

### Paragraph 1

#### Canopy of Nature

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 weekend.”

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. Alone in the middle of nowhere, 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 weekend 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.

1. Which alternate title fits this passage best?  
A. “No Paddles”      B. “Never as Planned”  
C. “Hot Cocoa by the Fire”  
D. “Forest Camping for Beginners”
2. As used at the end of the story, which is the best synonym for excursion?  
A. evolution              B. exodus  
C. expedition              D. hiatus
3. 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 direct comparison of two unlike things
4. As used in the middle of the story, which of the following could accurately be described as secluded?
- I. a hiking trail known only to a few
  - II. a crowded movie theatre
  - III. a popular beach on the California coast
- A. I only                      B. I and II
  - C. II and III                D. I, II, and III
5. What lesson does the narrator's family seem to live by?
- A. Camping is sure to be an adventure.
  - B. Danger is only in the imagination.
  - C. Things don't need to go as planned to have fun.
  - D. Reading the newspaper is a recipe for trouble.
6. "Then we all jumped in with our life jackets on. We pushed the canoes back to shore."
- Which of the following is the best way to combine the above sentences while keeping their original meaning as used in the story?
- 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, while 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. The narrator probably says the camping trip will have a punch line because he or she feels it will
- A. be expensive        B. have difficulties
  - C. have a funny ending
  - D. involve fighting and turmoil



## Paragraph2

The first of the Great Debates, between Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts and the incumbent Vice President Richard Nixon on September 26, 1960, centered around domestic issues. The topic of the next debate, on October 7, was a clash over U.S. policy regarding two small islands off the Chinese coast, and on October 13, this controversy continued. On October 21, the final debate, the candidates focused on American/Cuban relations.

Few of the 70 million viewers could have fathomed what this first-ever televised presidential debate augured, not only for this specific series of debates, but more importantly for the preeminent role the fledgling medium would play in the future of the political arena.

A pallid Nixon arrived at the Chicago CBS studios after a grueling day of campaigning. The previous August a knee infection had sidelined him. He was still twenty pounds underweight, and he perspired profusely in an ill-fitting shirt. Moreover, he declined makeup to burnish his hospital pallor. The freshly-painted studio backdrop had dried to an ashen hue that obscured his matching suit.

The Democratic contender by contrast exuded a robust glow after a month of campaigning in California. He had spent his day rehearsing potential questions and relaxing. An aide later admitted that he supplemented his natural glow with a smidge of makeup. He was fit, trim, and confident.

Despite the remarkably similar agendas and arguments of the Republican and the Democrat, TV viewers unequivocally believed Kennedy to be the victor – whereas people who had followed the debates on the radio held the opposite opinion. The age of TV had arrived, and the subsequent party shuffle proved the undeniable potency of television.

9. The author is mainly concerned about
- A. the debating styles of John Kennedy and Richard Nixon during the 1960 Great Debates
  - B. the domestic issues which affected the result of 1960 Great Debates
  - C. the health of Richard Nixon at the time of the 1960 Great Debates
  - D. the effect of television on the results of the 1960 Great Debates
10. It can be inferred from the passage that
- A. Kennedy was a better debater than Nixon
  - B. Nixon was the unequivocal winner of the 1960 debates
  - C. The Democrat beat the Republican in the 1960 election
  - D. Nixon was more prepared for the first debate than Kennedy
11. According to the passage, which of the following was true of Richard Nixon?
- A. He had a five o'clock shadow during the first debate.
  - B. He wore a brown suit during the first debate.
  - C. He warned of the impending Cuban crisis.
  - D. He lost his job after the election.

### Paragraph 3

Lida sat outside her great aunt's hotel watching the steam engines go by and listening to the clop-clop of horses as they pulled wagons down the cobbled road. She was taking a short break from her chores at the inn: mopping the ballroom, fixing cornbread for the guests, and tending the fire in the wood-burning stove. She enjoyed working there and was happy to help her illustrious aunt bolster her growing business and notoriety around the city.

Lida had always had an assiduous nature and applied herself to almost any task unremittingly. Today, however, she took this quick respite to daydream about the dance she would be attending that evening.

At 17, it would be her first. Her friends had all purchased brightly colored, ornate dresses to wear. Lida, as a reflection of her demure personality, had chosen a modest, yet elegant dress in a charcoal gray.

"Are you ready, Miss Lida?" Hattie asked as she burst through the parlor doors and into the kitchen. Mary and Florence were in step right behind her.

"Hattie, I done told you never to come in that way. You disturb the guests having cocktails in the parlor!"

"Oh, hush, Lida. You worry too much. Let's go."

"I need to put a few more logs in the stove so Auntie can boil water for the dishes," Lida said. "Then we can go."

