

# DAILY DEPARTURES

Speed Reading Passages  
for Low-Intermediate  
English Language Learners



REGINA WEAVER

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**by Regina Weaver**



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- Content is organized under headings and subheadings, which appear in sequential order and are reflected in the corresponding Table of Contents
- List structures (numbered and unnumbered) are used

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- Hyperlinks use meaningful, descriptive link text

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# CONTENTS

Preface .....	v
Acknowledgments .....	v
Introduction .....	v–vi
Instructions .....	vi
1. The Old Man Waits at the Post Office .....	1
2. Don't Wear Headphones While Driving .....	3
3. Max the Cat .....	5
4. The Blue Man .....	7
5. A Long Motorcycle Ride .....	9
6. Marching Band .....	11
7. The Butterflies Return .....	13
8. Many Years Ago in Japan .....	15
9. Two Old Women .....	17
10. A Boy, a Soccer Ball, and a Bird .....	19
11. A Daughter's Birthday .....	21
12. White Day .....	23
13. Matt Cooks Dinner .....	25
14. A Comfortable Bed .....	27
15. Too Close to the Sun .....	29
16. Sam's Chicken Foot .....	31
17. Food Cart .....	33
18. A Light for Studying .....	35
19. A Trip to Vancouver .....	37
20. The Big Day .....	39
Appendices .....	41
Answer Key .....	41
References .....	41
Progress Graph .....	42



# PREFACE

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## Introduction

*Daily Departures: Speed Reading Passages for English Language Learners* is a collection of twenty 200–225 word reading passages written primarily within the 1,000–word level of the New General Service List and designed to provide fluency support for English language learners at the Waystage level of the Common European Framework Reference (Browne, Culligan, and Phillips 2013; CEFR n.d.).

*Daily Departures* is modeled after *Asian and Pacific Speed Readings for ESL Learners*, by E. Quinn, I. S. P. Nation, and S. Millet (2007). The following principles and instructions from that book can also be applied to this one:

1. The focus is speed. While reading without understanding would be pointless, the goal of speed reading is not to achieve perfect accuracy in answering the questions. The goal is the fastest time with ~70 percent accuracy. A good reading speed to aim for is 300 words per minute.
2. The method of reading is important. Students should process meaning in chunks. Fast reading encourages guessing from context and ignoring unknown words.



3. Once a routine is established, the activity should take less than 15 minutes including reading, answering questions, checking answers, and recording progress on the graph. It is recommended to do three passages a week.
4. Readings should be collected as soon as students have finished the activity. Students may wish to keep the readings to understand them completely. This reduces the value of the activity by placing too much importance on skills other than speed. Moreover, these readings are not necessarily the best texts to use for developing other skills.
5. Recording the time and the score is a very important part of the exercise since seeing progress is a very effective motivator for students. It is also a good way for the teacher to monitor progress and give feedback.

## Instructions

1. Print each reading passage and corresponding questions on different sides of a double-sided page.
2. Introduce the activity to students as follows:
  - a. *The focus of this activity is to increase reading speed. Accuracy in answering questions is not the main consideration. Aim for the fastest time with approximately 70 percent accuracy.*
  - b. *While reading, don't mouth the words because this will make you read more slowly.*
  - c. *Don't write on the paper because the readings will be collected and reused.*
  - d. *When answering questions, don't turn back and look at the passage.*
3. Distribute the progress graph and the answer key for recording the reading time, the number of the reading passage, and for checking answers to comprehension questions.
4. Explain: *When you finish reading the passage, look up, note the time, and write an X beside the corresponding time on the progress graph. When you finish answering the questions, check your answers, then record your score on the graph.*
5. Write the times on the board and cross them off every 10 seconds so students can mark their time.

# 1

## THE OLD MAN WAITS AT THE POST OFFICE

The old man waits at the post office. The line is long, and there are many people waiting. The people are in a hurry. They look at their watches. They look at their phones. The old man is not in a hurry. He is thinking about what he is going to give his son. The old man's son lives in New York City. The old man wants to see his son, so he is sending him a plane ticket in the mail. The ticket will bring the son back to the town in Oregon where the old man lives. The old man thinks about how happy he will be to see his son again. He thinks about the things that he and his son will do together. They will take long walks in the town and beside the river. They will ride the train across the new bicycle bridge. The man will make his son a delicious dinner. When the old man and his son are eating dinner, the old man will tell his son how nice it is to have him home and how much he misses him. The old man smiles thinking about all these things while he waits in line at the post office.

