

# 14 Jumbo

Jumbo the elephant is one of the most famous animals that ever lived. He was the biggest elephant and the proudest possession of the British Crown.

In April of 1882, Jumbo was shipped to a zoo in the United States for a visit. He was an instant success. P. T. Barnum had heard of this giant and the great crowds he attracted. Barnum decided that he would like to have Jumbo in his circus. He thought of a way to get him.

Barnum knew that elephants in captivity have periodic fits of violence. He waited for Jumbo to have such a fit. When it happened, he asked the zoo to sell him the elephant. Jumbo was sold to Barnum, who paid on the spot. Jumbo became the star of the circus. Barnum made a fortune on this star.

But one day tragedy struck Jumbo. It was after a show. The elephant was being led back to his cage near the railroad tracks by his trainers. Suddenly a bright light blinded them. A train whistled, and brakes screeched as the engineer tried to stop. Dazzled by the light, Jumbo charged right into it. There was a crash that chilled the hearts of those who were there. The confused animal had run head-on into the train's engine. Jumbo died of a broken neck.

Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	5
a. Jumbo was dazzled by the light of a passing train.	<input type="checkbox"/>	___
b. Jumbo's long life as a circus star ended in tragedy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	___
c. Elephants are great circus attractions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	___

where - ponds

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 Another good title for this passage would be  
☐ a. Under the Big Top.  
☐ b. P. T. Barnum's Circus.  
☐ c. The Train That Killed Jumbo.  
☐ d. The World's Most Famous Elephant.
- Supporting Details** 3 P. T. Barnum  
☐ a. was the head of the British zoo.  
☐ b. killed Jumbo.  
☐ c. stole from the British.  
☐ d. bought Jumbo for his circus.
- Conclusion** 4 Which of the following is most likely true?  
☐ a. Jumbo was the biggest elephant known.  
☐ b. Jumbo probably didn't die immediately after the crash.  
☐ c. Jumbo could have been saved by surgery.  
☐ d. Jumbo may have wanted to end his own life when he charged into the train.
- Clarifying Devices** 5 The phrase "chilled the hearts of those who were there" means that those who saw Jumbo killed  
☐ a. had no feelings.  
☐ b. were fascinated.  
☐ c. were shocked and upset.  
☐ d. hated Jumbo.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 A "periodic fit of violence" is one that  
☐ a. occurs every once in a while.  
☐ b. happens only once.  
☐ c. results in someone's death.  
☐ d. is very surprising.

Add your scores for questions 1-6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 215.

Total  
Score

# 15 Stunt People

They are daredevils. They are in great physical shape. They are not movie stars, but they make a lot of money. These brave folks—stunt people—are the hidden heroes of many movies.

Stunt people were around long before films. Even Shakespeare probably used them in fight scenes. To be good, a fight scene has to look real. Punches must land on enemies' jaws. Sword fights must be fought with sharp swords. Several actors are usually in a fight scene. Their moves must be set up so that no one gets hurt. It is almost like planning a dance performance.

If a movie scene is dangerous, stunt people usually fill in for the stars. You may think you see Tom Cruise running along the top of a train. But it is probably his stunt double. Stunt people must resemble the stars they stand in for. Their height and build should be about the same. But when close-ups are needed, the film focuses on the star.

Some stunt people specialize in certain kinds of scenes. For instance, a stunt woman named Jan Davis does all kinds of jumps. She has leapt from planes and even off the top of a waterfall. Each jump required careful planning and expert timing.

Yakima Canutt was a famous cowboy stunt man. Among other stunts, he could jump from a second story window onto a horse's back. He invented the famous trick of sliding under a moving stagecoach. (Maybe you've seen this stunt in TV westerns.) Canutt also figured out a new way to make a punch look real. He was the only stunt man ever to get an Oscar.

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

- Jan Davis and Yakima Canutt were talented stunt people.
- Stunt people are brave and in good shape.
- Stunt people fill in for stars in many dangerous situations

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☐

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☐

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what - insect  
where - ponds

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 This passage is about

- ☐ a. Jan Davis.
- ☐ b. Yakima Canutt.
- ☐ c. fight scenes.
- ☐ d. the kinds of things stunt people do.

