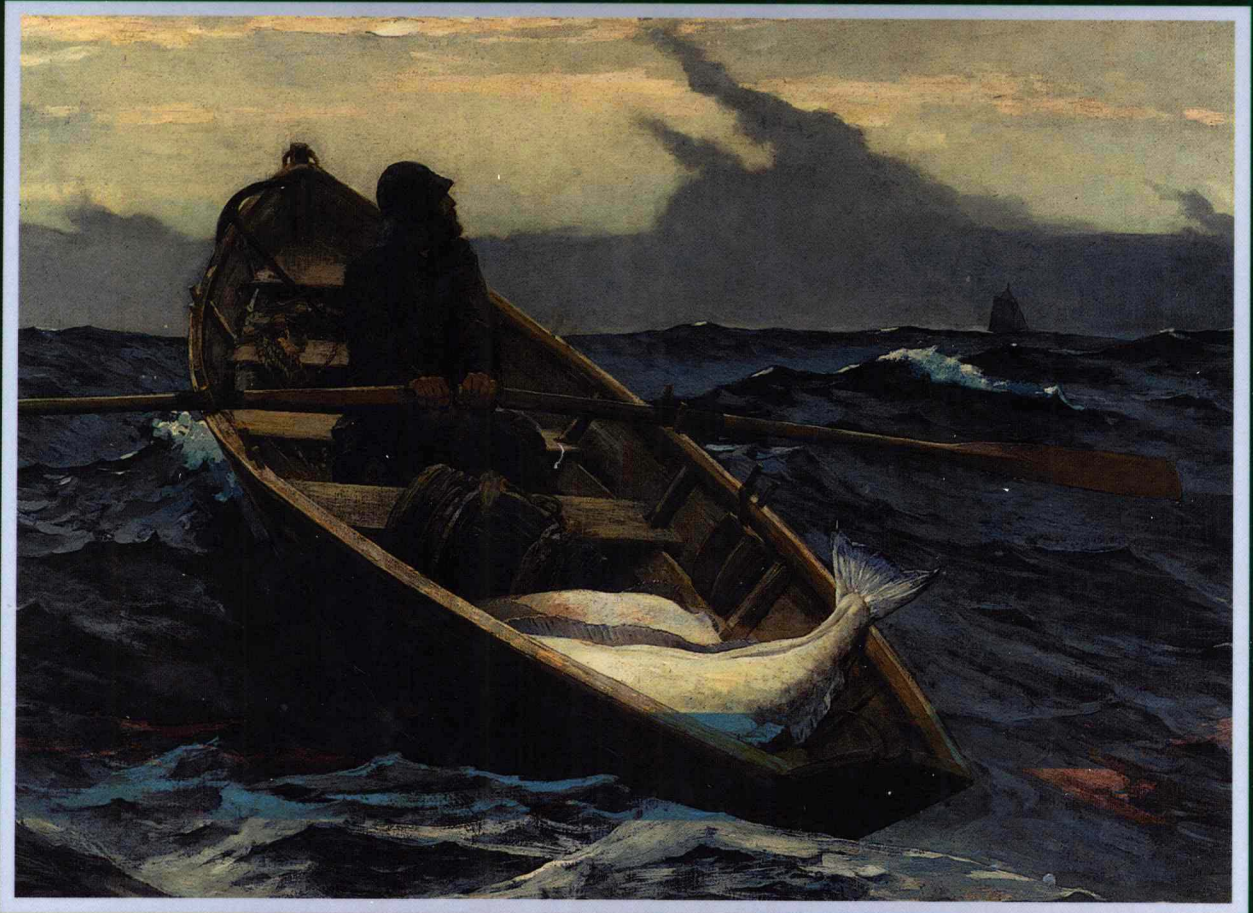


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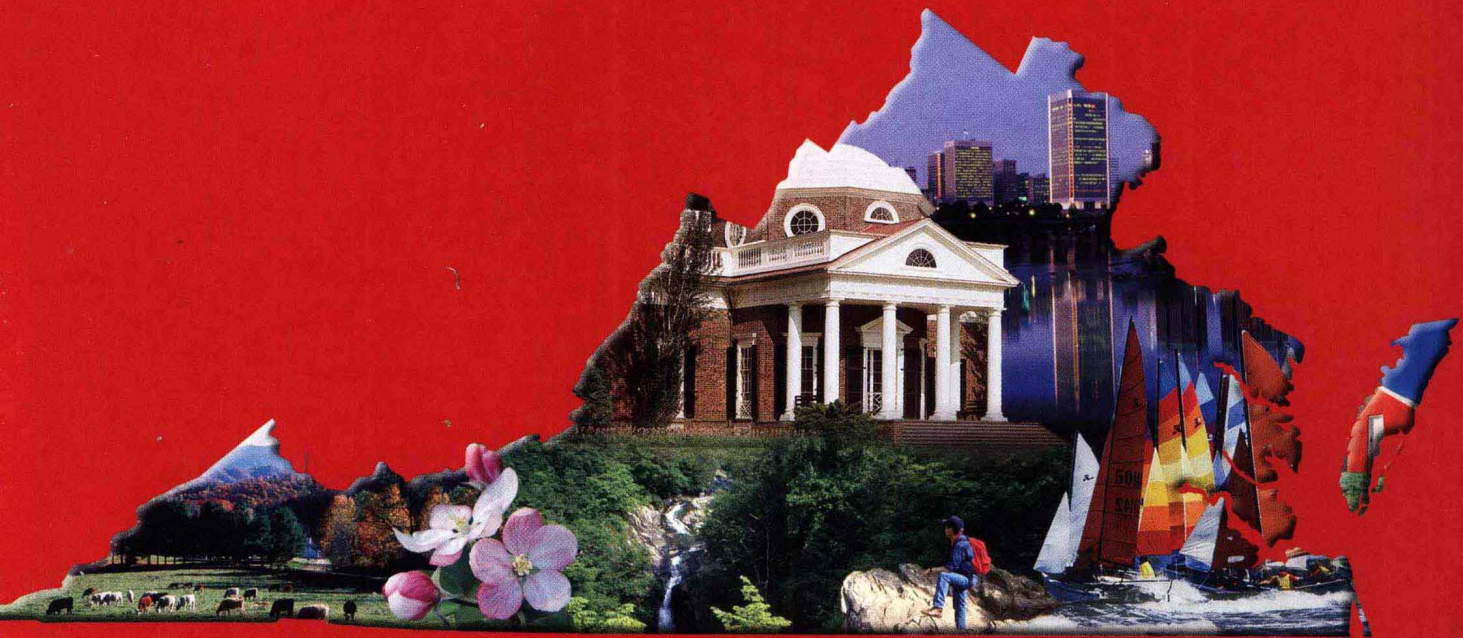
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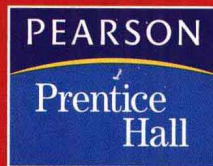
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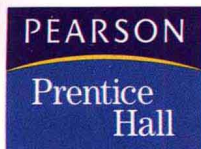
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ISBN 0-13-131278-2

5 6 7 8 9 10 09 08 07 06

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Virginia Program Advisors

Prentice Hall wishes to thank the Virginia Advisory Board for its ongoing advice in the development of the Virginia edition of *Prentice Hall Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes*. Their valuable insights have helped ensure that this language arts series meets the needs of Virginia students and their teachers.

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Standards of Learning Grade 9

Here is a complete list of the grade 9 Standards of Learning so that you'll know what you're expected to learn and do this year. Also included are examples of test items to show how the standards might be assessed on the Standards of Learning Tests.

ORAL LANGUAGE

9.1 The student will plan, present, and critique dramatic readings of literary selections.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- Choose a literary form for presentation, such as a poem, monologue, scene from a play, or story.
- Adapt presentation techniques to fit literary form.

(Units 1, 5, 10)

About the Example

When you read a literary selection aloud to an audience, you want to make sure your **tone** and **pitch** match the emotions or events of the selection. For example, you wouldn't use a sad tone to read aloud a cheerful poem. You may be asked to identify the best techniques to use for giving an oral presentation of a piece of literature.



EXAMPLE Which of the following presentation techniques would be the *best* one to use with the poem "Dreams"?

- great arm movements
- a bent head and sad voice
- an upturned face and strong voice
- facial expressions to show happiness