---

Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 1—The Old Man Waits at the Post Office

1. The old man is
  - a. on a bridge.
  - b. at the post office.
  - c. in New York City.
  
2. The old man is
  - a. thinking about his son.
  - b. worrying about the time.
  - c. looking at his phone.
  
3. The old man's son lives in
  - a. San Francisco.
  - b. Portland.
  - c. New York City.
  
4. The old man will send his son
  - a. a watch.
  - b. a plane ticket.
  - c. a bicycle.
  
5. The old man thinks that he and his son will
  - a. go to Seattle.
  - b. go to the library.
  - c. take walks.

## DON'T WEAR HEADPHONES WHILE DRIVING

The boy is wearing headphones and listening to music. The boy's mother calls his name. She wants him to go to the store to buy some milk. She gives the boy some money and the keys to the car.

"Take off your headphones," she says. "Don't wear them while driving."

The boy takes off his headphones. He drives the car down the road. The boy turns on the radio, but he does not like the music, so he puts on headphones. He moves his head back and forth to the music coming from the headphones. He doesn't hear the ambulance behind him. The ambulance is loud, but the boy doesn't hear it. He keeps on driving. Many cars move to the side of the road so that the ambulance can pass by them. The boy sees the cars moving to the side of the road. He looks out the window and sees the ambulance. Finally, he moves his car to the side of the road.

The other people in the cars are angry. They shout at the boy, "Why do you wear headphones while driving? Because of you, the ambulance had to wait."

The boy is sorry. He will never wear headphones while driving again.

---

Put an **X** beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 2—Don't Wear Headphones While Driving

1. The boy's mother needs
  - a. milk.
  - b. candy.
  - c. a newspaper.
  
2. The boy's mother tells the boy
  - a. "Don't wear headphones while driving."
  - b. "Don't turn on the car radio."
  - c. "Don't drive too fast."
  
3. The boy doesn't hear the ambulance
  - a. because people are shouting at him.
  - b. because he is listening to the car radio.
  - c. because he is wearing headphones.
  
4. The boy sees the ambulance when
  - a. he looks out the window.
  - b. he hears it coming.
  - c. other drivers shout at him.
  
5. The other drivers are
  - a. angry.
  - b. happy.
  - c. sad.

# 3

## MAX THE CAT

The Jones family is home. They took a trip to the mountains for a few days, but now they are home. Mr. Jones pulls the car into the driveway. The two children, a boy and a girl, see their cat, Max, sitting in the kitchen window. The window is open. "Oh no," says Mrs. Jones. "I forgot to close the kitchen window." The girl opens the door of the car and gets out. Suddenly, a big dog runs at the girl. The big dog barks. The girl is afraid. The dog bites the girl's leg. The girl screams. Just then, Max the cat jumps from the kitchen window. He jumps onto the dog's head. He scratches the dog's eyes. The dog stops biting the girl and runs away. Mr. and Mrs. Jones come to help the girl. Mrs. Jones holds the girl in her arms. Mr. Jones takes out his phone and calls an ambulance. The girl's leg hurts, but at the hospital, the doctor says the dog bite is not serious. The doctor says the girl is going to be all right. The doctor says that the Jones family has a very special cat. Max saved the day!

---

Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

### Questions for 3—Max the Cat

1. The Jones family is home after
  - a. church.
  - b. going to the store.
  - c. a vacation.
  
2. Max is
  - a. a dog.
  - b. a cat.
  - c. a boy.
  
3. Mrs. Jones forgot to
  - a. buy groceries.
  - b. feed the cat.
  - c. close the kitchen window.
  
4. The cat scratches the dog's
  - a. eyes.
  - b. feet.
  - c. tail.
  
5. The doctor says
  - a. the girl is going to be all right.
  - b. the girl must stay in the hospital.
  - c. the girl will not be able to walk again.

# 4

## THE BLUE MAN

“Come!” Jenny says. “I want to show you something.” I follow her outside. We walk to the corner.

“Look at that man,” Jenny says, pointing to a man standing on the corner. The man is holding a blue umbrella. He is not moving. He is wearing a blue suit and blue shoes. Even his face and hair are painted blue.

“Is that a real man?” I ask.

“Yes,” Jenny says.

“Why is he painted blue?” I ask. “And why isn’t he moving?”

“Because he is acting,” Jenny says. “He is doing that so we’ll give him money. It’s a show.”

Jenny and I watch the man. We think that after a few minutes, the man will move. We watch for 15 minutes, but the man does not move at all.

“Doesn’t his arm get tired?” I ask.

“Maybe,” Jenny answers.

“Do you think he is going to stand there all day?” I ask.

“I think so,” Jenny answers.

“Let’s give him some money,” I say.