Supporting Details 3 One trick that Yakima Canutt invented was

- ☐ a. jumping from a high window.
- ☐ b. leaping from the top of a waterfall.
- ☐ c. sliding his body under a moving stagecoach.
- ☐ d. the fight scene.

Conclusion 4 We can conclude that Canutt won an Oscar for

- ☐ a. playing a leading man.
- ☐ b. the excellence of his stunts.
- ☐ c. being the first movie stunt man.
- ☐ d. performing in so many movies.

Clarifying Devices 5 A well-planned fight scene is compared to a

- ☐ a. sword fight.
- ☐ b. fist fight.
- ☐ c. parachute jump.
- ☐ d. dance performance.

Vocabulary in Context 6 The word resemble means

- ☐ a. look like.
- ☐ b. confuse.
- ☐ c. admire.
- ☐ d. protect.

Add your scores for questions 1-6. Enter the total here  
and on the graph on page 215.

Total  
Score

## 16 A Dragon That Flies

Although it doesn't breathe fire, this dragon can fly. And what a beauty it is. By far the scariest thing about the dragonfly is its name. This double-winged, fast-flying insect is totally harmless. It has large, deep eyes that can detect the smallest movements. Its body may be bright blue and red or a vivid green. Dragonflies in flight look like dancing spots of color in the light of a midsummer's day.

The dragonfly has a long and respectable history. It was one of the first flying insects on the earth. To see this oldster of the insect world in action, head for a pond. Dragonflies live near the water. In fact, they lay their eggs right in the water.

A dragonfly goes through several big changes before it becomes a flying insect. From the egg, a tiny creature called a nymph is hatched. It lives in the water, eating other small creatures that live in the pond. As the nymph grows, it becomes too big for its skin. Then it sheds the skin that is too small for it. Soon it grows a new one. This molting happens several times, until the insect is full grown. At this time it crawls up the stem of a water plant, out into the air. It squeezes its way out of its last skin as a full-fledged dragonfly.

After going through all that work to grow up, the dragonfly only lives for about a month. But for this short time it startles the hot summer air with its bright beauty.

### Main Idea

1

	Answer	Score
Mark the <i>main idea</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> M	15
Mark the statement that is <i>too broad</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B	5
Mark the statement that is <i>too narrow</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	5
a. Dragonflies are harmless, beautiful insects with an interesting life cycle.	<input type="checkbox"/>	___
b. Dragonflies lay their eggs in the water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	___
c. Insects that live near water are harmless and fascinating.	<input type="checkbox"/>	___

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

**Subject Matter** 2 This passage is mostly about

- ☐ a. fire-breathing dragons.
- ☐ b. dragonflies
- ☐ c. pond life.
- ☐ d. flying insects

**Supporting Details** 3 Young dragonfly nymphs eat

- ☐ a. flies.
- ☐ b. their eggs.
- ☐ c. pond vegetation.
- ☐ d. other pond creatures

**Conclusion** 4 We can conclude that dragonflies are

- ☐ a. frightening to look at.
- ☐ b. good swimmers.
- ☐ c. only make-believe.
- ☐ d. ancient creatures.

**Clarifying Devices** 5 In the last sentence, the author refers to

- ☐ a. the speed of the dragonfly.
- ☐ b. the viciousness of the dragonfly.
- ☐ c. the loveliness of the dragonfly.
- ☐ d. the wings of the dragonfly.

**Vocabulary in Context** 6 Molting means

- ☐ a. swimming.
- ☐ b. shedding skin.
- ☐ c. growing.
- ☐ d. nymph stage.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here  
and on the graph on page 215.

Total  
Score



## 17 A Dangerous Weather Maker

Thunderstorms are dangerous because they can give off lightning. Snowstorms can tie up traffic and strand people. But tornadoes cause some of the worst weather of all.

Tornadoes are very strong columns of twisting air. They come out of rain clouds and form funnels. The funnels move along the ground, picking up anything in their path. Tornado winds can be over 300 miles an hour. Property damage can be terrible.

Most of the world's tornadoes are in the United States. The flat middle section of the country—the Great Plains—is where many strike. Spring is the most common time for tornadoes. But they hit in other seasons, too.

