Walls T-shirt. Each hour there will be free classes to show beginners the basics. With a few skills you will be climbing with ease. Classes are limited to 10 climbers, so sign up when you first come in.

June 8
1:00 P.M.—3:00 P.M.

Meet Lance Jergens, one of the top indoor and outdoor climbers in the country. Jergens began indoor climbing five years ago as a way to stay in shape during the winter. He will demonstrate his skill on our most difficult wall. He will also show a video of himself on a challenging outdoor climb in New Mexico.

June 14
11:00 A.M.—1:00 P.M.

Come to our wall-signing party. The mayor of Flatland will autograph our tallest climbing wall. Then he will attempt to climb it while visitors cheer him on. Afterward, visitors will also be allowed to sign the wall. Free pizza and soft drinks will be served.

June 19
2:00 P.M.—3:00 P.M.

Find out why indoor rock climbing has become the fastest-growing sport in the United States. Watch a video of climbers at gyms across the country, including the nation's first indoor rock-climbing gym, in Seattle, Washington. Hear why people of all ages enjoy the sport.

Daily admission to Tall Walls is \$5.00 for adults. Admission for children ages 6 through 12 is \$3.00. For safety reasons children under 6 are not permitted to climb.

June 7

Dear Marta,

1 We're finally getting used to our new house in Flatland. The land here is so wide open that you can see for miles in all directions. I like the open spaces, but I do miss the mountains in Colorado. For the first week here, I kept expecting to see mountain peaks whenever I walked outside.

2 Speaking of mountains, guess what I did! I went rock climbing! My aunt took me to a new rock-climbing gym called Tall Walls. The day I went, they were giving away free T-shirts. Inside are huge walls covered with ridges and bumps that look like lumps of clay. You use these ridges and bumps as footholds and handholds to climb the wall. Gripping the ridges firmly, you pull yourself up. Then you put your feet on other ridges to help support your weight. Climbing a wall takes strength and concentration. It's really cool when you reach the top!

3 You know how afraid of heights I am, so going climbing may not sound like something I'd do. But it wasn't scary at all. I wore a harness with a long nylon rope clipped securely to it. The rope went through metal bolts attached to the top of the wall. My aunt, who is an experienced climber, was my belayer. The belayer stands on the ground and controls the rope for a climber. If the climber slips, the belayer tightens the rope to keep the climber from falling to the ground.

4 My aunt helped me decide which route would be best to take as I climbed. When you're against a wall high in the air, it's hard to tell which ridges are within reach. Many climbers get to a certain place on a wall and have to stop. They can't continue because the ridges above or beside them are too far away. That didn't happen to me, though. I made it all the way to the top!

5 I'll write again soon. Let me know how your summer is going. My parents are already planning a trip back to Colorado next summer. Maybe you and I can go rock climbing outdoors.

Your friend,

Ling

Practice Questions

Answer these questions about “Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and “Letter to Marta from Ling.” As you work, think about the skills you learned while working on “Tornado Alley” and “Inventing the Ride.” Mark your answers below.

Use “Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” (p. 74) to answer questions 11–14.

Question 11

Which statement from the flyer is an opinion?

- A *Tall Walls will also give you an excellent workout.*
- B *Jergens began indoor climbing five years ago as a way to stay in shape during the winter.*
- C *The mayor of Flatland will autograph our tallest climbing wall.*
- D *Daily admission to Tall Walls is \$5.00 for adults.*



Answer Key: page 85

Question 12

In the announcement for June 4, which words help the reader know what basics means?

- A *10 climbers*
- B *a few skills*
- C *free classes*
- D *opening day*



Answer Key: page 85

Question 13

Which statement from the flyer supports the idea that rock climbing is good exercise?

