

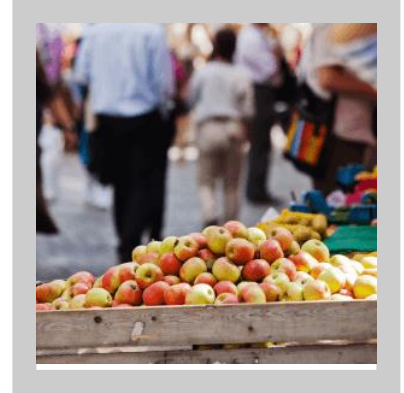
Name _____

Date _____

An Artful Dodger

It came to my attention one day that there was a young boy near the square. A sort of bandleader, you might say. An Artful Dodger.

It was hatefully hot. Sickeningly sunny. I was sitting in my usual place along the square, beneath the meager solace of my parasol. I had recently purchased a new book and was perusing it voraciously, my eyes hungrily devouring each line with delicate fury, my hand surreptitiously supplying my mouth with a steady stream of morsels from the quarry of nuts hidden deep within my shirt pocket. I looked up briefly, reluctant to tear my eyes from my book, and that was when, like a smear of darkness brought into the light, he was called to my attention.



Just past the crowded vendors' platform—that place where so many corpulent grocers bellow prices, obedient apprentices weigh goods, and compliant clerks shuttle crates to and fro; each man but a cog in a complex and frenzied machine—is where I found him. Standing little more than four feet from toe to toe, he must have been only eleven or twelve years of age. His nose a weathervane. His hair a glistening sheen of grease cascading from the head on all sides; it fell exactly long enough to hide two eyes of equal gloom. Together they sat cold and dark like cellmates conjecturing the color of the afternoon sky, peering out at the free world behind the iron bars that held them in. A threadbare vest, oversized and dangling about his thighs. The whole ensemble conspired to fabricate the appearance of being drenched, despite all the while absorbing the sun's wicked rays. I thought I myself might begin to melt simply by looking at the creature, this mirage, and I imagined myself pooling into the dusty platform, dripping down and slithering off beneath the cracks, but still, I watched him.

He was good; there was no denying it. I suppose any man (or, in this case, boy) desperate enough will adapt himself to any situation, take up any skill, any trade. The deftness with which he could make one of those plump, glistening orbs—an apple, peach, or a pear—disappear into his pants pocket, travel the length of the leg, and be liberated into the trembling hands of one of his many dutiful assistants crouching near the ground was nothing short of a marvel. These crimes were perpetrated so smoothly, so precisely they became just another section in the vast symphony playing out before my eyes. Everything around me whirled in perfect chaos, perfect harmony, not missing a beat. Under normal circumstances, I imagine one would have to pay for such a show

- 1) In paragraph 1, the narrator most likely calls the boy a "bandleader" because the boy
- A. plays in a symphony
 - B. teaches others valuable skills
 - C. plays a trick on someone
 - D. organizes a theft
 - E. manipulates a vendor
- 2) As used in paragraph 2, it can be inferred that the word **solace** belongs to which of the following Word groups?
- A. fortress, barrier, rampart
 - B. structure, arrangement, configuration
 - C. sanctuary, refuge, shelter
 - D. liberation, escape, release
 - E. fence, hedgerow, barricade
- 3) In paragraph 2, the narrator writes of the boy: "His nose a weathervane." Which of the following literary devices is used in this line?
- A. Allegory, characterized by the use of symbolic representation to convey the meaning of an often abstract concept. This concept is usually conveyed through a more concrete object or idea.
 - B. Assonance, characterized by the repetition of similar vowel sounds in a sentence. This is used to add character to the writing and often adds an element of playfulness.
 - C. Analogy, characterized by establishing a relationship based on similarities between two ideas or concepts. This often works to convey a new idea by using a familiar idea as the basis for understanding.
 - D. Metaphor, characterized by the comparison of two unlike things without the use of "like" or "as." This often involves taking a concept or identity that is clearly understood and applying it to a second, less well-known element.
 - E. Simile, characterized by the making of a comparison between two unrelated and dissimilar things, people, beings, places and concepts. Similes allow the reader to better understand the sentiment the author wishes to convey. Similes are marked by the use of the words "as" or "like."