Tornadoes can be rated by the damage that their winds do. The worst tornadoes have winds between 261 and 318 miles an hour. They can lift a sturdy wooden house off its foundation. They can even carry cars through the air. Luckily, tornadoes this strong don't happen very often.

The world's worst tornado happened in March 1925. It went through three states—Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana. It killed about seven hundred people and injured over two thousand. In one small town, over two hundred people were killed. Many of the dead were school children.

If you hear that a tornado is coming, look for a safe place right away. If you are indoors, go to a basement. If you are outside, lie flat on the ground. Treat these storms with respect.

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. Tornadoes are storms that cause very severe damage in the United States.
- b. Some tornadoes have winds over 300 miles an hour.
- c. Many kinds of weather can cause problems.

☐
☐
☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter**    2    This passage is about
- ☐ a. what tornadoes are and what they do.
  - ☐ b. the world's worst tornado.
  - ☐ c. the rules of tornado safety.
  - ☐ d. why tornadoes are different than thunderstorms and snowstorms.
- Supporting Details**    3    The world's worst tornado cut across
- ☐ a. the southern United States.
  - ☐ b. the Great Plains.
  - ☐ c. Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana.
  - ☐ d. a funnel.
- Conclusion**    4    Because many children were killed in the world's worst tornado, we can conclude that
- ☐ a. the tornado happened at night.
  - ☐ b. the tornado must have hit one or more schools.
  - ☐ c. children think tornadoes are funny.
  - ☐ d. no adults were killed.
- Clarifying Devices**    5    The sentence "Treat these storms with respect" means
- ☐ a. tell other people about them.
  - ☐ b. read more about the damage they can cause.
  - ☐ c. take them seriously.
  - ☐ d. be sure your house has a basement.
- Vocabulary in Context**    6    Foundation means
- ☐ a. a very hard rock.
  - ☐ b. the base of a building.
  - ☐ c. a large company.
  - ☐ d. a city-sized lot.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 215.

Total  
Score



## 18 Oldest, Youngest, or in the Middle?

Were you the first or last child in your family? Or were you a middle or only child? Some people think it matters where you were born in your family. But there are different ideas about what birth order means.

Some people say that oldest children are smart and strong-willed. They are very likely to be successful. The reason for this is simple. Parents have a lot of time for their first child. They give him or her a lot of attention. So this child is very likely to do well. An only child will succeed for the same reason.

What happens to the other children in a family? Middle children don't get so much attention. So they don't feel that important. If a family has many children, the middle ones sometimes get lost in the crowd. The youngest child, though, often gets special treatment. He or she is the "baby." Often this child grows up to be funny and charming.

Do you believe these ideas about birth order? A recent study saw things quite differently. This study found that first children believed in family rules. They didn't take many chances in their lives. They usually followed orders. Rules didn't mean so much to later children in a family. They went out and followed their own ideas. They took chances. And they often did better in life.

Which theory about birth order do you believe? Look at your own family or your friends' families. Decide which idea fits what you see.

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. There are two different ideas about the meaning of birth order.
- b. First children grow up to be like only children.
- c. Birth order matters in people's lives.

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Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

**Subject Matter** 2 This passage is about

- ☐ a. why the oldest children in a family usually succeed.
- ☐ b. why some children refuse to follow orders.
- ☐ c. ways in which birth order may affect how children grow up.
- ☐ d. how people have a lot of trouble agreeing about ideas.

**Supporting Details** 3 According to the article, some people think that youngest children grow up to be

- ☐ a. babies.
- ☐ b. not capable of doing anything.
- ☐ c. funny and charming.
- ☐ d. strong leaders.

**Conclusion** 4 If later-born children take chances rather than following rules, you might expect them to be

- ☐ a. jealous.
- ☐ b. creative.
- ☐ c. spoiled.
- ☐ d. obedient employees.

**Clarifying Devices** 5 The statement that middle children "sometimes get lost in the crowd" means that

- ☐ a. they have a poor sense of direction.
- ☐ b. they don't get a lot of attention.
- ☐ c. they have a strong desire to be leaders.
- ☐ d. they can't get along with others.

**Vocabulary in Context** 6 The word theory means

- ☐ a. idea.
- ☐ b. comparison.
- ☐ c. evidence.
- ☐ d. surprise.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 215.

Total  
Score