- A *Tall Walls has six huge walls with climbing routes that range from easy to difficult.*
- B *Climbing builds strong muscles, including your heart.*
- C *In just one lesson you will experience the thrill of rock climbing.*
- D *Find out why indoor rock climbing has become the fastest-growing sport in the United States.*



Answer Key: page 85

Question 14

The main purpose of the flyer is to —

- A encourage people to come to Tall Walls
- B compare rock climbing to other sports
- C provide the price of admission to Tall Walls
- D present the history of rock climbing



Answer Key: page 85


Continued

Use “Letter to Marta from Ling” (p. 75) to answer questions 15–17.

Question 15

According to information in the letter, what helps Ling overcome her fear of heights?

- A She imagines mountain peaks when she is outside.
- B She decides which route to take when climbing the wall.
- C She grips the footholds and handholds firmly and pulls herself up.
- D She wears a harness connected to a rope controlled by a belayer.


 Answer Key: page 86

Question 16

Which definition represents the meaning of tell as it is used in paragraph 4 of the letter?

tell \tel\ *verb* **1.** to command or order **2.** to say in detail
3. to decide or identify **4.** to reveal to others


- A Definition 1
- B Definition 2
- C Definition 3
- D Definition 4

 Answer Key: page 86

Question 17

Paragraph 3 of the letter is mainly about —

- A which activities Marta would expect Ling to do
- B where the belayer stands while controlling the rope
- C the rope that goes through metal bolts on the wall
- D why Ling is not afraid while climbing the wall

 Answer Key: page 86

Continued

Use “Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and “Letter to Marta from Ling” (pp. 74–75) to answer questions 18–21.

Question 18

Why doesn't Ling tell her friend about Lance Jergens's visit to Tall Walls?

- A She doesn't want her friend to be jealous.
- B Lance Jergens hadn't yet visited Tall Walls.
- C She wants to surprise Marta with a video.
- D Lance Jergens doesn't successfully climb the wall.



Answer Key: page 86

Question 19

The reader can tell that Tall Walls —

- A offers T-shirts to first-time climbers
- B has another location in Colorado
- C is concerned about the safety of climbers
- D is mostly for beginning climbers



Answer Key: page 86

Question 20

The reader can conclude that Ling most likely went to Tall Walls —

- A to watch the mayor climb the wall
- B more than once
- C to watch a video on rock climbing
- D on opening day



Answer Key: page 87

Continued

Question 21

The letter and the flyer both suggest that an indoor rock climber must —

- A not be afraid of heights
- B first practice outdoors
- C have strength and concentration
- D be a thrill seeker



Answer Key: page 87

Congratulations! You have completed Step 5. Be sure to add a check mark to Your Steps to Success Chart on page 15.

PARENT AND STUDENT— WORKING TOGETHER AGAIN

- Reading Answer Key

Pages 83–87 provide the answers and explanations for the practice questions asked with “Inventing the Ride” and the paired selections “Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and “Letter to Marta from Ling.”

Check your answers. Are they correct? If not, the explanation for each answer choice will help you understand why the answer you chose was incorrect.



“Inventing the Ride”

Question 1 (page 67)

- A** Incorrect. This idea shows that the sport was important to Hawk, but it doesn't show that he thought it could benefit young people.
- B** **Correct.** Hawk promoted skateboarding by building these parks, which shows that he believes that this sport benefits young people.
- C** Incorrect. Even though Hawk competed at a young age, this fact doesn't indicate that he thinks skateboarding benefits other young people.
- D** Incorrect. Although Hawk's book might inspire young people, this idea doesn't show that he thinks skateboarding can benefit them.

If you missed this question, turn to page 48 to read more about supporting conclusions with evidence from the text.

Question 2 (page 67)

- A** Incorrect. Hawk's foundation is a nonprofit organization.
- B** Incorrect. The article doesn't mention the foundation's beliefs about other sports.
- C** **Correct.** The last sentence of paragraph 7 states that Hawk's foundation works to build positive relationships between skaters and communities. Therefore, it is likely that the foundation might try to have young skaters show adults the benefits of skateboarding.
- D** Incorrect. The foundation is a nonprofit organization and doesn't sell skate equipment and clothing.

