

Name _____

Date _____

Allergic to Dogs?

The Airedale Terrier, the Cockapoo, and the Italian Greyhound—if you are allergic to dogs, but would love to have one, these are names you need to know.

Anyone who has ever longed for a pooch and has been told by his or her doctor not to get one because of an allergy to dogs knows how devastating that news can be. For example, a few years ago, my neighbor's son wanted a dog and after a while his family decided to get him one. They all went to the kennel and after the boy had held a number of dogs, he became especially attached to one: a handsome German Shepherd puppy.



The boy's parents bought him the dog and took it home with them. Days later, the boy noticed a shortness of breath, an itchy rash that would not go away, and eyes that would not stop watering. While at a routine checkup at the doctor, the boy was informed that he had a dog allergy. His parents told the boy that he would have to find a new home for his new puppy. Tears streamed down the child's face.

While some people simply accept the idea that they cannot have a dog because of their allergies, others decide to get one anyway and live with the negative side effects. But having a dog when you are allergic to it can be a bittersweet experience. On one hand you love your dog. On the other hand, the itchy eyes and runny nose make you feel miserable. But don't worry. There is hope.

Experts say that the Airedale Terrier, Cockapoo, and Italian Greyhound are among the many breeds of dogs that can be considered *hypoallergenic*, meaning they are far less likely to cause allergic reactions in their owners than other breeds. The worst dogs for allergy sufferers are the German Shepherd, Springer Spaniel, and Dachshund. Experts recommend that dog owners who have allergies stay away from these dogs.

Contrary to popular belief, it is not a dog's hair that causes problems for people with allergies. It is a dog's saliva and the tiny specs of dander found on a dog's hair. Not surprisingly, experts recommend that those with allergies get dogs that don't produce a lot of dander and don't drool so much.

The choice for dog lovers with allergies has often come down to having a dog and feeling sick or not having a dog and feeling, well, not complete. But not anymore. An entire dog industry has sprouted up to promote, breed, and cross breed dogs that are not likely to cause their owners problems.

- 1) Which of the following statements best describes the main idea of this passage?
- A. A dog's saliva and dander are what cause allergic reactions in humans.
 - B. Having a dog allergy can be problematic, but there are solutions.
 - C. German Shepherds are among the worst dogs to own if you have a dog allergy.
 - D. Most people believe that a dog's hair causes people to sneeze and have itchy eyes.
- 2) As used in paragraph 2, which is the best definition for **devastating**?
- A. very annoying
 - B. very frightening
 - C. very maddening
 - D. very upsetting
- 3) The author includes the story about the boy to
- A. illustrate an earlier point
 - B. provide a general overview
 - C. introduce a new idea
 - D. conclude an argument
- 4) Using the passage as a guide, it can be understood that which of the following are symptoms of a dog allergy?
- I. shortness of breath
 - II. itchy rash
 - III. watery eyes
- A. I only
 - B. I and II only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. I, II, and III

- 5) In paragraph 3, the author writes, "But having a dog when you are allergic to it can be a bittersweet experience." Which of the following literary devices is used in this sentence?
- A. Oxymoron, characterized by the use of contradictory, contrasting concepts placed together in a way that actually ends up making sense.
 - B. Imagery, characterized by using vivid or figurative language to appeal to the reader's senses.
 - C. 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.
 - D. 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.
- 6) A *conjunction* is a word or phrase used to show a logical relationship between ideas, and help the reader understand the flow of an argument. In paragraph 4, the author writes, "The worst dogs for allergy sufferers are the German Shepherd, Springer Spaniel and Dachshund." Which of the following conjunctions would best be used to begin this sentence?
- A. As a result
 - B. Conversely
 - C. Therefore
 - D. In addition
- 7) The main purpose of paragraph 5 is to
- A. clarify a common misconception
 - B. explain a previously mentioned idea
 - C. cite an example
 - D. refute a popular argument
- 8) Which of the following best summarizes how the author feels about people who love dogs but have dog allergies?
- A. bothered and annoyed
 - B. angry and proactive
 - C. sympathetic and hopeful
 - D. questioning and doubtful



9) If you had a dog allergy, would you adopt a hypoallergenic dog or simply not own a dog? Why?