Jenny and I walk toward the man. I put one dollar into the blue hat by the man’s feet.

The man smiles.

I smile back.

“He moved,” I say to Jenny as we walk away.

---

Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.



## Questions for 4—The Blue Man

1. Jenny wants to show me
  - a. a street.
  - b. a house.
  - c. a man.
  
2. The man is standing
  - a. in the street.
  - b. on the corner.
  - c. beside a tree.
  
3. The man is holding
  - a. an umbrella.
  - b. a hat.
  - c. some flowers.
  
4. Jenny and I watch the man for
  - a. 5 minutes.
  - b. 45 minutes.
  - c. 15 minutes.
  
5. When I put a dollar in the man's hat,
  - a. he laughs.
  - b. he smiles.
  - c. he speaks.

# 5

## A LONG MOTORCYCLE RIDE

It is not easy to drive a motorcycle from Miami to Los Angeles in the summer. In the summer, the sun is hot. It is not an easy time to travel by motorcycle, but that is what Peter and Kate Smith do. Peter and Kate are married with children, but their children are 20 and 21. They don't live with Peter and Kate anymore, so Peter and Kate have free time. Every August, Peter and Kate get on their motorcycle and travel across the southern United States.

Why do they do this? It began in 1995, soon after they got married. They received a motorcycle as a wedding present. After a few months, they went for a motorcycle ride in their home state of Florida. They had a lot of fun, so they decided to plan a trip across the south of the United States. The next year in August, they were ready to go. They drove their motorcycle across Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, Arizona, and California. They saw many things: red rocks, big trees, interesting animals. They also met many friendly people. The trip was a great experience for the Smiths, and they decided to do it every year. They take their trip in August because it is the month when Peter and Kate don't have to work.

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Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 5—A Long Motorcycle Ride

1. Kate and Peter Smith are
  - a. sister and brother.
  - b. wife and husband.
  - c. daughter and father.
  
2. Peter and Kate take a big trip in
  - a. October.
  - b. June.
  - c. August.
  
3. Peter and Kate took their first trip across the US
  - a. after they got married.
  - b. before they got married.
  - c. when they were children.
  
4. The Smiths ride their motorcycle across
  - a. southern states.
  - b. every state.
  - c. only one state.
  
5. On their motorcycle trip, the Smiths see
  - a. beaches.
  - b. islands.
  - c. rocks and trees.

# 6

## MARCHING BAND

This is Joyce's first visit to New Orleans, a city in the southern part of the United States. Joyce stands on the sidewalk with the other people. There are visitors and locals. A marching band is coming. There is music in the street. Street music is common in New Orleans.

Joyce hears the horns and drums. She steps closer to get a better look. Coming down the street are men and women in red pants and white hats. They are marching, their legs moving up and down. They are playing brass horns and steel drums. They are playing joyful songs. The songs are getting louder. The music is getting closer. The sun is shining off the tops of buildings. Everyone is smiling.

Nearby, an old woman is selling food: beef and noodle soup. Joyce asks the woman how much for a bowl. The woman says, "Three dollars." Joyce buys the soup and tastes it. It is warm and spicy. It is exactly what Joyce wants to eat.

Now the music is booming. The people on the sidewalk are cheering. They are clapping their hands and singing. Joyce is eating soup and listening. She is having a great time in the city of New Orleans.

---

Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 6—Marching Band

1. Joyce is visiting
  - a. an empty place.
  - b. a quiet city.
  - c. a fun city.
  
2. New Orleans is located
  - a. in the southern US.
  - b. in the northern US.
  - c. in Canada.
  
3. The people coming down the street are
  - a. marching.
  - b. singing.
  - c. standing around.
  
4. An old woman is selling
  - a. tea.
  - b. chocolate.
  - c. soup.
  
5. Joyce feels
  - a. tired.
  - b. sad.
  - c. good.

# 7

## THE BUTTERFLIES RETURN

The sisters walk on the mountain road holding hands. The trees make a ceiling above their heads. In the distance, butterflies fly in the air. The butterflies all look the same: large with orange and black wings.

This is the month of the butterflies' return. Every year in October, the butterflies return to Mexico from Canada. They spend the winter in Mexico because the weather is warmer there.

The sisters are Mari and Posa. They are twins, born on the same day in October. Together, their names mean "butterfly" in Spanish. When Mari and Posa were born, their parents took them to see the butterflies. Now, every year on their birthday, the twins continue the tradition by returning back to the mountains to see the butterflies again.

This year, the twins will be 10. Mari and Posa hold hands as they enter the place where the trees open up. The butterflies are everywhere: sitting on tall grasses, sleeping on trees, flying in the mountain air. A butterfly touches the place where Mari's and Posa's hands come together. The sisters count, "One, two, three." Then they whisper their birthday wishes into the air. What do you think they wish for?

