



"Summer Rain"

Reading Comprehension Assessment

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Name _____
 Date _____

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

Summer Rain

The worst days of any summer are the rainy ones. We spend all year looking forward to nice weather and long, hot days. All of winter, with its dreary gray days and bitter cold, we dream of those endless days at the beach, laying on the sand and soaking in the bright and burning sun. And then, summer comes, and it rains.

As a child, I would wake up to rainy summer days and come close to crying. It wasn't fair. We suffered through months of school and miserable weather for those scant ten weeks of freedom and balmy weather. Any day that I could not spend at the beach or playing ball with my friends seemed like a punishment for something I didn't even do.

On those rainy summer days, I had nothing fun to do and could only sit inside, staring out at the rain like a Dickensian orphan. I was an only child, so there was no one else to play with. My father worked from home, so I was not truly alone, but he could not actively play with me since he was technically at work. It was those days that I would resign myself to whatever was on television or any books that I could find lying around. I'd crawl through the day and pray each night that the rain would not be there the next day.

As an adult, though, my opinion of summer rain has changed. When you have to work every day, summer is not as eagerly anticipated. Mostly, the days run together, bleeding into each other so that they no longer seem like separate entities and instead feel like continuations of the same long day. Everything seems monotonous and dull, and an ennui or listlessness kicks in. Such a mindset makes you cheer for anything new or different. I spend the winter dreaming of summer and the summer dreaming of winter. When summer comes, I complain about how hot it is. And then I look forward to the rain, because the rain brings with it a cold front, which offers a **reprieve**—admittedly one that is all too short—from the torture of 100° and humid days. Rainy days are still the worst days of the summer, but summer rain today means positively beautiful—and considerably cooler—weather tomorrow.



- 1) The passage makes use of language that is
 - A. metaphorical
 - B. rhetorical
 - C. formal
 - D. ambiguous

- 2) According to the passage, summer is different for adults because
 - A. rain brings with it cold temperatures for the following days
 - B. the weather is much warmer than it is for children
 - C. they do not get a long time off from work for the season
 - D. they better know how to occupy their downtime

- 3) According to the passage, which of the following is a true statement about the narrator as a child?
 - A. He or she was often bored on summer days.
 - B. He or she preferred cooler weather.
 - C. He or she liked staying indoors.
 - D. He or she had no siblings.

4) Compared to how he or she was as a child, the narrator as an adult is

- A. more realistic
- B. less excitable
- C. more idealistic
- D. less calm

5) As used in the final paragraph, the word **reprieve** most nearly means

- A. a permanent conclusion
- B. a short continuation
- C. a higher level of pain
- D. a temporary break

6) The author of this passage describes his or her feelings about rainy summer days. In general, how do you feel about such days? Do you agree with the author’s opinions, or do you not mind this type of weather? Briefly explain your views below.

7) In paragraph 4, the author describes why he or she no longer looks forward to summertime the way he or she used to do as a child. What do you think of this change? Do you believe that you will come to feel this way one day? Why or why not?

- 8) The author writes in paragraph 4 that he or she “spend[s] the winter dreaming of summer and the summer dreaming of winter.” On the other hand, many people would say that they have specific favorite seasons or times of year. How do you feel? Do you have a favorite season, or do you always look forward to whatever is to come? Why?

1) **A**

Question Type: Inference

Throughout the passage, the narrator uses language that is figurative and not literal. He or she refers to “soaking in the bright and burning sun,” needing to “crawl through the day” when it was raining outside, and the days “bleeding into each other.” One cannot literally “soak” in the sun, since the sun is not wet. Additionally, the narrator does not mean he or she literally crawled around the house on hands and knees but instead that the day passed slowly. Finally, days cannot bleed or even run into each other like liquids can, so the days did not literally bleed. All of these are examples of figurative or metaphorical language. Because of this, choice **(A)** is correct. Rhetorical language is language used to try to persuade someone or to impress someone. Such language would, thus, be used primarily on a persuasive essay. This passage is not persuasive, though, as the narrator never attempts to convince the reader of anything. Instead, he or she only shares his or her views of summer rain as an adult and as a child. There is no effort made to convince the reader to agree with him or her. As such, the passage does not use rhetorical language, so choice **(B)** is incorrect. The passage does not use formal language. Such language would sound stiff and polite, and it would be completely free of figurative language. Additionally, it would not use interjections like those used in the last two sentences of the passage. Formal language does not tend to use dashes to separate descriptive interjections. As such, choice **(C)** is incorrect. Ambiguous language is language that is unclear in meaning. This passage does not use any ambiguous phrasing, as everything in the passage has clarity. Because of this, choice **(D)** is incorrect.

