

“The Bus Driver”

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories

Directions: Read the story. Then answer the questions below.



Dana Miller is a bus driver.

She drives a bus in the city of Philadelphia.

She works the night shift. That means she starts work at 10:00 at night and gets off at 6:00 in the morning. In the world of bus driving, this is sometimes called third shift.

Dana has been driving a bus for 15 years. She started when she was 23 years old.

She loves her job most of the time. She gets to see the beautiful city from her seat.

She gets to meet all kinds of people.

There is the guitar player. He **lugs** his heavy guitar on the bus every Friday night. He plays at a nightspot downtown.

People call him Get Low. That is because he likes to play the guitar on his knees.

If the bus is not too crowded, Get Low plays in the back of the bus. The bus is seldom crowded at night. He likes to warm up on the bus before shows.

There is the woman who works at the pretzel factory. Each day the “Pretzel Lady” brings Dana a bag of fresh, soft pretzels. They fill the bus with a wonderful smell!

Sometimes Dana’s job is hard. It is hard when Dana sees people down on their luck.

One time, a young woman left her sleeping baby on the bus. There was a note on the baby’s blanket asking for help. Dana had to call the police.

Another time, a teenaged boy stole money from Dana on the bus. He had a fake gun. Dana thought it was real. She was very scared.

Occasionally, driving the bus can be scary. But most of the time, driving the bus is great. Dana does not want to work anywhere else.

“How was your night?” Dana’s husband likes to ask when she gets home.

“Good music, good food, and a **great view of the city**,” she says.

Questions:

1) Where does Dana drive the bus?

- A. around Philadelphia
- B. to the police station
- C. to pick up guitar players
- D. to pick up school children

2) What shift does Dana work?

- A. third shift
- B. evening shift
- C. afternoon shift
- D. second shift

3) How old is Dana?

- A. 15
- B. 23
- C. 38
- D. 39

4) How long is Dana's shift?

- A. 6 hours
- B. 8 hours
- C. 10 hours
- D. 12 hours

5) What is one reason Dana loves her job?

- A. She finds sleeping babies.
- B. She gets to call the police.
- C. She gets to sleep during the day.
- D. She gets to meet all kinds of people.

6) Why is the guitar player called Get Low?

- A. He has a low voice.
- B. He likes to play sitting down.
- C. He likes to play on his knees.
- D. It is the name of his favorite song.

7) What does **lug** mean?

- A. to throw
- B. to push easily
- C. to carry on one's head
- D. to carry something that is hard to move around

8) The main reason Get Low rides the bus is because

- A. he likes to see the city
- B. he enjoys talking to Dana
- C. he likes to play guitar there
- D. he needs to get to a show

9) How often does Get Low play guitar on the bus?

- I. when the bus is not crowded
 - II. when he doesn't have a show
 - III. every Friday night
- A. I only
 - B. I and II
 - C. II and III
 - D. I, II, and III

10) Who gives Dana pretzels?

- A. the guitar player
- B. the young mom
- C. the teenager
- D. the woman who works at the factory

Questions:

11) Why might the young woman have left her baby on the bus?

- A. She forgot it there.
- B. It was sleeping.
- C. She meant to come right back.
- D. She felt she could not take care of it.

12) Who steals money?

- A. Get Low
- B. the baby's mother
- C. a teenager
- D. Dana

13) Why does Dana seem to think people do bad things?

- I. They are down on their luck.
 - II. They are bad by nature.
 - III. They know Dana is vulnerable.
- A. I only
 - B. I and II
 - C. II and III
 - D. I, II, and III

14) As used at the end of the story, which is the best synonym for **occasionally**?

- A. seldom
- B. one time
- C. frequently
- D. usually

15) What **great view of the city** does Dana have?

- A. the view from a tall building
- B. the view from a mountain top
- C. the view from the sidewalk
- D. the view from her bus seat

Do you think Dana has a good job? Explain.

Answers and Explanations

1) **A**

In paragraph 2, the author tells us, “Dana drives a bus in the city of Philadelphia.” Therefore **(A)** is correct. The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

2) **A**

In paragraph 3, the author writes that Dana “works the night shift.” The author explains, “In the world of bus driving, this is sometimes called third shift.” Therefore **(A)** is correct. The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

3) **C**

In paragraph 4, we learn that Dana has been driving a bus for 15 years. The author states, “She started when she was 23 years old.” To find out how old Dana is now, we need to add the number of years Dana has been driving a bus to the age she was when she started. Adding 15 to 23 gives us 38 ($15 + 23 = 38$). Therefore **(C)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)** and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect. Dana started driving the bus when she was 23 years old, but that was 15 years ago, so she is no longer 23. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect.