---

Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 7—The Butterflies Return

1. Mari and Posa are
  - a. brothers.
  - b. twins.
  - c. cousins.
  
2. It is the month of
  - a. December.
  - b. May.
  - c. October.
  
3. Today, the twins turn
  - a. 11.
  - b. 10.
  - c. 12.
  
4. Together, the twins' names mean
  - a. birthday.
  - b. mountain air.
  - c. butterfly.
  
5. The twins make birthday
  - a. wishes.
  - b. cakes.
  - c. promises.

# 8

## MANY YEARS AGO IN JAPAN

The year is 1915. It is three o'clock in the afternoon. Yoko is sitting in a chair in the garden. The chair is beneath a tree. Beside the chair is a table. On the table, there is a fishbowl with a fish swimming in it. There is also a glass of cold tea. Yoko sits very still. She tries not to move. It is a very hot day, and there is no air conditioning in the house. Yoko watches the fish swimming in the bowl. She drinks the tea.

Yoko's father comes outside and sprays water on the plants in the garden. For a moment, everything feels cooler. Yoko's mother comes with a schoolbook. In Japan, it is important to study all year long, even in summer. Yoko's mother gives Yoko the schoolbook. Yoko opens the book, but she doesn't feel like studying.

Later, when the sun goes down, the family walks to the public bath. Yoko and her mother enter the bath for women. Yoko's father enters the bath for the men. It feels nice to rinse in the shower and then to sit in the water. Later, the family walks home. The air feels cooler. The moon is smiling in the sky. Yoko smiles back.

---

Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.



## Questions for 8—Many Years Ago in Japan

1. Yoko is sitting
  - a. at a desk in a classroom.
  - b. in a chair in the garden.
  - c. beside a swimming pool.
  
2. It is a very hot day in
  - a. Korea.
  - b. China.
  - c. Japan.
  
3. Yoko watches
  - a. a fish swimming in a bowl.
  - b. a butterfly.
  - c. a fish jumping from a river.
  
4. Yoko's mother brings Yoko
  - a. lunch.
  - b. a schoolbook.
  - c. cold tea.
  
5. When the sun goes down, the family
  - a. eats a big dinner.
  - b. plays a game.
  - c. walks to the public bath.

# 9

## TWO OLD WOMEN

In a mountain city, two old women sit together in a park. It is a pretty day, and the women are sitting on a bench. They are taking a rest from shopping. One woman wears a red sweater. The other woman wears a blue sweater. The woman in the red sweater shows a photograph to her friend. It is a photograph of her grandson. The woman in the blue sweater looks at the photograph and smiles. The little boy in the photograph is fat and cute. He is the first grandchild of the woman in the red sweater. This baby is very important to the woman in the red sweater. She has been waiting many years to have a grandchild.

A taxi comes. The driver honks his horn. The old woman in the red sweater says good-bye to her friend and gets into the taxi. The taxi will take her up the street to her home. The old woman in the blue sweater does not need a taxi. She can walk the short distance to her house. When she gets close to her house, her five grandchildren look out the window. They run outside. They call her name and jump up and down. The old woman laughs and hugs them in her arms.

---

Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 9—Two Old Women

1. The two old women sit
  - a. in a shopping mall.
  - b. in a park.
  - c. in a café.
  
2. The old woman in the red sweater
  - a. shows her friend a photograph of her grandson.
  - b. shows her friend her phone.
  - c. shows her friend a photograph of her husband.
  
3. The baby is important to the old woman because
  - a. she likes children.
  - b. she already has three granddaughters.
  - c. she has been waiting for a grandchild.
  
4. The old woman in the blue sweater does not need a taxi
  - a. because she lives next to the park.
  - b. because she has a car.
  - c. because she can walk to her house from the park.
  
5. The old woman in the blue sweater
  - a. has no grandchildren.
  - b. has many grandchildren.
  - c. has one grandchild.

## A BOY, A SOCCER BALL, AND A BIRD

The boy gets up at six in the morning. He puts on his soccer shoes and goes into the kitchen. The bird is already awake. The bird is watching the boy very closely. It wants the boy to open the door of the cage. It wants to fly around the room. The boy picks up his soccer ball and says to the bird, "I will see you in one hour." Then the boy goes outside. The sun is coming up in the sky, but the street is empty. The boy drops the ball and kicks it toward the park. He runs after the ball and catches it with his foot. The boy practices many moves with the ball. At seven o'clock, people start to come outside. The boy picks up the ball and returns home. He enters the kitchen. "Hello," he says to the bird. He opens the door of the cage. The bird flies out. The bird flies around the room for several minutes while the boy fixes breakfast. The boy sits down to eat his breakfast, and the bird sits on the boy's head. When the boy finishes breakfast, he takes the bird on his finger and returns it to the cage. "See you later," he says to the bird. "See you after school."

