

83 A Reward for Heroism

When soldiers distinguish themselves for bravery in a combat situation, they may be awarded the Medal of Honor. Bestowed by the President and Congress, the Medal of Honor is the highest military award the country can give. Only about 3,400 soldiers have received it.

The Medal of Honor was first presented by President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War. At that time it was given to a whole regiment of soldiers—over eight hundred in all. The purpose was not really to honor the soldiers, however; it was more a way to keep them on duty! In 1916, Congress changed the function of the medal to be a reward for heroism. The earlier medals were taken back. Since then medals have been awarded in every war except the Persian Gulf War. The most recent recipients were two army sergeants who fought and were killed in Somalia. They received their medals posthumously.

Here are some of the deeds for which the medal has been awarded. A soldier in World War II killed eleven Germans and captured over thirty others—all in a single battle. One who was captured during the Vietnam War wounded and almost killed himself rather than betray information about his troops. A soldier in Korea led a charge up an enemy hill while being shot at. Some soldiers have thrown themselves on hand grenades in order to protect their fellow soldiers. Others have performed daring feats of rescue.

Once a year, the living medal winners meet at a formal reunion. They feel that the medal binds them together like members of a (very heroic) family.

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. Many soldiers are deserving of awards for bravery.

☐

—

b. The Medal of Honor has been awarded to brave American soldiers through many wars.

☐

—

c. Many medal recipients have rescued their fellow soldiers in battle.

☐

—

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 This passage is basically a(n)
☐ a. argument in favor of awarding the Medal of Honor.
☐ b. history of the Medal of Honor.
☐ c. history of American wars.
☐ d. story about Abraham Lincoln.
- Supporting Details** 3 The Medal of Honor was originally awarded during
☐ a. the Civil War.
☐ b. the Persian Gulf War.
☐ c. World War I.
☐ d. World War II.
- Conclusion** 4 The first soldiers to receive the Medal of Honor were
☐ a. enthusiastic soldiers.
☐ b. not very enthusaistic soldiers.
☐ c. very young.
☐ d. very old.
- Clarifying Devices** 5 The writer explains how the medal may be won by
☐ a. giving several examples.
☐ b. telling the story of one soldier.
☐ c. telling about its first recipients.
☐ d. mentioning Abraham Lincoln.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 Posthumously means
☐ a. at the start of battle.
☐ b. after death.
☐ c. in a special ceremony in front of Congress.
☐ d. with their comrades.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 219.

Total
Score

84 I Wouldn't Try It Again

He shouldn't have come back alive. Captain J. H. Hedley was a British pilot in World War I. He fell victim to a bit of misfortune that would have been enough to kill anyone. Yet with bad luck staring him in the face, good luck was coming up fast on his tail.

Captain Hedley was flying a mission over Germany with his copilot, a Canadian flyer named Makepeace. Suddenly they were surrounded by a group of German fighters. Makepeace, an experienced pilot, knew he had to take the plane into a dive straight down in order to slip away from the Germans. Inexplicably, Hedley was caught unaware by his copilot's maneuver. He was thrown sharply out of his seat and out of the plane. Makepeace sadly counted Hedley a dead man and continued trying to avoid the enemy.

Suddenly, Makepeace spotted Hedley clinging to the tail of the plane. Hedley hung on and pulled himself back into the plane when it leveled off. Makepeace was stunned by the sight of Hedley, but he kept his composure enough to get them out of trouble and out of Germany. The best explanation for Hedley's reprieve was that the plane's sudden vertical dive had created a vacuum in the air behind it. Hedley fell into the vacuum and was pulled along until he grabbed the tail and made his fantastic reentry.

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

- Captain Hedley was thrown from an open cockpit plane. ☐
- People sometimes survive terribly dangerous accidents. ☐
- Captain Hedley was thrown out of an airplane and was able to get back inside unharmed. ☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 This passage is about

☐ a. World War II.

☐ b. the adventures of Makepeace and Hedley.

☐ c. the miraculous fall and recovery of Captain Hedley.

☐ d. World War I.

Supporting Details 3 In World War I, Britain and Canada were

☐ a. afraid of each other.

☐ b. in competition.

☐ c. on the same side.