If you missed this question, turn to page 41 to read more about logic and consistency within a text.

Question 3 (page 67)

- A** Incorrect. Although building leg muscles might have provided a solution in the future, it wouldn't have helped Hawk with his immediate need for protection.
- B** **Correct.** Paragraph 5 says that only elbow pads were small enough to stay on Hawk's thin legs.
- C** Incorrect. Paragraph 5 indicates that Hawk did protect his knees while skateboarding.

- D** Incorrect. Hawk asked businesses to pay for his training and travel to competitions. The article doesn't say that Hawk asked them to design special knee pads for him.

If you missed this question, turn to page 34 to read more about cause and effect.

Question 4 (page 68)

- A** Incorrect. Hawk's father built the ramp, not Steve.
- B** Incorrect. The article doesn't tell who took Hawk to the skate park.
- C** Incorrect. Steve modeled his water-surfing moves for Hawk but did not teach him how to surf.
- D** **Correct.** Paragraph 4 states that Steve gave Hawk his first skateboard lesson.

If you missed this question, turn to page 26 to read more about important details.

Question 5 (page 68)

- A** **Correct.** The events are described in the order they happened (chronological order). This is the best description of how paragraphs 3 through 6 are organized.
- B** Incorrect. The author doesn't explain why Tony Hawk chose skating over playing the violin. In addition, the information about Hawk playing the violin is mentioned only in paragraph 3, so it does not explain the organization of paragraphs 3 through 6.
- C** Incorrect. Only paragraphs 4 and 6 describe some of the skating moves Hawk learned and created.
- D** Incorrect. Skating and surfing are compared only in paragraph 4. The author does this to show that the moves are similar rather than to show that Hawk thinks one sport is better than the other.

If you missed this question, turn to page 50 to read more about patterns of organization.

Question 6 (page 68)

- A** Incorrect. Hawk learned to play the violin before he entered his first skateboard contest. (See paragraph 3.)
- B** Incorrect. Hawk performed the “900” after he was called the best skater in the world. (See paragraph 6.)
- C** **Correct.** Hawk became a professional skater at the age of 15 after gaining business support and before being called the best skater in the world. (See paragraph 6.)
- D** Incorrect. Hawk helped design a video game as an adult, long after he was called the best skater in the world. (See paragraph 9.)

If you missed this question, turn to page 39 to read more about representing information in different ways.

Question 7 (page 69)

- A** Incorrect. Hawk didn’t quit once he started skateboarding. Therefore, *quit* doesn’t make sense in the context of the sentence.
- B** **Correct.** *Redirect* means to “change the direction or course of.” The article tells you that once Hawk started skateboarding, he spent more time and energy on the sport than on any other activity. He *changed* how he spent most of his time.
- C** Incorrect. Hawk didn’t make any type of offer. Therefore, *offer* doesn’t make sense in the context of the sentence.
- D** Incorrect. Hawk didn’t collect anything. Therefore, *collect* doesn’t make sense in the context of the sentence.

If you missed this question, turn to page 20 to read more about context clues.

Question 8 (page 69)

- A** Incorrect. Although the author does give some description of what Hawk’s life was like before he became a skateboarder, it doesn’t support the conclusion that the author admires Hawk.
- B** Incorrect. Although the author does describe influential people, this doesn’t tell you about the author’s feelings toward Hawk.
- C** **Correct.** The author shows admiration for Hawk by describing Hawk’s determination to overcome challenges.
- D** Incorrect. Although the author provides a list of Hawk’s awards, this doesn’t really describe how the author feels about Hawk.

If you missed this question, turn to page 42 to read more about an author’s perspective.