---

Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 10—A Boy, a Soccer Ball, and a Bird

1. The bird's cage is
  - a. in the bedroom.
  - b. in the kitchen.
  - c. in the bathroom.
  
2. The bird wants
  - a. to eat breakfast.
  - b. to stay in its cage.
  - c. to fly around the room.
  
3. When the boy goes outside,
  - a. the street is empty.
  - b. people are in the street.
  - c. he sees his classmates.
  
4. The boy returns home and
  - a. fixes breakfast.
  - b. does his homework.
  - c. goes back to bed.
  
5. When the boy sits down to eat, the bird
  - a. sits on the boy's head.
  - b. flies out the window.
  - c. does not come out of the cage.

## A DAUGHTER'S BIRTHDAY

Dan leaves work early and gets into his car. He is in a hurry. Today is his daughter's birthday, and he must stop at the bakery to pick up the birthday cake. But first, he must stop for gas. The gas tank is almost empty! Dan drives to the gas station and fills up the gas tank. Then he drives to the bakery. He pays for the cake and puts it in his car. Then he quickly drives the rest of the way home. When he gets to his house, he sees a lot of cars in the driveway and many children playing in the yard. He sees his daughter. She is wearing a red dress. Dan parks his car and goes inside. His wife is in the kitchen. She looks worried, but when she sees Dan, she smiles. "You're here," she says.

They go outside. Dan calls his daughter. It is time to sing. Dan lights five candles on the cake. Everyone claps their hands. Then they sing "Happy Birthday to You." Dan's daughter makes a wish and blows the candles out: one, two, three, four, five! Dan holds his daughter in his arms. He hugs her. He whispers in her ear, "Happy birthday. I love you."

---

Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 11—A Daughter's Birthday

1. Dan is in a hurry because
  - a. he has to take a train to New York City.
  - b. he has to take his car to the car wash.
  - c. he has to pick up a birthday cake for his daughter's party.
  
2. The gas tank is
  - a. full.
  - b. almost empty.
  - c. almost full.
  
3. When Dan gets home, he sees his daughter
  - a. wearing a red dress.
  - b. wearing blue jeans.
  - c. wearing a swimming suit.
  
4. Dan's wife is
  - a. angry.
  - b. happy to see him.
  - c. very upset.
  
5. Dan's daughter is turning
  - a. 5 years old today.
  - b. 10 years old today.
  - c. 12 years old today.

# 12

## WHITE DAY

Today is March 14th. It is White Day in Japan. On White Day, boys give girls white chocolate, cookies, or jewelry. In Japan, Valentine's Day is when boys get gifts, and White Day is when girls get them. White Day comes one month after Valentine's Day. On February 14th, girls give chocolate to boys, but on March 14th, it is the boys' turn to give. This is the tradition. So today, Akiko is riding her bicycle to the train station to meet her boyfriend, Kenji, before school. It is a sunny day with a bright blue sky, but Akiko is not thinking about the weather. She is thinking about Kenji. She hopes that he has not forgotten White Day. Akiko sees Kenji standing outside the train station. He is standing beside the bicycle rack. He is waving, but he doesn't have anything in his hands. Akiko gets off her bicycle and walks over to Kenji. She tries to smile. Kenji sees that Akiko is worried. He opens his backpack and takes out a large blue box. "Happy White Day," he says. "Open it." Inside the box, there are white chocolates and white cookies. Akiko smiles. "Thank you, Kenji," she says. He smiles too. "Happy White Day, Akiko."

---

Put an **X** beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.



## Questions for 12—White Day

1. On White Day in Japan,
  - a. girls give chocolate to boys.
  - b. boys give white chocolate or cookies to girls.
  - c. girls and boys give money to their parents.
  