☐ d. fighting each other.

Conclusion 4 We can conclude that Hedley's escape from death

was mostly due to

☐ a. faith.

☐ b. luck.

☐ c. science.

☐ d. Makepeace's flying ability.

Clarifying Devices

5 The writer begins the passage by

☐ a. making a series of interesting statements without explaining them.

☐ b. telling a joke.

☐ c. asking some questions.

☐ d. quoting a war veteran.

Vocabulary in Context

6 Something that happens inexplicably happens in a manner that is

☐ a. ridiculous.

☐ b. memorable.

☐ c. unforgivable.

☐ d. unexplainable.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 219.

Total
Score

85 Eye Facts

There are many commonly held beliefs about eyeglasses and eyesight that are not proven facts. For instance, some people believe that wearing glasses too soon weakens the eyes. But there is no evidence to show that the structure of eyes is changed by wearing glasses at a young age. Wearing the wrong glasses, however, can prove harmful. Studies show that for adults there is no danger, but children can develop loss of vision if they have glasses inappropriate for their eyes.

We have all heard some of the common myths about how eyesight gets bad. Most people believe that reading in dim light causes poor eyesight, but that is untrue. Too little light makes the eyes work harder, so they do get tired and strained. Eyestrain also results from reading a lot, reading in bed, and watching too much television. However, although eyestrain may cause some pain or headaches, it does not permanently damage eyesight.

Another myth about eyes is that they can be replaced, or transferred from one person to another. There are close to one million nerve fibers that connect the eyeball to the brain; as of yet, it is impossible to attach them all in a new person. Only certain parts of the eye—the cornea and the retina—can be replaced. But if we keep clearing up the myths and learning more about the eyes, someday a full transplant may be possible!

Main Idea

1

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

- People have many false notions about the eyes and sight.
- There are many things about the body that are not completely understood.
- There are several causes of eyestrain.

☐
☐
☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

- Subject Matter** 2 This passage is mostly about
- ☐ a. different types of eyeglasses.
 - ☐ b. a visit to the eye doctor.
 - ☐ c. myths about eyesight.
 - ☐ d. cornea transplants.
- Supporting Details** 3 One cause of eyestrain mentioned in the passage is
- ☐ a. wearing contact lenses too long.
 - ☐ b. going to the movies.
 - ☐ c. reading a lot.
 - ☐ d. not visiting your eye doctor.
- Conclusion** 4 From this passage one can conclude that
- ☐ a. doctors are still learning things about eyesight.
 - ☐ b. headaches are only caused by eyestrain.
 - ☐ c. everyone should wear glasses.
 - ☐ d. people only believe things that are proven facts.
- Clarifying Devices** 5 "Commonly held beliefs" are
- ☐ a. ideas that only low class people believe.
 - ☐ b. ideas that most people believe.
 - ☐ c. beliefs that have something in common.
 - ☐ d. foolish beliefs.
- Vocabulary in Context** 6 The word develop is used to mean
- ☐ a. become larger.
 - ☐ b. create.
 - ☐ c. train.
 - ☐ d. acquire.

Add your scores for questions 1-6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 219.

Total
Score

86 Life on Other Planets?

Since early times, people have been fascinated with the idea of life existing somewhere else besides Earth. Until recently, scientists believed that extraterrestrial life was just a hopeful dream. But now they are beginning to locate places where life could form. In 1997, they saw evidence of planets near other stars like the sun. Planets are places that might have the basic conditions for life. But scientists now think that life could be even nearer, in our own solar system.

One place scientists are studying very closely is Europa, a moon of Jupiter. Space probes have provided evidence that Europa has a large ocean under its surface. The probes have also made scientists think that under its surface Europa has a rocky core giving off volcanic heat. Water and heat from volcanic activity are two basic conditions needed for life to form. A third is certain basic chemicals such as carbon, oxygen, and nitrogen. Comets and meteorites carrying these chemicals have certainly hit Europa at some point. So scientists think chemicals might be lying at the bottom of Europa's ocean. They may have already created life—or may be about to.