2) **C**

Question Type: Global

In the fourth paragraph, the narrator explains his or her views of summer as an adult. There, he or she writes, “When you have to work every day, summer is not as eagerly anticipated” and that, because of that, “the days run together.” In paragraph 2, the narrator described looking forward to summer after suffering “months of school,” so it follows that one of the reasons summer was so eagerly anticipated as a youth was that there was no school. However, since adults do not get time off from work for the summer, it is different for them than it is for children. As such, choice **(C)** is correct. The fourth paragraph explains that the narrator actually kind of likes rainy summer days because they bring with them cold fronts and cooler temperatures. This is something the narrator is able to perceive as an adult, but it is not something that is fundamentally different as an adult. Rain brought a cold front with it when the narrator was a child too. Because of this, choice **(A)** is incorrect. The narrator complains about the heat of the summer as an adult, but it is not implied that the days actually are warmer for him or her as an adult. Rather, he or she perceives the temperature differently. Because of this, choice **(B)** is incorrect. Though the narrator complains about having nothing to do on rainy summer days as a child, the passage never implies that the adult narrator is better able to occupy his or her downtime. Additionally, this question asks about summer overall, not summer’s rainy days alone. Because of this, choice **(D)** is incorrect.

3) **D**

Question Type: Detail

To answer this detail question, look for the parts of the passage that describe the narrator as a child. That occurs in the second and third paragraphs. In the third paragraph, the narrator states that he or she “was an only child.” This makes it clear that he or she had no siblings, and choice **(D)** is, therefore, correct. The passage makes it clear that the narrator was bored on rainy summer days as a child, but it does not suggest he or she was bored on most summer days. In fact, it is implied that the narrator usually enjoyed summer days when it wasn’t raining outside. As such, choice **(A)** is incorrect. The passage makes it clear that the narrator loved hot summer days as a child and that he or she would “spend all year looking forward to nice weather and long, hot days.” Thus, choice **(B)** is incorrect because it is factually inaccurate. The narrator makes it clear that he or she did not like having to spend summer days indoors, as he or she preferred to be “at the beach or playing ball” outside. Therefore, choice **(C)** is incorrect.

4) **B**

Question Type: Inference

The first two paragraphs of the passage make it clear the narrator looked forward to summer as a child, while the fourth paragraph states that all days seem “monotonous and dull” and cause him or to feel “ennui or listlessness.” It also states that “summer is not as eagerly anticipated” as an adult. All of this implies that the narrator is less excitable as an adult than he or she was as a child. Thus, choice **(B)** is correct. The passage suggests that the narrator has new perspectives as an adult and can see that bad weather (rain) brings with it better weather (cooler temperatures), but it does not imply that he or she is more realistic as an adult. Being more realistic would imply that he or she was once idealistic or impractical. Instead, he or she merely has the ability to see things in a larger perspective. Therefore, choice **(A)** is incorrect. The passage never describes the narrator as idealistic, and as an adult, he or she is no more idealistic than he or she was as a child. After all, he or she is not given to fantasy or a pursuit of an unattainable perfection. Therefore, choice **(C)** is incorrect. The passage actually suggests that the narrator is calmer as an adult, not less calm. As a child, he or she would eagerly anticipate summer, but as an adult, he or she feels ennui and listless. Therefore, choice **(D)** is incorrect.

5) **D**

Question Type: Vocabulary

reprieve (*noun*): a temporary escape or break from an undesirable fate or bad situation.

In the final paragraph, the narrator states that “rain brings with it a cold front, which offers a reprieve—admittedly one that is all too short—from the torture of 100° and humid days.” A cold front would cause cooler temperatures, so it follows that the cold front offers a break from the very hot temperatures. The narrator makes it clear that this break is short, though, in stating that it “is all too short” of a break. This implies that a reprieve is a temporary break from something unpleasant. It also makes it clear that choice **(D)** is correct. The fourth paragraph implies that a cold front offers a break from hot weather, but it does not imply that the break is permanent. Rather, the narrator refers to the reprieve as one that “is all too short,” implying that the conclusion of hot weather is not permanent but, rather, short-lived. As such, choice **(A)** is incorrect. The fourth paragraph does make it clear that a reprieve is “all too short,” but it does not imply that it is a way of continuing or prolonging something. Rather, the narrator refers to a cold front as a reprieve from hot weather, and a cold front would bring with it cooler temperatures, not more of the same high temperatures. As such, choice **(B)** is incorrect. In fact, the fourth paragraph uses reprieve to refer to what is brought by a cold front in relation to high

temperatures. As such, it implies that a reprieve is a break from pain, not an increase in the level of pain. Because of this, choice **(C)** is incorrect.