2. White Day is celebrated in
  - a. January.
  - b. February.
  - c. March.
  
3. Kenji is
  - a. standing outside the train station.
  - b. at school.
  - c. in a restaurant.
  
4. In his backpack, Kenji has
  - a. a large blue box.
  - b. a sandwich.
  - c. a soccer ball.
  
5. Kenji gives Akiko
  - a. flowers.
  - b. earrings.
  - c. white chocolates and white cookies.

## MATT COOKS DINNER

Matt is a high school student, but he doesn't care very much about science, history, or English. Matt is interested in cooking. Today is Saturday, and Matt is going to cook rabbit. This morning, Matt rode his bicycle to the meat shop. He told the man at the meat shop to pick out a rabbit and cut it into five pieces. At home in his kitchen, Matt puts the pieces of meat in a large bowl and adds some salt and spices. He covers the bowl and lets it sit for about an hour. Then Matt heats some oil in a large pan on the stove and cooks the rabbit until the color of the meat is brown. Then Matt adds some lemon juice and some olives. He covers the meat in the pan and puts it in the oven for 10 minutes. While the rabbit is cooking, Matt makes some rice. When he takes the rabbit out of the oven, Matt puts it on top of the rice. It smells delicious. Matt calls his mother, father, and brother to the kitchen. He says that dinner is ready. Matt's family eats the meal. Everyone agrees that Matt's dinner is delicious.

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Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 13—Matt Cooks Dinner

1. Matt is interested in
  - a. math.
  - b. cooking.
  - c. history.
  
2. Today, Matt is cooking
  - a. steak.
  - b. fish.
  - c. rabbit.
  
3. In the morning, Matt
  - a. rode his bike to the meat shop.
  - b. went running.
  - c. did his homework.
  
4. Matt shares the dish
  - a. with his teacher.
  - b. with his family.
  - c. with his boyfriend.
  
5. The rabbit tastes
  - a. delicious.
  - b. too spicy.
  - c. so-so.

## A COMFORTABLE BED

It is a nice house, and the man and woman like living in it. There is a large bedroom on the second floor with a comfortable bed.

One afternoon the man and the woman go to visit some neighbors. They do not think they will be gone very long, so they do not lock their door. But they stay at the neighbors' house for over an hour, and when they get home, it is dark. The man and the woman enter the house and turn on some lights. The woman warms up some rice on the stove while the man makes a salad. After dinner, the man and the woman go upstairs to bed. When the man turns on the lights in the bedroom, he and his wife are very surprised to see a strange man sleeping in their bed! The woman screams, and the sleeping man wakes up.

"Who are you?" the woman asks. The strange man gets out of bed. His hair and clothes are dirty. "I'm sorry," he says. "I don't have a place to live. I was cold, and your house looked nice, and this bed looked so comfortable." The man and woman are too surprised to speak. They watch as the strange man walks slowly past them, down the stairs, and out the front door.

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Put an **X** beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 14—A Comfortable Bed

1. The man and the woman
  - a. drive to a grocery store.
  - b. go to visit some neighbors.
  - c. have a party at their house.
  
2. The man and the woman
  - a. stay away for over an hour.
  - b. are away for just one minute.
  - c. do not leave their house.
  
3. After dinner, the man and woman
  - a. play a game.
  - b. go upstairs.
  - c. watch television.
  
4. The man and the woman see
  - a. a strange man sleeping in their bed.
  - b. two teenage boys.
  - c. a stranger taking a shower.
  
5. The strange man says,
  - a. “This is my house.”
  - b. “I don’t know where I am.”
  - c. “I don’t have a place to live.”

## TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN

Altair's father is famous for making things like chairs and tables. Altair likes to help his father. His father says that Altair is good at making things, too.

Today, Altair is making something new. Altair is making wings. Altair loves birds, and he wants to fly. Of course, Altair's wings must be larger than the wings of birds. Altair makes his wings three meters wide. He makes his wings from wood and wax. When Altair finishes making his wings, he ties them on his back.

That night, when his father is eating dinner outside, Altair walks up the mountain and stands at the edge. One, two, three! He jumps! He moves his wings. He is flying! "Look at me," he calls, but his father does not look up. Altair flies closer to his father, and he also flies closer to the sun. The heat of the sun melts the wax on Altair's wings. Suddenly, Altair's wings fall from his arms, and Altair falls too.

"Help!" Altair cries. His father sees Altair falling. "Save my son!" he says. Just then a strong wind comes and blows the sand. Altair's father covers his eyes. When he opens them, Altair is standing before him. "Thank God," he says. "The wind saved my son!"

---

Put an **X** beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 15—Too Close to the Sun

1. Altair's father is famous for making
  - a. houses.
  - b. chairs and tables.
  - c. bread.
  
2. Altair loves
  - a. fish.
  - b. cars.
  - c. birds.
  
3. Altair is making
  - a. wings.
  - b. a skateboard.
  - c. tacos.
  
4. Altair's father cries,
  - a. "Call an ambulance!"
  - b. "Help! Save my son!"
  - c. "I'll catch you!"
  
5. Altair is saved by
  - a. the wind.
  - b. his brother.
  - c. his mother.

## SAM'S CHICKEN FOOT

Sam is from China. He and his parents are living in Portland this year. Sam's parents teach at a Chinese university, but they are in Portland studying English. Sam goes to a Portland school. He is in the sixth grade.