Hattie gave a sigh, but did not bother to argue. She knew that when Lida had something to do, she didn't rest until it was done.

"Let's take the tracks," Hattie said when they finally headed out to the party. Daylight was turning into dusk.

"Naw, Hattie," Lida said. "You know that's too dangerous in the night."

"Look, Lida," Hattie said impatiently. "We're runnin' late 'cause of you. The tracks will take 15 minutes off our walk." Mary and Florence both mumbled in agreement. "We can take the carriage back."

Against her better judgment, Lida agreed to take the train tracks. After all, it was her first real dance ever. Why adulterate it with acrimony?

The girls clumsily navigated the moonlit tracks and talked excitedly about the dance: who would be there, who was the best-looking, who was the smartest, and if anyone had remembered money for a carriage ride home. Then Lida heard a whistle in the distance. It seemed to get louder as it persisted and then cut out in a shock of tender silence. "We've gotta get off the tracks. Train's coming," said Lida.

The girls scurried to the side but found the decline too precipitous. They made their way forward along the tracks and finally found a suitable place to descend. Lida tiptoed nimbly from the precipice. Finding herself safely below, she heard a sudden thud. She gasped and turned about.

"Help!" she heard a voice cry, "Help...down here!" Hattie had fallen in the ash pit, an 8 foot trench between the rails, about 20 feet long, where trains stopped to empty ashes from the engine's fire box when they pulled through town.



Hattie screamed and tried frantically to climb out, but the pit was too deep. Lida scrambled to the edge, grabbing for her hand, the train getting closer, the whistle growing evermore piercing.

Not wanting to appear scared herself, Lida's calm voice belied the panic-stricken beating of her heart.

"Just give me your hand, Hattie, and I'll pull ya right out."

They fumbled for each other's hands in the dark. Lida lay down on the rails and hooked her feet under the track to give herself more leverage. She had Hattie in her fingertips. Then she lost her. Then she had her again. Lida pulled and she could feel the joints in Hattie's hands popping. In this instant, Hattie found better purchase—on what, no one could be sure—and her hands came into view. Wearing a mask of anguish, her teeth clenched and reflecting the pale moonlight, Lida pulled and pulled. Hattie's amorphous form appeared from below the surface like some stygian phantom. Mary and Florence's screams could be heard intermittently in the night, watching helplessly as the train lights grew brighter.

Hattie's torso finally eclipsed the edge of the pit and there she lay, catching her breath. The girls hoisted her to her feet and hobbled away from the tracks like a collection of frenzied grave robbers, their treasure in tow. It was there that they stood, caked in ash, watching as the train screeched to a stop and dropped its load of glowing cinders.

12. Using the story as a guide, it can be inferred that
- A. Lida lives in a hotel
  - B. Lida and her family are poor
  - C. Hattie and Lida are best friends
  - D. the story is not set in contemporary times
13. As used in the beginning of the story, which is the best definition for assiduous?
- A. cautious
  - B. efficient
  - C. energetic
  - D. diligent
14. As used in the beginning of the story, which is the best synonym for respite?
- A. continuation
  - B. stop
  - C. pause
  - D. shelter
15. Using the story as a guide, how do Hattie and Lida differ?
- A. Hattie is good-natured; Lida is stoic.
  - B. Hattie is trusting; Lida is circumspect.
  - C. Hattie is carefree; Lida is responsible.
  - D. Hattie is respectful; Lida is judgmental.
16. What type of characters are Mary and Florence?
- A. round, characterized by being well developed in the story
  - B. foils, characterized by eliciting each other's traits through contrast
  - C. confidantes, characterized by being people whom the main character confides in
  - D. flat, characterized as doing very little to advance plot



17. As used in the beginning of the story, which is the best antonym for demure?
- A. reckless
  - B. aggressive
  - C. harmful
  - D. outgoing
18. As used at the end of the story, which is the best definition for belied?
- A. revealed
  - B. disguised
  - C. protected
  - D. calmed
19. Which literary device is used in the following sentence from the final paragraph: “The girls hoisted her to her feet and hobbled away from the tracks like a collection of frenzied grave robbers, their treasure in tow”?
- A. personification, characterized by the attribution of human qualities to inanimate objects or abstract notions
  - B. flash forward, characterized by an interjected scene that temporarily jumps the narrative forward in time
  - C. irony, characterized by a discrepancy between expectation and reality
  - D. simile, characterized by the use of a comparison using “like” or “as”

#### Paragraph 4

Abraham Lincoln served as the 16th President of the United States, yet he never went to college. In fact, Lincoln had nearly no formal education whatsoever, attending schools for less than a year throughout his childhood. Yet this should not be construed to mean that Lincoln was ignorant or unlearned; on the contrary, he was one of the most well-read leaders of the time. The fact is that Abraham Lincoln educated himself by studying books of religion, philosophy, and literature, and he continued his voracious reading throughout his life.