Question 9 (page 70)

- A** Incorrect. This answer choice doesn’t focus on the article as a whole. Instead, it provides only a couple of details.
- B** Incorrect. This answer choice doesn’t capture the main points. It provides information only about Hawk’s youth, not his adulthood. Also, it doesn’t follow the sequence of information presented in the article.
- C** Incorrect. This answer choice doesn’t focus on the article as a whole. It specifies two things that are Hawk’s notable achievements but leaves out other important information.
- D** **Correct.** This answer choice focuses on the article as a whole. It follows the sequence of the article from Hawk’s childhood through his teenage years to adulthood. It contains information from the second half of the article as well.

If you missed this question, turn to page 26 to read more about summarizing texts.

Question 10 (page 70)

- A Correct.** From the clues in paragraphs 4, 5, and 6, you learn that even the best skaters have to work hard to learn the sport.
- B Incorrect.** Hawk, who is now an adult, continues to enjoy skateboarding.
- C Incorrect.** The article states that even experienced skaters are injured or frustrated by the “900.”
- D Incorrect.** Even though Hawk has been successful in business after retiring from professional skating, other skaters may not be able to do the same.

If you missed this question, turn to page 45 to read more about drawing conclusions.

**“Climb to Great Heights at Tall Walls!” and
“Letter to Marta from Ling”**

Question 11 (page 76)

- A Correct.** This answer is correct because it states an opinion from the flyer. The word *excellent* is a clue that this is an opinion.
- B Incorrect.** This statement is a fact. The fact that Jergens began indoor climbing five years ago is something that can be proved.
- C Incorrect.** This statement is a fact that can be proved. It can be proved that the mayor of Flatland is planning to sign autographs. The statement is not someone’s opinion.
- D Incorrect.** This statement is a fact that can be proved. The cost of admission is not someone’s opinion about something.

If you missed this question, turn to page 47 to read more about distinguishing fact from opinion.

Question 12 (page 76)

- A Incorrect.** Knowing that classes are limited to *10 climbers* doesn’t help you know what *basics* are.
- B Correct.** The words *a few skills* describe *basics* that beginners need to know to start rock climbing. It makes sense to say that there will be *classes to show beginners a few skills*.
- C Incorrect.** It doesn’t make sense in the context of the paragraph to say that there will be *free classes to show beginners the free classes*.

- D Incorrect.** It doesn’t make sense to say that there will be *classes to show beginners the opening day*. Opening day only tells you when the free classes are.

If you missed this question, turn to page 20 to read more about context clues.

Question 13 (page 76)

- A Incorrect.** The number of walls and levels of difficulty don’t support the idea that rock climbing is good exercise.
- B Correct.** Good exercise includes activities, such as rock climbing, that build strong muscles.
- C Incorrect.** Experiencing the thrill of rock climbing indicates that it could be dangerous, but this experience doesn’t mean that rock climbing is good exercise.
- D Incorrect.** Being the fastest-growing sport doesn’t prove that rock climbing is good exercise.

If you missed this question, turn to page 48 to read more about supporting your conclusions.

Question 14 (page 77)

- A Correct.** The flyer is an advertisement that is intended to encourage, or persuade, people to visit Tall Walls.
- B Incorrect.** There is no comparison made between rock climbing and other sports.
- C Incorrect.** The list of admission prices is only a small part of the flyer.
- D Incorrect.** The flyer doesn’t include the history of rock climbing.

If you missed this question, turn to page 41 to read more about the purposes of text.

Question 15 (page 78)

- A** Incorrect. Because she is homesick for Colorado, Ling thinks she sees mountains every time she goes outside. This doesn't help her overcome her fear of heights.
- B** Incorrect. The letter states that Ling's aunt helped her decide her route.
- C** Incorrect. This answer choice describes how Ling climbs the wall, but it doesn't explain how she overcomes her fear of heights.
- D** **Correct.** In paragraph 3, Ling says that the harness made her feel secure about climbing the wall.

If you missed this question, turn to page 30 to read more about recognizing and analyzing problem resolution.