- 4) In paragraph 2, the phrase “iron bars” refers to the
- A. melancholy mood surrounding the boy
 - B. poverty that limits those of the lower class
 - C. locks of greasy hair covering the boy's eyes
 - D. hunger that imprisons those who do not have enough to eat
 - E. threadbare vest in which the boy is cloaked
- 5) In paragraph 2, the narrator says, "I had recently purchased a new book and was perusing it voraciously..." As used in paragraph 2, which of the following describes a **voracious** act?
- A. Yoko answers each of the teacher's questions correctly. At recess, she boasts to her classmates about how smart she is.
 - B. A relatively new building collapses. The owner sues the general contractor, stating that it was built in hasty fashion with profit, not quality, as the main consideration.
 - C. Anselm collects baseball cards. He buys six new packs each day, hoping to add rare and valuable assets to his already enormous collection.
 - D. The call center is the largest in the state. It employs over 14 percent of the total number of telephone operators nationwide.
 - E. All Ingrid needs to do is run $\frac{1}{8}$ of a second faster and she will hold the world record in the 100-meter dash. She is well aware of this, so she trains night and day.
- 6) In paragraph 2, the narrator says, "It was hatefully hot. Sickeningly sunny." Which of the following literary devices is used in these lines?
- A. Simile, characterized by the making of a comparison between two unrelated and dissimilar things, people, beings, places and concepts. Similes allow the reader to better understand the sentiment the author wishes to convey. Similes are marked by the use of the words “as” or “like.”
 - B. Assonance, characterized by the repetition of similar vowel sounds in a sentence. This is used to add character to the writing and often adds an element of playfulness.
 - C. Hyperbole, characterized by the use of specific words and phrases that exaggerate and overemphasize the core of the statement in order to produce a grander, more noticeable effect. This usually works to convey an action or sentiment that is generally not realistically possible or plausible but helps to emphasize an emotion.
 - D. Alliteration, characterized by the use of adjacent words that begin with the same sound or letter, creating a repetition of similar sounds in the sentence. This is used to add character to the writing and often adds an element of playfulness.
 - E. Pun, characterized by the use of a play on words intended to suggest the presence of two or more possible meanings. This is generally intended to produce an effect of irony, humor, or wit.

7) In the final paragraph, the narrator says, "Everything around me whirled in perfect chaos, perfect harmony, not missing a beat." This statement suggests an element of which of the following Literary devices?

A. Paradox, characterized by the use of contradictory concepts or ideas that, when placed together, bear a deep significance or possible truth.

B. Sarcasm, characterized by the use of harsh or bitter derision or irony. This is often conveyed through understatement, but it can also be conveyed through overstatement. The speaker is usually stating the opposite of what is meant.

C. Ambiguity, characterized by the expression of an idea in such a way that it becomes possible to glean more than one meaning from it.

D. Anthropomorphism, in which a human quality, emotion or ambition is attributed to a non-human object or being. This is often used in order to relate the object to the reader on a familiar level and also to increase the level of relativity between the humans and objects while lending character to the subject.

E. Synthesis, characterized by a way of writing in which the combination of multiple parts into one, unified whole. Synthesis is the opposite of analysis, which involves detailed consideration of the separate elements or parts of a work.

8) What assumptions can you make about the narrator of this passage? What is his or her background? What personality traits does he or she possess? How do you know? Use evidence from the passage to support your answer.

Answers and Explanations

1) D

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In paragraph 3, we learn that the boy is stealing fruit (“plump, glistening orbs—an apple, peach, or a pear”) from near the vendors’ platform. The boy puts the fruit in his pocket, which presumably has a hole in it that lets the fruit fall down the leg. Then, one of his “dutiful assistants,” presumably another child “crouching near the ground,” takes the fruit. All of this is done in such a carefully organized manner that it seems to the narrator to be “just another section in the vast symphony playing out before my eyes.” The narrator claims, “Everything around me whirled in perfect chaos, perfect harmony, not missing a beat.” In the passage, the “symphony” refers to the “perfect chaos” that is “whirling about” the narrator. The boy is the leader of the group of thieves that are committing crimes in “perfect harmony” in broad daylight. The theft is described in musical terms as part of a symphony, so the narrator most likely calls the boy the “bandleader” of the group because he is the one who organizes the theft. This makes **(D)** correct.

The author uses the word “symphony” figuratively, not literally. Furthermore, the boy is not described as playing any instrument or making any music. All that he does is organizing the theft. This eliminates **(A)**.

The boy leads the others in the theft, but the passage does not suggest that the boy actually teaches them valuable skills. This means **(B)** is not the best choice.

The boy is stealing fruit, which is different than playing a trick on someone. This means **(C)** is incorrect.

To manipulate someone is to influence them or control their actions, especially if they have no idea you are doing so. The boy is stealing from the vendor, which is a stronger abuse than just manipulation. This eliminates **(E)**.

2) C

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

Solace (*noun*): something that gives comfort, consolation, or relief.

In paragraph 2, the narrator says, “It was brutally hot. Sickeningly sunny. I was sitting in my usual place along the square, beneath the meager solace of my parasol.” We can infer from this information that the narrator was outside on a terribly hot day, but protected from the hot sun by a parasol. Since the parasol, or umbrella, gave the narrator *solace* from the sun (presumably in the form of shade), we can infer that solace means comfort or consolation, in this case in the form of literal protection. The word group *sanctuary, refuge, shelter* contains words that indicate a place of comfort and protection from something harsh. This means solace fits into this word group. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

The word group *fortress, barrier, rampart* contains words for things that provide defensive cover or protection during combat. Since being in the sun cannot be likened to a combat situation, **(A)** is not the best choice.