You may wonder if light is also needed for life to form. Until recently, scientists thought that light was essential. But now places have been found on Earth that are in total blackness, such as caves several miles beneath the surface. And bacteria, primitive forms of life, have been seen there. So the lack of light in Europa's subsurface ocean doesn't automatically rule out life forming.

Needless to say, scientists want to learn more about Europa. They are continuing to study it closely.

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. Europa seems to have the conditions necessary to support life. ☐
- b. There should be life somewhere else in the universe besides Earth. ☐
- c. Europa has probably been hit by comets or meteorites. ☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 This passage is mainly about

- ☐ a. life on other planets.
- ☐ b. space probes exploring our solar system.
- ☐ c. whether light is needed for life to develop.
- ☐ d. life forming on Europa.

Supporting Details 3 Two conditions necessary for life are

- ☐ a. light and water.
- ☐ b. water and heat.
- ☐ c. light and chemicals like nitrogen.
- ☐ d. heat and bacteria.

Conclusion 4 If scientists have their way, there will be

- ☐ a. more space probes to Europa.
- ☐ b. settlements on planets like Mars.
- ☐ c. more publicity about recent space discoveries.
- ☐ d. better control over the budget for space exploration.

Clarifying Devices

5 In the second paragraph, the phrase "a rocky core" means

- ☐ a. a structure that almost resembles an apple.
- ☐ b. the innermost part.
- ☐ c. stones covering Europa's surface.
- ☐ d. a mountain on the surface that is about to explode.

Vocabulary in Context

6 The word extraterrestrial means

- ☐ a. beyond the Earth.
- ☐ b. on the Earth.
- ☐ c. inside the Earth.
- ☐ d. on a UFO.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 219.

Total
Score

87 Early Passenger Planes

The Wright brothers made their first flight in 1903. But they probably had little idea that one day planes would transport people all over the world.

In the early days of aviation, dirigibles—huge gas-filled balloons—were used to transport most passengers. The first recorded passenger service by airplane came in 1914, when for \$5 a passenger could fly across Tampa Bay in a two-seater plane. A somewhat larger passenger plane was built around the same time in Russia. This plane had an open deck along its back—a place where passengers could walk, if they dared, during the flight. Since nearly all early flights took place in cold, drafty planes, passengers were often supplied with leather helmets, gloves, and even hot-water bottles.

Early passenger flights had two serious limitations. To be safe, they could not fly very high, and they could not fly at night. So flying across the United States required a series of short hops from one destination to the next. As airplane construction improved, so did passenger choices. The Boeing 247, an all-metal plane introduced in 1933, carried ten passengers and could go almost 200 miles per hour. Shortly afterward came the Douglas DC-3. This plane was an updated version of one that had sleeper berths for overnight travel. It could hold twenty-one passengers and fly above 5,000 feet. DC-3s were the first planes large enough to operate at a profit.

When jet airliners were introduced in the 1950s, flights became longer, faster, and cheaper. Air travel was now a possibility for just about everyone.

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. Early passenger planes could not fly high, nor could they fly at night.

☐

b. The history of flight involves many types of planes.

☐

c. Passenger planes developed steadily through the first half of the century.

☐

Score 15 points for each correct answer.

Score

Subject Matter 2 This passage is mostly about

- ☐ a. how people learned to fly.
- ☐ b. different kinds of early passenger planes.
- ☐ c. safety features of early planes.
- ☐ d. magic herbs.

Supporting Details 3 The first flights made just for passengers occurred in

- ☐ a. 1914.
- ☐ b. 1903.
- ☐ c. 1950.
- ☐ d. 1933.

Conclusion 4 Sleeper berths in airplanes

- ☐ a. were popular from the very beginning.
- ☐ b. did not last too long.
- ☐ c. were only for the very rich.
- ☐ d. were practical, but expensive to build.

Clarifying Devices 5 As used in this passage, the expression "a series of short hops" refers to

- ☐ a. airplanes.
- ☐ b. pilots.
- ☐ c. flights.
- ☐ d. schedules.

Vocabulary in Context 6 A good synonym for limitations in this passage would be

- ☐ a. controls.
- ☐ b. shortcomings.
- ☐ c. characteristics.
- ☐ d. descriptions.

Add your scores for questions 1–6. Enter the total here and on the graph on page 219.

Total
Score