

69 A Dish Fit for Royalty

When people think of caviar, they think of elegant parties given by wealthy people. Actually, not all caviar is terribly costly; you sometimes find domestic—home-grown—caviar on buffet tables in all-you-can-eat restaurants. But the best kinds of caviar are very expensive indeed.

Caviar is fish eggs. The top variety comes from three kinds of sturgeons found in the Caspian Sea in Russia: beluga, osetra, and sevruga. These fish take between nine and fifteen years to mature and produce eggs. When they do, they generally yield a few pounds of tiny, dark brown or dark gray eggs apiece. The scarcity of caviar and the long time it takes to harvest are what make caviar expensive. One ounce of beluga can cost around \$50 to \$60 in a retail store.

Why do people eat caviar? Some, naturally, are entranced by anything so expensive. But there are also people who appreciate the taste. Beluga is said to have a creamy, buttery taste. Osetra has a nutty flavor. True fans will eat top-quality caviar by itself on dry toast points; the fat from the eggs will moisten the bread.

If you've never tried caviar, you might want to see what an inexpensive type tastes like. Caviar from North American sturgeon costs less than a third as much as the most expensive Russian types. Some people also call salmon eggs caviar. These slightly larger, bright red eggs are the least expensive of all. If you're in doubt, go to the nearest fish buffet and see if you can sample them there!

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

- a. Rare foods are expensive.
- b. Rare and expensive, caviar is a delicacy many people like.
- c. Three kinds of sturgeons produce Russian caviar.

☐

☐

☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 This selection is about

- ☐ a. fishing for sturgeon.
- ☐ b. harvesting and eating caviar.
- ☐ c. the differences between Russian and American caviar.
- ☐ d. the colors of fish eggs.

Supporting Details 3 Caviar is scarce because

- ☐ a. it takes a long time for a small amount to develop.
- ☐ b. no one is willing to harvest it.
- ☐ c. local fishermen eat the sturgeon and throw away the eggs.
- ☐ d. the waters where sturgeon are found are polluted.

Conclusion 4 The writer's attitude seems to be

- ☐ a. only expensive caviar is good.
- ☐ b. keep an open mind about eating caviar.
- ☐ c. people who eat caviar are snobs.
- ☐ d. don't buy caviar at retail prices.

Clarifying Devices 5 The writer mentions "beluga, osetra, and sevruga" to

- ☐ a. explain places where caviar is found.
- ☐ b. identify three types of Russian caviar.
- ☐ c. list companies that sell caviar.
- ☐ d. mention famous Russians who enjoyed caviar.

Vocabulary in Context 6 Entranced, as used in this passage, means

- ☐ a. surprised.
- ☐ b. alarmed.
- ☐ c. disgusted.
- ☐ d. charmed or delighted.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 218.

Total
Score

70 Asteroids and Meteorites

In addition to comets, two other relatively small bodies can be found floating around the solar system. They are known as asteroids and meteorites. Asteroids are smallish bodies that orbit the sun, mainly in the area between Mars and Jupiter. Though not large enough to be thought of as planets, asteroids can range from the size of a small boulder to several hundred miles in diameter. They are rocky bodies made up of various metals and other substances. Now and then something will jar an asteroid out of its orbit. Then it may approach or—very rarely—hit Earth.

Meteorites are also small, rocky bodies that have traveled through space. Some may be broken-off pieces of asteroids; some may be leftover chunks of comets. Meteorites are pieces of rock from space that actually hit our planet.

When these intruders make contact, what damage do they do? It all depends on their size and where they hit. Since Earth is mostly made up of water, a small meteorite falling into the Atlantic Ocean probably won't harm anything. But some meteorites strike solid ground. A meteorite weighing about sixty tons once hit near a farm in southern Africa. Another huge one broke up in the air above Siberia in 1908. It destroyed trees in a twenty-mile area.

The damage from a huge fallen asteroid can be far worse. In eastern Mexico are the remains of a basin one hundred miles wide where an asteroid touched Earth 65 million years ago. Enough debris shot forth to block out the sun's light for decades. When there was light again, all the dinosaurs had disappeared.

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. Asteroids and meteorites hit Earth and sometimes do damage.

☐

b. A meteorite can weigh as much as sixty tons.

☐

c. Asteroids and meteorites float around the solar system.

☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 This passage deals mostly with
- ☐ a. the history of asteroids and meteorites.
 - ☐ b. what happens when asteroids and meteorites hit Earth.
 - ☐ c. comparing asteroids and meteorites.
 - ☐ d. the destruction of the dinosaurs.
- Supporting Details** 3 Asteroids and meteorites are similar in that
- ☐ a. both are broken-off pieces of comets.
 - ☐ b. both are rocky bodies.
 - ☐ c. they orbit the sun in the area of Mars and Jupiter.
 - ☐ d. neither can be more than about a mile wide.
- Conclusion** 4 The most likely reason for the dinosaurs' disappearance is that
- ☐ a. their eyesight couldn't adapt to the dark.
 - ☐ b. without sunlight, plants and other foods were no longer available.
 - ☐ c. people began to inhabit the planet.
 - ☐ d. the asteroid hit caused the land to flood.
- Clarifying Devices** 5 In paragraph 3, the phrase "these intruders" refers to
- ☐ a. dinosaurs.
 - ☐ b. comets.
 - ☐ c. asteroids and meteorites.
 - ☐ d. human beings.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 Debris in this passage means
- ☐ a. dinosaur remains.
 - ☐ b. frozen water.
 - ☐ c. fragments of rock.
 - ☐ d. garbage.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here **Total**
and on the graph on page 218. **Score**

71 El Niño

When you live in an area for a while, you get used to its climate. You know about how cold and wet it will be in March and how warm in August. Sometimes, though, weather conditions occur that create big changes in temperature and rainfall. One of these is called El Niño.

In an El Niño situation the surface water in the eastern Pacific Ocean, near the coast of Peru, gets unusually warm. (This warming occurs around Christmas; "El Niño" is Spanish for "Christ Child.") Rainfall seems to follow the warm water, so that areas around Peru get floods. But the weather change doesn't stop there. Regions to the west of the warm water, such as Australia, get very little rain and so experience drought. El Niño also influences the United States. Usually California gets very severe rains. The middle and eastern parts of the country have winters that are much warmer than normal.

El Niños have been occurring for hundreds of years, but people didn't understand what was happening. It was only in the 1960s that scientists found definite proof that warming in the Pacific affected weather elsewhere. Computers are continuing to compile information about how an El Niño works. We know, for instance, that the condition occurs every two to seven years. Usually it lasts for several months, though sometimes it can last for years. And its effects can vary: some El Niños are much stronger than others. Often an El Niño year is followed by one with a condition called La Niña. In this situation, the Pacific waters get very cold and the weather patterns of El Niño tend to be reversed.

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. El Niño is named for the Christ Child.	☐	___
b. Many conditions can affect weather.	☐	___
c. An El Niño situation causes dramatic weather changes.	☐	___

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 Another good title for this selection would be

- ☐ a. El Niño and La Niña.
- ☐ b. A Cold Ocean Situation.
- ☐ c. A Real Drought Maker.
- ☐ d. Turning the Weather Upside Down.

Supporting Details 3 In an El Niño situation, regions around Peru get

- ☐ a. snow.
- ☐ b. drought.
- ☐ c. violent winds.
- ☐ d. floods.

Conclusion 4 During La Niña, the weather in California is most likely very

- ☐ a. dry.
- ☐ b. wet.
- ☐ c. cold.
- ☐ d. warm.

Clarifying Devices 5 The author begins this passage by

- ☐ a. referring to weather patterns readers are already familiar with.
- ☐ b. defining El Niño.
- ☐ c. talking about Pacific Ocean water.
- ☐ d. telling an interesting story.

Vocabulary in Context

6 Compile means

- ☐ a. hide.
- ☐ b. notice.
- ☐ c. write about.
- ☐ d. collect.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 218.

Total
Score

72 The Witch's Wind

In California it's called the "Santa Ana." Argentineans call it the "zonda." It has more than twenty other local names; one of the most fitting is the "witch's wind." The scientific name of this mysterious wind is *foehn*, pronounced fern.

A foehn is a moving mass of air that, after crossing mountains, becomes a dry, gusty wind that moves with great power. A witch's wind in Texas once flattened 252 oil derricks. One in Austria derailed three streetcars, each weighing over three tons.

There is an unresolved mystery in the witch's wind. The foehn can have a strange and hard-to-explain effect on people's physical and mental states. When the wind is blowing, some people experience what in Europe is called "the foehn disease." Those who suffer from it say they are depressed and can't concentrate. In Germany, you can even buy anti-foehn pills.