4) **B**

Paragraph 3 explains that Dana starts work at 10:00 at night and is done at 6:00 in the morning. There are 2 hours between 10:00 and midnight. There are six hours between midnight and 6:00. This means there are 8 hours between 10:00 at night and 6:00 in the morning. Therefore **(B)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

5) **D**

In paragraph 5, we learn that “Dana loves her job most of the time.” The next paragraph states, “She gets to meet all kinds of people.” We can understand that one reason Dana loves her job is that she is able to meet all kinds of people. Therefore **(D)** is correct.

One time Dana found a sleeping baby on her bus, but that was an example of a time when Dana’s job was hard. It is not what she loves about her job. Therefore **(A)** is incorrect. When Dana found the baby, she had to call the police. But that is not what she loves about her job. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. If Dana works all night, it is probably true that she gets to sleep during the day. But the passage does not say that is what she loves about her job. Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

6) **C**

In paragraph 8, we learn about the guitar player who rides the bus. The author writes, “People call him Get Low. That is because he likes to play the guitar on his knees.” Therefore **(C)** is correct.

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

7) **D**

In paragraph 7, we learn that Get Low “lugs his heavy guitar case on the bus every Friday night.” Because Get Low’s guitar case is heavy, we can understand that it is hard to move around. To lug something means to carry something that is hard to move around. Therefore **(D)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

8) **D**

Paragraph 7 tells us that Get Low “plays at a nightclub downtown.” We can understand that Get Low is using the bus to get to a show. Therefore **(D)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)** and **(B)**. Therefore they are incorrect. Although Get Low does play guitar on the bus, paragraph 9 tells us this is because he “likes to warm up on the bus between shows.” Therefore **(C)** is incorrect.

9) **A**

In paragraph 9, we learn that “if the bus is not too crowded, Get Low plays in the back of the bus.” Get Low only plays if the bus is not crowded. This supports **option (I)**. Paragraph 9 tells us that Get Low plays on the bus to warm up before a show. We can understand that he would not be playing if he did not have a show. This eliminates **option (II)**. Paragraph 9 explains, “The bus is seldom crowded at night.” If something happens *seldom*, this means it does not happen very often. So we can understand from this sentence that some Friday nights the bus might be crowded, although usually it is not. Get Low does not play if the bus is crowded. This eliminates **option (III)**. Therefore **(A)** is correct.

10) **D**

Paragraph 10 tells us about “the woman who works at the pretzel factory.” We learn that “each day the ‘Pretzel Lady’ brings Dana a bag of fresh, soft pretzels. They fill the bus with a wonderful smell.” Therefore **(D)** is correct. The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

11) **D**

In paragraph 12, the author tells us, “There was a note on the baby’s blanket asking for help.” We can understand from the note that the baby’s mother felt she could not take care of the baby by herself. Therefore **(D)** is correct. The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

12) **C**

Paragraph 13 describes how “a teenaged boy stole money from Dana on the bus.” Therefore **(C)** is correct. The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

13) **A**

In paragraph 11, the author writes, “It is hard when Dana sees people down on their luck.” In the next 2 paragraphs, the author gives examples of people who do things that might be thought of as bad. In paragraph 12, the author tells us about the woman who left her baby on the bus. The paragraph after that, paragraph 13, tells us about the teenager who stole money from Dana. Using this information, we can understand that Dana believes people like the woman and the teenager do bad things because they are down on their luck. This supports **option (I)**. There is no information in the passage to suggest that Dana thinks these people are bad by nature. This eliminates **option (II)**. There is no information in the passage to suggest that Dana is vulnerable. This eliminates **option (III)**. Therefore **(A)** is correct.

14) **A**

Paragraph 14 reads, “Occasionally, driving the bus can be scary. But most of the time, driving the bus is great.” Since driving the bus is great most of the time, *occasionally* must be the opposite of *most of the time*. *Seldom*, or infrequently, is the only answer choice that means the opposite of *most of the time*. Therefore **(A)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

15) **D**

In paragraph 15, Dana’s husband asks her about her night when she has gotten home from driving the bus. In paragraph 16, Dana tells him, “Good music, good food, and a great view of the city.” Because Dana is answering her husband’s question about how her job went that night, we can understand that Dana gets the great view of the city from the driver’s seat of the bus. Therefore **(D)** is correct.

The passage does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)**. Therefore they are incorrect.