Every day, Sam's mother cooks for him. She makes delicious meals, but there are some Chinese dishes that she can't make because the ingredients are too difficult to find in Portland. That is why Sam is excited about today. Today, Sam is going with his parents to a Chinese restaurant 30 minutes away.

The restaurant is large. There are women and men pushing food carts. A cart passes Sam's table with many delicious things, but not the food Sam wants to eat. His parents order dumplings and noodles and duck. A woman writes some numbers on a paper and then she brings the family the food. Sam's parents ask if he is happy, but Sam cannot say yes.

Sam's father waves to a woman on the other side of the restaurant. The woman comes with a different food cart. Sam's eyes become large. He sees a plate of chicken feet. It is the food he wants to eat. Sam takes a chicken foot and smiles. "Yes," he tells his parents. "I am happy now."

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Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.



## Questions for 16—Sam's Chicken Foot

1. Sam is from
  - a. Japan.
  - b. Korea.
  - c. China.
  
2. Sam's mother is a good
  - a. driver.
  - b. speaker.
  - c. cook.
  
3. Sam is excited to go
  - a. to school.
  - b. to a Chinese restaurant.
  - c. to a movie.
  
4. The restaurant is
  - a. tiny.
  - b. small.
  - c. large.
  
5. Sam wants to
  - a. eat a chicken foot.
  - b. eat dumplings.
  - c. eat some duck.

# 17

## FOOD CART

Sami owns a food cart in Portland, Oregon. The food cart is near the university. Sami's food cart sells kebobs. Kebobs are meat and vegetables on a stick. Many university students buy food from Sami's food cart. They like Sami's kebobs.

Sami is from Iran. He graduated from Portland State University five years ago. His major was business. When he was a student, Sami got tired of eating the food on campus. He wanted to eat food from his home country. He wanted to eat kebobs. After Sami graduated, he decided to open a food cart. Now his food cart is very popular. He sells three kinds of kebobs: beef, chicken, and lamb. All of the kebobs come with mushrooms, peppers, and onions.

Sami has a wife and two children. His children go to school from Monday to Friday. Most days, Sami's wife helps Sami in the food cart. Sami's wife makes the sauce to put on the meat of the kebobs. She likes helping Sami and meeting the people who come to the food cart. Sami and his family are happy living in Portland. Sami says that in a few years, he may return to Iran, but for now, he is happy with his business here.

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Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 17—Food Cart

1. Sami's food cart sells
  - a. hamburgers.
  - b. noodles.
  - c. kebobs.
  
2. Sami is from
  - a. Saudi Arabia.
  - b. Iran.
  - c. Kuwait.
  
3. At the university, Sami studied
  - a. business.
  - b. cooking.
  - c. computers.
  
4. Sami has
  - a. a wife and two children.
  - b. no family.
  - c. three cats.
  
5. Sami may return to his country
  - a. in one month.
  - b. next week.
  - c. in a few years.

## A LIGHT FOR STUDYING

Many students like to study at night. It is quiet at night. The busy day is done. Classes and work are over. But in some parts of the world, students cannot study at night. In some parts of Africa, students do not have lights in their homes. Without lights, students cannot see to read or write. They must wait until the morning to study.

For these reasons, today is a happy day for 50 students in a small town in Sierra Leone, in West Africa. Today, the director of the school is giving 50 lights to 25 boys and 25 girls. These lights are special. They use the energy of the sun to work. After the lights sit in the sun for a few hours, they can shine brightly through the night.

One of the students to receive a light is Fatu. Fatu is 14. She studies hard. She gets up early every morning to do her homework. She is never late for class. The principal smiles when he gives Fatu the light. He tells her, "Congratulations." Fatu is happy. She carries the light home to show her family. Everybody in the family wants to touch the light. They are proud of Fatu. They say, "Fatu, you are like this light. You shine bright, even in darkness."

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Put an **X** beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 18—A Light for Studying

1. At night, many students like to
  - a. work a part-time job.
  - b. study.
  - c. take extra classes.
  
2. In Africa, some students don't have
  - a. clothes for school.
  - b. lights in their houses.
  - c. paper.
  
3. The principal of the school will
  - a. meet the president of the country.
  - b. give lights to 50 students.
  - c. bring water to the school.
  
4. Fatu gets up early every morning
  - a. to wash her clothes.
  - b. to check her email.
  - c. to do her homework.
  
5. Fatu's family
  - a. is proud of her.
  - b. does not like Fatu's light.
  - c. lives in a big house with many lights.

