

54 The Code Talkers

Many people enjoy secret codes. The harder the code, the more some people will try to figure it out. In wartime, codes are especially important. They help armies send news about battles and the size of enemy forces. Neither side wants its code broken by the other.

One very important code was never broken. It was used during World War II by the Americans. It was a spoken code, never written down. And it was developed and used by Navajo Indians. They were called the "Navajo Code Talkers."

The Navajos created the code in their own language. Navajo is hard to learn, and only a few people know it. So it was pretty certain that the enemy would not be able to understand the Code Talkers. In addition, the Talkers used code words. They called a submarine an "iron fish" and a grenade a "potato." If they wanted to spell something, they used code words for letters of the alphabet. For instance, the letter *a* was "ant" or "apple" or "axe."

The Code Talkers worked mostly in the islands in the Pacific. One or two would be assigned to a battalion of soldiers. They would send messages by field telephone to the Code Talker in the next battalion. And he would relay the information to his commander.

The Code Talkers played an important part in several battles. They helped troops coordinate their movements and attacks. After the war, the U.S. government honored them for what they had accomplished. There was the most successful wartime code ever used.

Main Idea

1

Answer

Score

Mark the *main idea*

☒ M

15

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

☐ B

5

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

☐ N

5

- Many Navajo code terms were descriptions of objects.
- The Navajo Code Talkers had an important job in World War II.
- A good code is one that is hard or impossible to break.

☐

☐

☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 The subject of this passage is
☐ a. how the Navajo code worked during World War II.

☐ b. the kinds of words used as code words.

☐ c. the war in the Pacific.

☐ d. the bravery of the Code Talkers.

Supporting Details 3 Instead of saying the letter *a*, the Code Talkers might say

☐ a. admiral.

☐ b. aircraft.

☐ c. axe.

☐ d. anteater.

Conclusion 4 To do their jobs well, Code Talkers had to be fluent in Navajo and

☐ a. English.

☐ b. Japanese.

☐ c. German.

☐ d. sign language.

Clarifying Devices

5 The writer explains how the code worked by

☐ a. telling a story.

☐ b. giving examples of code words.

☐ c. having two characters speak it.

☐ d. describing the Navajo language.

Vocabulary in Context

6 A batallion is a

☐ a. code.

☐ b. group.

☐ c. hiding place.

☐ d. dining hall.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 217.

Total Score

55 Feeling the Forecast

To find out what the weather is going to be, most people go straight to the radio, television, or newspaper to get an expert weather forecast. But if you know what to look for, you can use your own senses to make weather predictions.

There are many signs that can help you. For example, in fair weather the air pressure is generally high, the air is still and often full of dust, and faraway objects may look hazy. But when a storm is brewing, the pressure drops and you are often able to see things more clearly. Sailors took note of this long ago and came up with a saying: "The farther the sight, the nearer the rain."

Your sense of smell can also help you detect weather changes. Just before it rains, odors become stronger. This is because odors are repressed in a fair, high-pressure center. When a bad weather low moves in, air pressure lessens and odors are released.

You can also hear an approaching storm. Sounds bounce off heavy storm clouds and return to earth with increased force. An old saying describes it this way: "Sound traveling far and wide, a stormy day will betide."

And don't scoff if your grandmother says she can feel a storm coming. It is commonly known that many people feel pains in their bones or in corns and bunions when the humidity rises, the pressure drops, and bad weather is on the way.

Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	☒ M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	☒ B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	☒ N	5

- You can use your senses to detect weather changes.
- Seeing and hearing approaching storms is possible.
- With a little training, we can use our senses more effectively.