In many places, there have been increases in the numbers of accidents, suicides, and calls for medical help during the wind. The foehn has been blamed for everything from drops in factory production to family quarrels. In California during the 1890s, people who committed crimes of passion during the witch's wind could use the foehn as an excuse.

Some people feel symptoms even before the wind arrives. They may have headaches or breathing problems. Their skin becomes taut, and old scars ache. These signs have occurred in people as much as ten hours before scientific weather equipment detected the foehn's approach.

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. The witch's wind is a strong wind with a mysterious effect on people. ☐
- b. The witch's wind has great destructive force. ☐
- c. Weather changes can produce mysterious mental effects. ☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 The passage is mainly about
- ☐ a. the destructive power of wind.
 - ☐ b. different types of winds.
 - ☐ c. how weather affects people.
 - ☐ d. foehns.
- Supporting Details** 3 The foehn is mysterious because
- ☐ a. of its power to lift great weights.
 - ☐ b. its origin is unknown.
 - ☐ c. it can affect physical and mental health.
 - ☐ d. it occurs in many different areas of the world.
- Conclusion** 4 The passage implies that "witch's wind" is a good name for the foehn because
- ☐ a. the word foehn means "witch."
 - ☐ b. it has a strange and harmful power.
 - ☐ c. it causes depression.
 - ☐ d. it has become legendary.
- Clarifying Devices** 5 The writer tells how the foehn "flattened 252 oil derricks" in order to
- ☐ a. impress the reader with the wind's power.
 - ☐ b. explain the mystery of the foehn.
 - ☐ c. emphasize how unpredictable the wind is.
 - ☐ d. compare the foehn with other destructive natural forces.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 As used in the passage, the word states means
- ☐ a. positions.
 - ☐ b. declares.
 - ☐ c. nations.
 - ☐ d. conditions.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 218.

Total
Score

73 A Fighter for Justice

He was denied admission to one law school because he was black. But today that same school has a law library named after him. You may not know much about Thurgood Marshall, but he strengthened education rights for African Americans all over the country.

Marshall was born in Baltimore in 1908. Like other African American students of his time, he went to segregated schools. These schools were not illegal. An 1896 law stated that schools for blacks and whites could be "separate but equal." But Marshall knew that most black schools were not equal. He decided to do something about it.

Marshall received a law degree from Howard University. Then he began to work at changing the country's schools. Marshall's strategy was to start with colleges and graduate schools, because he thought judges would sympathize with ambitious young African Americans searching for an education. In 1935, he successfully sued the University of Maryland Law School to accept its first black student. Other cases followed, with similar results.

By the 1950s, Marshall was ready to turn to grade schools and high schools. In 1954, he accepted the case of Linda Brown, who wanted to attend a white grade school near her home. As a result of Marshall's arguments, the Supreme Court changed the law. It said that "separate" schools could never be "equal."

In 1967, Marshall became the first African American appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. Until he retired in 1991, he supported many other civil rights bills.

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. Thurgood Marshall took on the case of student Linda Brown.

☐

b. The Supreme Court frequently rules on racial issues.

☐

c. Thurgood Marshall was responsible for changing the "separate but equal" law.

☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 This passage is basically about

- ☐ a. Thurgood Marshall's childhood.
- ☐ b. Thurgood Marshall's influence on American education.
- ☐ c. Thurgood Marshall on the Supreme Court.
- ☐ d. inequality in America.

Supporting Details 3 The first schools that Marshall tried to change were

- ☐ a. public elementary schools.
- ☐ b. public high schools.
- ☐ c. private schools.
- ☐ d. colleges.

Conclusion 4 As a lawyer, Marshall must have been very

- ☐ a. cruel.
- ☐ b. easygoing.
- ☐ c. persuasive.
- ☐ d. confusing.

Clarifying Devices

5 The first two sentences of this passage

- ☐ a. set up a contrast.
- ☐ b. are intended to criticize.
- ☐ c. give the steps in a process.
- ☐ d. explain basic facts about Marshall's childhood.

Vocabulary in Context

6 Segregated in this passage means

- ☐ a. good.
- ☐ b. locally run.
- ☐ c. separated by race.
- ☐ d. poor.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 218.

Total
Score