## A TRIP TO VANCOUVER

Chen and Lily are from China, but they live in Seattle, Washington. They are international students at a Seattle university. They have different majors. Chen studies engineering, and Lily studies computer science. They met taking a reading class in an English language program.

Next week, the university will close on Monday. Monday is a holiday, so Chen and Lily are going to take a trip north. They are going to drive to Vancouver, Canada. Vancouver is not far away from Seattle. It takes only 2 hours and 45 minutes by car to get there.

Lily and Chen have not been to Vancouver, but many people say that it is a pretty city with nice mountains and beaches. Lily and Chen want to take a lot of photographs of boats, and people with dogs walking beside the water. They also want to rent bikes to ride around for exercise. Of course, they also want to go shopping and eat Chinese food in Chinatown. Maybe they will see a hockey game. Chen's uncle and aunt live in Vancouver, so Chen and Lily will stay with them. Chen is excited to see them again. Lily and Chen are going to have a fun time this weekend!

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Put an **X** beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.

## Questions for 19—A Trip to Vancouver

1. Chen and Lily live
  - a. in China.
  - b. in Seattle.
  - c. in Portland.
  
2. Chen and Lily met
  - a. taking English classes.
  - b. in San Francisco.
  - c. taking a cooking class.
  
3. The university will be closed on
  - a. Monday.
  - b. Tuesday.
  - c. Thursday.
  
4. Chen and Lily will drive to
  - a. San Francisco.
  - b. New York.
  - c. Vancouver.
  
5. Chen and Lily will
  - a. stay in a hotel.
  - b. stay with Chen's aunt and uncle.
  - c. camp on the beach.

## THE BIG DAY

The sea is a pretty color of blue. The water is so bright that Kim can see to the bottom. She touches the water with her foot. The temperature is warm. There are waves in the distance. The sky is clear. The day is perfect.

It is still early. There are no crowds. Kim is alone in the prettiest place on earth. And she is ready. This is the day that she will perform. She has practiced her entire life for this moment.

Kim grew up on the island. Her family's house is beside the ocean. When she was a little girl, she would swim in the ocean while her brothers rode the waves. Then one day, Kim got tired of swimming and decided to try using her brother's surfboard. Her brother helped and encouraged her. At age seven, Kim received a surfboard for her birthday. From then on, she was always surfing.

Now Kim is 16. Other girls her age are coming to the island today. They are coming from all over the country. They are coming to Hawai'i for a surfing competition. Kim is excited to compete against them. She is looking forward to showing the world what she can do. She believes that she will succeed.

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Put an X beside your stopping time on the progress chart, then answer the questions on the back of this page.



## Questions for 20—The Big Day

1. The water is
  - a. cold.
  - b. hot.
  - c. warm.
  
2. Kim is standing
  - a. beside the water.
  - b. in a swimming pool.
  - c. in the park.
  
3. Kim grew up
  - a. in New York.
  - b. in Hawai'i.
  - c. in London.
  
4. Kim's brother
  - a. was unkind to Kim.
  - b. did not like water.
  - c. helped and encouraged her.
  
5. Today, Kim will
  - a. watch a movie with her friends.
  - b. compete in a surfing competition.
  - c. play basketball.

# APPENDICES

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## Answer Key

- |                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. 1. b 2. a 3. c 4. b 5. c  | 11. 1. c 2. b 3. a 4. b 5. a |
| 2. 1. a 2. a 3. c 4. a 5. a  | 12. 1. b 2. c 3. a 4. a 5. c |
| 3. 1. c 2. b 3. c 4. a 5. a  | 13. 1. b 2. c 3. a 4. b 5. a |
| 4. 1. c 2. b 3. a 4. c 5. b  | 14. 1. b 2. a 3. b 4. a 5. c |
| 5. 1. b 2. c 3. a 4. a 5. c  | 15. 1. b 2. c 3. a 4. b 5. a |
| 6. 1. c 2. a 3. a 4. c 5. c  | 16. 1. c 2. c 3. b 4. c 5. a |
| 7. 1. b 2. c 3. b 4. c 5. a  | 17. 1. c 2. b 3. a 4. a 5. c |
| 8. 1. b 2. c 3. a 4. b 5. c  | 18. 1. b 2. b 3. b 4. c 5. a |
| 9. 1. b 2. a 3. c 4. c 5. b  | 19. 1. b 2. a 3. a 4. c 5. b |
| 10. 1. b 2. c 3. a 4. a 5. a | 20. 1. c 2. a 3. b 4. c 5. b |

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