

Name _____

Date _____

Chores Are... Good?

Kids, please don't shoot the messenger: those chores your parents have you do around the house may actually be quite good for you.

According to research conducted at the City University, kids who are responsible for taking out the trash, mowing the lawn, keeping their rooms tidy, and other tasks to help around the house turn out to be well-adjusted adults. That means—according to researchers—that chores are instrumental in helping kids learn how to complete an assigned job. They also help teach organizational skills, discipline, cooperation, and social responsibility. Kids with chores are less likely to get involved with drugs and alcohol, too.



According to the Minnesota study, "the best predictor of young adults' success in their mid-twenties is that they participated in household tasks" starting as young as 3 years old. By contrast, the study found that those kids who weren't given chores by their parents on a regular basis turned out to be, well, a little bratty.

So while you may not be happy about washing those dishes now, you will probably thank your parents later.

1) The main purpose of the passage is to

- A. set the stage for debate
- B. state a hypothesis
- C. support a theory with evidence
- D. summarize the results of a study

2) As used in paragraph 2, which is the best definition for the phrase **well-adjusted**?

- A. balanced
- B. clean
- C. smart
- D. organized

3) As used in paragraph 2, which is the best definition for **instrumental**?

- A. annoying
- B. musical
- C. distracting
- D. important

4) If added to in paragraph 3, which of the following sentences would fit best?

- A. Chores should never interfere with a child's ability to spend time with his or her friends.
- B. The fact is that parents usually give kids chores that they don't like doing themselves.
- C. Parents should make sure their child's homework is complete before allowing them to start their chores.
- D. Parents who let their kids avoid doing their fair share around the house are not doing them any favors.

5) In the final paragraph, the author suggests that

- A. doing the dishes is the worst chore of all
- B. children will one day thank the researchers for conducting this study
- C. in later years, kids will be appreciative for having done chores
- D. parents should all assign chores to their kids by the age of three

6) Do you find the results of the studies mentioned in the passage to be believable? Why or why not?

Answers and Explanations

1) C

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

The passage opens with a theory: "those chores your parents have you do around the house may actually be quite good for you." In paragraph 2, the author describes the results of a recent study (evidence) that have found many benefits for adults who as kids were assigned chores at home. In paragraph 3, the author cites another study (evidence), which found that doing chores as a kid is "the best predictor for a young adult's success." In the final paragraph, the author addresses kids directly and suggests that they may "thank their parents" eventually. Based on the content, we can determine that the main purpose of the passage is to support a theory with evidence. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

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

2) A

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

Well-adjusted (*adjective, idiom*): having adapted or conformed suitably; well-balanced.

In paragraph 2, the author writes, "According to research conducted at the City University, kids who are responsible for taking out the trash, mowing the lawn, keeping their rooms tidy, and other tasks to help around the house turn out to be well-adjusted adults." In the previous paragraph, the author claims that doing chores "may actually be quite good for" kids. Based on this information, we can infer that being *well-adjusted* is a good thing. Then the author provides examples of a well-adjusted adult: someone who knows "how to complete an assigned job" and who exhibits "organizational skills, discipline, cooperation, and social responsibility." A person who has all of these different skills could be considered *balanced* in his or her abilities, so it is a good definition for well-adjusted in this context. This means **(A)** is the best choice.

Being *clean*, *smart*, and *organized* are each very specific positive qualities. None of them are broad enough to incorporate everything the author mentions: discipline, organizational skills, social responsibility, and cooperation. Therefore choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)** are incorrect.

3) D

Core Standard: **Craft and Structure**

Instrumental (*adjective*): serving a crucial role; important; vital.

In paragraph 2, the author writes that "chores are instrumental in helping kids learn how to complete an assigned job." Directly after this sentence, the author writes, "They also help teach organizational skills, discipline, cooperation, and social responsibility." From this context, we can understand that

Chores are useful in helping kids learn how to complete an assigned job and that they are also useful in helping to teach other things. This tells us that the word *instrumental* means useful or *important*.

Therefore **(D)** is correct.

Based on context, we can understand that the word “instrumental” has a positive connotation, because the chores are instrumental in teaching good things. This means that a word with a negative connotation like *annoying* would not make sense in this sentence. Although some kids may find chores annoying, they are not annoying in helping kids learn important lessons. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect.

The word instrumental can refer to a *musical* instrument, but that meaning does not make sense in this context. So **(B)** is incorrect.

Based on context, we can understand that instrumental has a positive connotation, because the chores are instrumental in teaching good things. This means that a word with a negative connotation like *distracting* would not make sense in this sentence. The chores are not distracting in helping kids learn important lessons; they are useful. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

4) D

Core Standard: **Integration of Knowledge**

Paragraph 3 compares the outcomes of kids who have regular chores to the outcomes of kids who do not. The author writes that “the best predictor of young adults’ success in their mid-twenties is that they participated in household tasks starting as young as 3 years old,” but that the researchers “found that those kids who weren’t given chores by their parents on a regular basis turned out to be, well, a little bratty.” Based on this comparison, it makes sense for the author to draw the conclusion that parents who let their kids avoid doing their fair share around the house are not doing them any favors. Therefore **(D)** is correct.

Paragraph 3 does not discuss any guidelines for chores, such as the fact that they should not interfere with hanging out with friends. This means **(A)** is incorrect.

Paragraph 3 does not discuss which chores parents give their kids or why, so **(B)** is incorrect.

Paragraph 3 does not compare the importance of doing homework to the importance of doing chores, so **(C)** is incorrect.

5) C

Core Standard: **Key Ideas and Details**

In the final paragraph, the author writes, “So, while you may not be happy about washing those dishes now, you will probably thank your parents later.” This comment, directly addressed to kids, suggests that in later years, kids will be appreciative of having done chores. This means **(C)** is correct.

The final paragraph does not suggest anything about which chores are worst, so **(A)** is incorrect.

The final paragraph suggests children will one day thank their parents, not the researchers, so **(B)** is incorrect.

Although earlier in the passage the author writes that it is helpful for kids as young as three to have chores, in the last paragraph the author does not mention an age when parents should assign chores. Also, the author does not go so far as to recommend that parents should all assign chores to their kids at such a young age. This means **(D)** is incorrect.