☐
☐
☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 The topic of this passage is
- ☐ a. expert weather forecasters.
 - ☐ b. seeing approaching storms.
 - ☐ c. old sayings about weather.
 - ☐ d. using the senses to detect weather changes.
- Supporting Details** 3 According to the passage, as a storm approaches, faraway objects look
- ☐ a. hazy because of dust in the air.
 - ☐ b. clearer because air pressure is high.
 - ☐ c. clearer because air pressure is dropping.
 - ☐ d. distorted because of cloud storms.
- Conclusion** 4 In the last paragraph, the writer implies that
- ☐ a. the idea of feeling a coming storm is foolish.
 - ☐ b. older people know a lot about weather.
 - ☐ c. it is possible, but unlikely, that people feel aches when a storm is coming.
 - ☐ d. it is definitely true that some people can feel coming weather changes.
- Clarifying Devices** 5 The writer quotes the old saying "The farther the sight, the nearer the rain" in order to
- ☐ a. show how foolish and untrue such sayings were.
 - ☐ b. show that this observation, made long ago, is true.
 - ☐ c. convince the reader that expert predictions are not reliable.
 - ☐ d. give the reader a visual image.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 As used in this passage, repressed is closest in meaning to
- ☐ a. spread out.
 - ☐ b. composed.
 - ☐ c. trapped.
 - ☐ d. hidden.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 217.

Total
Score

56 The African Elephant

The elephant is the largest of all land animals. It can reach a height of eleven feet and weigh nearly six tons. The African elephant can also boast the biggest ears in the world. They can grow as large as three-and-a-half feet across. You might think that a gigantic animal like the elephant wouldn't have much to worry about, but it has its problems too. And its huge ears can help it to deal with many problems ranging from pesky insects to great danger.

The ears are very effective fans that can be used to swat flies. The elephants' huge ears also help them hear everything that's happening nearby. A mother elephant might hear the approach of a dangerous lion that would kill her calves.

The elephants' great size can sometimes present a heat problem. The larger an object, the harder it is for it to lose heat. Elephants live on the hot plains of Africa, where keeping cool is not an easy task. Elephants' huge ears help them cool their bodies so they can survive in the heat. The large surfaces of the ears have many blood vessels that are very close to the surface of the skin. Blood that is closer to the surface cools more easily.

The most impressive use of the ears, though, is seen in an elephant's threat display. When trying to threaten another animal, the elephant bellows and charges with both ears spread wide. This makes the huge beast look almost twice as large as it really is. Few enemies would dare to stand up to anything that colossal.

Main Idea 1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	☒ M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	☐ B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	☐ N	5
a. Large ears help animals survive.	☐	_____
b. African elephants lose heat through their ears.	☐	_____
c. The huge ears of African elephants help them in many ways.	☐	_____

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 Another good title for this passage would be
- ☐ a. Survival on the African Plains.
 - ☐ b. They're All Ears.
 - ☐ c. Keeping Cool in Africa.
 - ☐ d. The Elephant's Threat Display.

- Supporting Details** 3 The African elephant's large ears help it to
- ☐ a. hide.
 - ☐ b. cool off.
 - ☐ c. find food.
 - ☐ d. control its young.

- Conclusion** 4 We can conclude that if elephants did not have big ears they would probably
- ☐ a. see better.
 - ☐ b. be smaller.
 - ☐ c. not be able to survive.
 - ☐ d. not live in Africa.

- Clarifying Devices** 5 The author calls the elephant's threat display "impressive." This means that it is
- ☐ a. interesting.
 - ☐ b. admirable.
 - ☐ c. amusing.
 - ☐ d. normal.

- Vocabulary in Context** 6 Colossal indicates that the elephant appears
- ☐ a. extremely angry.
 - ☐ b. incredibly large.
 - ☐ c. to be moving very fast.
 - ☐ d. amazingly strong.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 217.

Total
Score

57 Jaws

Of all the fish in the ocean, sharks are the greediest eaters and killers. They suffer from continual hunger. Almost as soon as they have eaten, they are on the prowl for more food. Sharks have been described as eating machines, and indeed they are perfectly designed for that activity. They are powerful swimmers, with smooth, well-muscled, streamlined bodies.

But the most remarkable part of a shark is its mouth—a wide gash lined with rows of jagged teeth. When a shark attacks, it opens its mouth wide until its teeth can stab straight into the body of its victim. The teeth slice like razors as the shark twists and rolls its body to tear off a chunk of food. New teeth are constantly being formed and moving forward to take the place of those lost during the shark's violent feeding activities. Even very old sharks have razor-sharp teeth.