Question 16 (page 78)

- A** Incorrect. Ling is not giving a "command or order." This definition doesn't make sense in the letter.
- B** Incorrect. Ling is not describing something in "detail." This definition doesn't make sense in the letter.
- C** **Correct.** Ling had a hard time "deciding or identifying" which ridges were within reach. In the first sentence of paragraph 4, Ling says that her aunt helped her decide which route to take. This context helps you to know that Definition 3 is correct.
- D** Incorrect. Ling isn't "revealing anything to others." This definition doesn't fit the context of the letter.

If you missed this question, turn to page 23 to read more about multiple-meaning words.

Question 17 (page 78)

- A** Incorrect. This paragraph has nothing to do with the activities Marta would expect Ling to do.
- B** Incorrect. This is a detail from the paragraph, not what the paragraph is mostly about.
- C** Incorrect. This is a detail from the paragraph, not what the paragraph is mostly about.
- D** **Correct.** The third paragraph describes ways in which Ling was able to overcome her fear of climbing. She relied on the harness and on her aunt as her belayer.

If you missed this question, turn to page 26 to read more about finding main ideas.

Question 18 (page 79)

- A** Incorrect. There is nothing in Ling's letter to indicate that she is worried about Marta being jealous.
- B** **Correct.** Ling goes to Tall Walls on June 4, and she writes the letter to Marta on June 7. Lance Jergens doesn't visit until June 8, which is after Ling goes to Tall Walls and writes her letter.
- C** Incorrect. There is nothing in Ling's letter to indicate that she is going to send Marta a video. Also, while the flyer mentions videos, it does not say that the videos will be for sale.
- D** Incorrect. There is nothing in Ling's letter to indicate that Lance Jergens isn't successful when he climbs the wall, and as the flyer indicates, Lance has not yet made his visit to Tall Walls.

If you missed this question, turn to page 36 to read more about using chronology to recall information.

Question 19 (page 79)

- A** Incorrect. The flyer states that T-shirts will be given to the first 100 visitors, not to first-time climbers.
- B** Incorrect. There is nothing in the flyer about other locations, and Ling's letter refers only to climbing outdoors in Colorado.
- C** **Correct.** Ling's letter describes the safety equipment that she has to wear. The flyer states that Tall Walls doesn't allow children under six to participate because of safety issues. Safety for climbers is an idea that is found in both the letter and the flyer.
- D** Incorrect. Ling discusses her experiences as a beginning climber, but the flyer states that Tall Walls is for both beginners and experts.

If you missed this question, turn to page 37 to read more about comparing two selections.

Question 20 (page 79)

- A** Incorrect. T-shirts were given out on a different day than the day when the mayor climbs the wall. Ling states in her letter that the day she went to Tall Walls, they gave away free T-shirts. She did not see the mayor climb.
- B** Incorrect. There is no information to support the conclusion that Ling went to Tall Walls more than once.
- C** Incorrect. According to the flyer, a video about rock climbing was shown on June 19. This is not the same day that the T-shirts were given away. Ling states in her letter that the day she went to Tall Walls, they gave away free T-shirts. She did not see the video.
- D** **Correct.** Ling states that when she went to Tall Walls, they gave away free T-shirts. The flyer states that T-shirts will be given away on opening day. Therefore, Ling went to Tall Walls on opening day.

If you missed this question, turn to page 49 to read more about connecting ideas across texts.

Question 21 (page 80)

- A** Incorrect. The flyer doesn't have any information about a rock climber's fear of heights, and Ling states in her letter that she *is* afraid of heights.
- B** Incorrect. Visitors may use the indoor climbing wall without any prior experience, just as Ling did.
- C** **Correct.** This idea appears both in the flyer and the letter. The flyer says that climbing walls is an *excellent workout*. It also says that Jergens began climbing to stay in shape. In the letter, Ling writes that climbing walls requires strength and concentration. (See paragraph 2.)
- D** Incorrect. Neither the flyer nor the letter suggests that people who visit Tall Walls are thrill seekers.

If you missed this question, turn to page 37 to read more about comparing two selections.

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2 Study Guide Questions

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Use a (✓) to mark the grade and subject of this study guide.

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