The word group *structure, arrangement, configuration* contains words that describe the way that something is put together or set up. These words do not mean protection or comfort, so solace does not fit into this family. This means **(B)** is incorrect.

The words in the family *liberation, escape, and release* all describe getting away from or avoiding something. The parasol blocks the sun, but it does not liberate the narrator from the sun. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

The words in the family *fence, hedgerow, barricade* all represent something used to keep other things out, but they do so by forming a barrier around something. Since the parasol offers solace by creating a shelter from the sun, not by forming a barrier around the narrator, solace does not fit into this word group. This eliminates **(E)**.

3) D

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

In the passage, the narrator directly calls the boy’s nose a weathervane. Since this comparison involves taking a concept or identity that is clearly understood (the appearance of a weathervane) and applying it to a second, less well-known element (the appearance of the boy’s nose), and since this comparison does not use the words “like” or “as,” we can understand that it is a metaphor. Therefore **(D)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support choices **(A)** and **(B)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

Although an analogy does compare two things, it goes beyond mere comparison to establish a relationship based on multiple similarities between the two concepts or ideas. An analogy is usually more involved than a metaphor, which can be created in just a few words, as is the case here. This makes **(C)** incorrect.

Since the author does not use the words “like” or “as” to make this comparison, we can understand that it is not a simile. This means **(E)** is incorrect.

4) C

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

In paragraph 2, the narrator describes the boy: “His hair a glistening sheen of grease cascading from the head on all sides; it fell exactly long enough to hide two eyes of equal gloom. Together they sat cold and dark like cellmates conjecturing the color of the afternoon sky, peering out at the free world

Behind the iron bars that held them in.” The first sentence tells us that the boy’s hair hung down just long enough to hide his eyes. The author then describes these eyes as “cold and dark like cellmates.” Continuing this prison imagery, the author writes that these eyes peered out “behind the iron bars that held them in.” Since the hair was hiding the boy’s eyes, we can infer that the “iron bars” that the eyes are peering out from behind must refer to the locks of greasy hair covering the boy’s eyes. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

The narrator’s description does create the image of a gloomy little boy, but the “iron bars” refer specifically to the boy’s greasy locks, not to his melancholy mood. This means **(A)** is not the best choice.

The passage does not directly address the poverty of the lower class. Furthermore, these lines specifically describe the boy’s appearance, not his social standing. This eliminates **(B)**.

Though the boy may be stealing fruit out of hunger, the passage does not definitively imply that this is the boy’s motive. Furthermore, these lines specifically describe the boy’s appearance, not his hunger. This makes **(D)** incorrect.

The threadbare vest worn by the boy is not mentioned until after the narrator describes the “iron bars,” so it does not make sense that the iron bars would refer to his vest. Also, a vest does not hold eyes in, as it does not cover the face. Therefore **(E)** is incorrect.

5) C

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

Voracious (*adjective*): having an unusually large and enthusiastic appetite for something.

In paragraph 2, the narrator says, “I had recently purchased a new book and was perusing it voraciously, my eyes hungrily devouring each line with delicate fury.” Since the narrator “hungrily devour[ed]” the book, the narrator must have had a great appetite for the book. From this we can infer that *voracious* means having a great appetite for something. Buying several packs of cards a day to add to an already enormous collection demonstrates a great appetite for collecting baseball cards. This makes **(C)** correct.

Answering questions correctly and bragging about it does not necessarily display a great appetite for anything. This means **(A)** incorrect.

Neither suing a contractor nor building something quickly and cheaply displays a great appetite for anything. This eliminates **(B)**.

Having a large portion of the total number of telephone operators does not necessarily indicate a great appetite for having telephone operators. A need, rather than an appetite, may cause this situation. This means **(D)** is not the best choice.

The purpose of Ingrid’s training for the 100-meter dash is to reach a goal, not to satisfy an appetite. Therefore **(E)** is incorrect.

6) D

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

Since the words “hatefully hot” both start with an “h” and the words “sickeningly sunny” both start with an “s,” we can understand that these phrases contain examples of the same consonant sounds at the beginning of adjacent words. This is the definition of alliteration, so **(D)** is correct.

Although the quotation in question does use repetition of similar sounds, these are consonant sounds, not vowel sounds. This means **(B)** is incorrect.

The passage does not provide information to support choices **(A)**, **(C)**, and **(E)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

7) A

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

In these lines, the narrator says that everything was in both “perfect chaos” and “perfect harmony.” Chaos and harmony are conflicting concepts, yet this statement bears a deep significance or possible truth, involving the fact that among the chaotic, hectic activity of the marketplace, an elegantly crafted theft is able to take place, coordinated and in harmony. This suggests an element of paradox. Therefore **(A)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

Although the narrator describes the elements of the marketplace coming together in “perfect chaos” and “perfect harmony,” synthesis does not refer to the behavior of the subject matter in a piece of writing, but rather to the overall structure and approach as designed by the author. Therefore **(E)** is incorrect.