The largest and most fearsome of the species is the great white shark. Its average length is between fourteen and sixteen feet. A few great whites may reach well over thirty feet in length. The longest ever recorded was a thirty-seven-footer, a truly monstrous fish. The great white lives in the tropical seas and sometimes along the southern coast of the United States.

Main Idea

1

Mark the *main idea*

Answer

Score

M

15

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

B

5

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

N

5

a. Sharks are large ocean fish.

☐

b. Sharks are greedy eaters.

☐

c. Sharks are powerful fish well designed to hunt other fish for food.

☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 This passage is mostly about

- ☐ a. great white sharks.
- ☐ b. how sharks are designed for their eating needs.
- ☐ c. the way in which sharks grow new teeth.
- ☐ d. why so many people hate and fear sharks.

Supporting Details 3 Sharks tear off food by

- ☐ a. squeezing it.
- ☐ b. slicing it.
- ☐ c. killing it.
- ☐ d. rolling their bodies.

Conclusion 4 We can infer from this passage that

- ☐ a. even old sharks have no trouble eating.
- ☐ b. old sharks starve to death because of weak teeth.
- ☐ c. sharks fear people and will not go near them.
- ☐ d. sharks die young because they wear themselves out.

Clarifying Devices 5 "Jagged" teeth are

- ☐ a. dull.
- ☐ b. broken.
- ☐ c. sharp and uneven.
- ☐ d. large.

Vocabulary in Context 6 Continual means

- ☐ a. painful.
- ☐ b. fierce.
- ☐ c. constant.
- ☐ d. enormous.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 217.

Total
Score

58 Are You Superstitious?

Many superstitious people are afraid of black cats. They believe that black cats have a strange power. If a black cat crosses their path, they think they will have bad luck.

Black cats haven't always had such a bad reputation. Long ago, the Egyptians thought that black cats were holy animals. They even worshipped them. Pasht was an Egyptian goddess who had a woman's body and a cat's head. Because the Egyptians had so much respect for black cats, they often buried the sacred creatures with great ceremony. Mummies of cats have often been found in ancient cemetery ruins. To keep the cats company after they died, mice were sometimes buried beside them.

Feelings about black cats have always been strong. People have thought they were either very good or very bad. The people of Europe in the Middle Ages believed black cats were the evil friends of witches and the devil. Witches were said to have the power to change themselves into black cats. People believed that you could not tell whether a black cat was just a cat or whether it was a witch disguising herself as she plotted some evil scheme. The brain of a black cat was thought to be a main ingredient in a witch's brew.

Unlike their ancestors of the Middle Ages, the English today consider black cats to be good luck charms. Fishermen's wives often keep a black cat around so that their husbands will be protected when they are out at sea.

Main Idea

1

Mark the *main idea*

Mark the statement that is *too broad*

Mark the statement that is *too narrow*

Answer

Score

M

15

B

5

N

5

- a. People think that cats are special animals.
- b. Black cats have always been thought to have special powers.
- c. Superstitious people believe that black cats bring bad luck.

☐
☐
☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 The subject of this passage is

- ☐ a. witches.
- ☐ b. superstition.
- ☐ c. black cats.
- ☐ d. ancient beliefs.

Supporting Details 3 The Egyptian goddess Pasht had a

- ☐ a. woman's head and a cat's body.
- ☐ b. woman's head and a lion's body.
- ☐ c. cat's head and a man's body.
- ☐ d. woman's body and a cat's head.

Conclusion 4 Judging from this passage, people of the Middle

Ages probably

- ☐ a. treated black cats with respect.
- ☐ b. treated black cats badly.
- ☐ c. were witches if they had black cats.
- ☐ d. thought black cats were beautiful.

Clarifying Devices

5 People of ancient Egypt and Europeans of the Middle Ages

- ☐ a. both worshipped black cats.
- ☐ b. both feared black cats.
- ☐ c. thought black cats could bring good luck.
- ☐ d. had very different feelings about black cats.

Vocabulary in Context

6 Sacred means

- ☐ a. dead.
- ☐ b. holy.
- ☐ c. black.
- ☐ d. fearful.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 217.

Total
Score