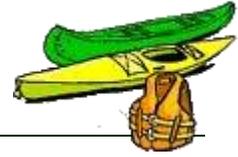


“Canopy of Nature”

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories

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



Dad decided last Sunday that we should all go on a camping trip.

He read an article in the Sunday paper about camping and how it “brings families together under the canopy of nature.”

“Overrated,” I joked. “What about the canopy of television or the canopy of restaurant food?”

“This will be good for us,” Dad said, sliding the magazine across the coffee table. “Let’s go next week-end.”

I shot a quick look over at my little brother, Paul. He gave me a slow eyebrow raise which meant, “This will probably not go off completely as planned.”

My smile back said, “But it will surely be fun.”

I started to think back. Once Dad decided “we should all learn how to canoe.” We borrowed two canoes from our friends, hoisted them on the van and drove for three hours to a **secluded** lake in Virginia. Once we got there, we discovered that we had forgotten the paddles.

Paul and I got in a canoe with Dad, and our two younger sisters got in a canoe with Mom. We floated aimlessly around the lake for hours. *Then we all jumped in with our life jackets on. We pushed the canoes back to shore.* It was a fantastic trip.

Another time, Dad decided “we should all learn how to ski.” All of us hate the cold so we spent the week-end huddled by the fire, drinking hot cocoa in the ski lodge and playing board games. It was great. We had a blast.

When I stopped daydreaming, Mom was saying, “Sweetheart, we don’t have a tent.”

“We don’t need one!” Dad said happily. “We’ll take all the seats out the van when we get to the campsite and put in an air mattress.”

I don't know what the punch line will be on this **excursion**, but I am sure with Mom, Dad and the four of us kids scrunched in a van at some national park, we are bound to have a good time.

Questions:

1) Which other title fits this passage best?

- A. "No Paddles"
- B. "Never as Planned"
- C. "Hot Cocoa by the Fire"
- D. "Van Camping for Beginners"

2) What literary term best describes the narrator's daydreams?

- A. foreshadowing, meaning the use of hints to suggest what is to come
- B. irony, meaning a contrast between what is stated and what is really meant
- C. flashback, meaning a scene that interrupts the action to show what happened at an earlier time
- D. metaphor, meaning the comparison of two unlike things with the intent of giving added meaning to one of them

3) Which of the following could be described as **secluded** ?

▼ Check all that are correct.

- A. a deserted island
- B. an amusement park
- C. a hiking trail known only to a few
- D. a popular beach on the California coast

4) What lesson does the narrator's family seem to live by?

- A. Camping is an adventure.
- B. Danger is only in the imagination.
- C. Things don't need to go as planned to have fun.
- D. Reading newspapers is a prescription for trouble.

5) Which is the best synonym for **excursion**?

- A. evolution
 - B. exodus
 - C. expedition
 - D. hiatus
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Questions (continued):

6) "Then we all jumped in with our life jackets on. We pushed the canoes back to shore."

▼ Which is the best way to combine the above sentences?

- A. We all jumped in with our life jackets on as we pushed the canoes back to shore.
- B. Then we all jumped in with our life jackets on, pushing the canoes back to shore.
- C. We pushed the canoes back to shore while we all jumped in with our life jackets on.
- D. After we all jumped in with our life jackets on, we pushed the canoes back to shore.

7) Which best describes the narrator's tone?

- A. condescending
- B. sarcastic
- C. jovial
- D. annoyed

8) Why might the narrator say that the camping trip will have a punch line?

- A. He feels the trip will be expensive.
- B. He feels the trip will have difficulties.
- C. He feels the trip will have a funny ending.
- D. He feels the sleeping in such close quarters will cause fighting.

Do you like to go on excursions? Explain.