A lack of public school education did not prevent Lincoln from becoming a great leader. He led the United States through four years of civil war, which threatened to divide the nation into two separate countries. He was a powerful opponent of slavery, and it was largely through his leadership that slavery was abolished in this country.

Lincoln’s determination to educate himself through diligent reading also led to his reputation as a great orator—and even today his speeches are quoted and studied worldwide. He serves as an example of a great leader—and a great reader. His love of books and good literature enabled Abe Lincoln to rise to world renown.

20. What is the main idea of this passage?
- A. Abe Lincoln was the 16th President of the United States.
  - B. Abe Lincoln demonstrated the value of reading.
  - C. Abe Lincoln was a Republican.
  - D. Abe Lincoln freed the slaves.
21. Lincoln accomplished all of the following EXCEPT
- A. preventing the United States from being divided.
  - B. ending slavery
  - C. becoming a great leader



- D. establishing the Lincoln Memorial
22. A voracious reader is
- A. likely to become President.
  - B. a person who makes reading a regular habit.
  - C. someone who never went to school.
  - D. probably poor
23. The word construed, as used in first paragraph, most nearly means
- A. tormented
  - B. taken apart
  - C. unscrewed
  - D. interpreted
24. According to the passage, what lesson can be learned from the life of Abraham Lincoln?
- A. Education is not important.
  - B. All books are worth reading.
  - C. Good reading habits can help a person do great things.
  - D. Politicians are always good role models.
25. How does Lincoln still affect students today?
- A. His face is on money.
  - B. His speeches are still quoted and studied today.
  - C. People grow beards to look like him.
  - D. Students quit school in hopes of becoming president.

### Paragraph 5

A metaphor is a poetic device that deals with comparison. It compares similar qualities of two dissimilar objects. With a simple metaphor, one object becomes the other: Love is a rose. Although this does not sound like a particularly rich image, a metaphor can communicate so much about a particular image that poets use them more than any other type of figurative language. The reason for this is that poets compose their poetry to express what they are experiencing emotionally at that moment. Consequently, what the poet imagines love to be may or may not be our perception of love. Therefore, the poet's job is to enable us to experience it, to feel it the same way that the poet does. We should be able to nod in agreement and say, "Yes, that's it! I understand precisely where this person is coming from."

Let's analyze this remarkably unsophisticated metaphor concerning love and the rose to see what it offers. Because the poet uses a comparison with a rose, first we must examine the characteristics of that flower. A rose is spectacular in its beauty, its petals are velvety soft, and its aroma is soothing and pleasing. It's possible to say that a rose is actually a veritable feast to the senses: the visual, the tactile, and the aural [more commonly known as the senses of sight, touch, and sound]. The rose's appearance seems to border on perfection, each petal seemingly symmetrical in form. Isn't this the way one's love should be? A loved one should be a delight to one's senses and seem perfect. However, there is another dimension added to the comparison by using a rose. Roses have thorns. This is the comprehensive image the poet wants to communicate; otherwise, a

daisy or a mum would have been presented to the audience as the ultimate representation of love—but the poet didn't, instead conveying the idea that roses can be treacherous. So can love, the metaphor tells us. When one reaches out with absolute trust to touch the object of his or her affection, ouch, a thorn can cause great harm! "Be careful," the metaphor admonishes: Love is a feast to the senses, but it can overwhelm us, and it can also hurt us. It can prick us and cause acute suffering. This is the poet's perception of love—an admonition. What is the point? Just this: It took almost 14 sentences to clarify what a simple metaphor communicates in only five words! That is the artistry and the joy of the simple metaphor.

26. The main idea of this passage is
- A. poetic devices are necessary for poets.
  - B. poetry must never cater to the senses.
  - C. always use words that create one specific image.
  - D. the metaphor is a great poetic device.
27. It can be inferred that a metaphor is
- A. a type of figurative language.
  - B. the only poetic device.
  - C. not precise enough.
  - D. a type of flower in a poem
28. According to the passage, thorns
- A. protect the rose from harm
  - B. reduce the ability to love another.
  - C. add a new element to the image of love.
  - D. are just more images to compare to a rose
29. It can be inferred that the true meaning of the love is a rose metaphor is that
- A. love is a true joy.
  - B. love comes only once in a lifetime.
  - C. love is never permanent.
  - D. love is a combination of good and bad experiences.
30. According to the passage, the poet's intention is
- A. to release anger.
  - B. to announce heartache
  - C. to enable you to experience the poet's point of view
  - D. to reward the senses