Answers and Explanations

1) B

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

To answer this question correctly, we need to understand the main idea of the passage. This can be done by learning what the author pays most attention to or expends the most effort trying to explain. The author begins the passage by introducing the names of some dogs that are less likely to bother people who are allergic to them. In paragraph 2, the author uses an anecdote, or short story, to illustrate how difficult it can be to have a dog allergy. In paragraphs 3-5, the author further analyzes the problem of dog allergies, and attempts to arrive at some solutions. The author concludes with the hopeful idea that the causes of dog allergies are becoming better understood, and that dogs are being bred to be more acceptable for owners with allergies. Using this information, we can understand that the author spends the most effort trying to explain how having a dog allergy can be problematic, which means “presenting a problem,” as well as the potential solutions to this problem. Therefore, this is the main idea. Choice **(B)** is correct.

The ideas described in **(A)**, **(C)**, and **(D)** are not main ideas. They are merely details used to support the main idea. This makes these choices incorrect.

2) D

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

devastating (*adjective*): to destroy completely, to overwhelm with grief or shock.

In paragraph 2, the author tells us that “Anyone who has ever longed for a pooch and been told by his or her doctor not to get one because of an allergy to dogs knows how devastating that news can be.” Then the author provides an example of a boy who has had this happen to them. At the end of the example, the author tells us that “Tears streamed down the child’s face.” This lets us know that the devastating event led to the boy feeling very upset. Therefore, if something is *devastating*, it must be *very upsetting*. Choice **(D)** is correct.

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

3) A

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

In paragraph 2, the author provides the story about the boy. But just before the author begins the story, he or she writes, “Anyone who has ever longed for a pooch and been told by his or her doctor not to get one because of an allergy to dogs knows how devastating that news can be.” Given that the story is about a boy who becomes devastated, or very upset, after longing for a pooch and being told by his doctor that he has an allergy, we can understand that the author includes this story in order to support an earlier point about how devastating this can be. Therefore **(A)** is correct.

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

4) D

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In paragraph 2, the author tells a story about a boy with dog allergies. After getting a new dog, the boy "noticed a shortness of breath, an itchy rash that would not go away, and eyes that would not stop watering." Since these are all symptoms of a dog allergy, this supports **option (I)**, **option (II)**, and **option (III)**.

Therefore **(D)** is correct.

5) A

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

In paragraph 3, the author tells us that "Having a dog when you are allergic to it can be a bittersweet experience. On one hand you love your dog. On the other hand, the itchy eyes and runny nose make you feel miserable." Using context, we can understand that the author believes that having a dog is both good and bad. It is good because you love your dog. It is bad because the dog makes you have itchy eyes and a runny nose. Given that the author uses the term "bittersweet" to describe this experience, we can understand that he or she is using the literary device called oxymoron.

Therefore **(A)** is correct.

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

6) B

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

In order to answer this question correctly, we need to look at the sentence in context. In the previous sentence—the sentence before the one in question—the author tells us about the dogs that are far less likely to cause allergic reactions in their owners than other breeds. Then, in the sentence in question, the author talks about the dogs are the worst for allergy sufferers. These ideas are contradictory. The only choice that contains a conjunction that indicates that contradictory ideas are being presented is **(B)**, making it the correct choice. *Conversely* is a conjunction used to indicate the presentation of contradictory ideas.

As a result is a conjunctive phrase used to present something that is caused by another. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect.

Therefore is a conjunctive phrase used to present something that logically follows from something else. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

In addition is a conjunctive phrase used to present something more, or extra. Therefore **(D)** is incorrect.

7) A

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

To get this question right, it helps to understand the clause used to begin paragraph 5: "Contrary to popular belief." This lets us know that the author intends on telling us something that is opposite to what most people think. The author writes, "Contrary to popular belief, it is not a dog's hair that causes problems for people with allergies." This lets us know that most people believe a dog's hair to be responsible for problems for people with allergies. However, according to the author, this is not actually the case. Instead, as the author continues to say, "a dog's saliva and the tiny specs of dander found on a dog's hair" are responsible. Using this information, we can understand that the main purpose of paragraph 5 is to clarify a common misconception. Therefore choice **(A)** is correct.

While **(D)** is close, keep in mind that the author is not trying to refute anyone's argument. In this passage, no one argues in favor of the idea that a dog's hair causes problems for people with allergies. The author simply tells us that this is what many people believe.

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

8) C

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

In paragraph 2, the author tells a story to enable the reader to understand how devastating, or very upsetting, it is for dog lovers to find out that they have an allergy to dogs. The story involves a young boy who cries after learning that he cannot keep his dog as a result of his allergies. This story is intended to make the reader sympathize, or feel for, such individuals. Later, in paragraph 3, the author tells us not to worry, as "There is hope." This lets us know that the author feels sympathetic and hopeful towards the problem of dog lovers with allergies. Choice **(C)** is correct.

The passage does not provide evidence to support choices **(A)**, **(B)**, or **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.