What it Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- Use verbal and nonverbal techniques for presentation.
- Evaluate impact of presentation.

(Units 1, 6, 9)

About the Example

When you give a speech, you should adjust your **verbal and nonverbal communication** to fit your purpose and audience. On a test, you may be asked to read part of a speech and then answer questions about the verbal and nonverbal messages of a speaker's presentation.



EXAMPLE How could the speaker improve this speech?

- use vague words
- use more descriptive words
- use more formal language
- use less formal language

9.2 The student will make planned oral presentations.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- a) Include definitions to increase clarity.
- b) Use relevant details to support main ideas.
- c) Illustrate main ideas through anecdotes and examples.

(Units 1, 7, 10)

About the Example

Whether you are speaking to inform or to persuade, you want to make sure you use relevant details to **support** your main idea. On a test, you may be asked to read part of a speech and then answer questions about the supporting details. The following example asks you to identify a detail that is irrelevant.



EXAMPLE Which detail from the speech does *not* support the main idea of the speech?

- A Isaac Newton was born in 1642, in Woolsthorpe, England.
- B Newton attended grammar school at a village close to Woolsthorpe.
- C During his time in grammar school, he lived with a scientist named Clark, who influenced Newton's love of chemistry.
- D Many people know who Isaac Newton is.

What it Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- d) Cite information sources.
- e) Make impromptu responses to questions about a presentation.
- f) Use grammatically correct language, including vocabulary appropriate to the topic, audience, and purpose.

(Units 1, 8, 9)

About the Example

You must use grammatically correct language in a speech, as well as vocabulary that is appropriate to your topic, audience, and purpose. On a standardized test, you may be asked to **evaluate** the appropriateness of a speaker's language. This question asks you to choose the best revision of a sentence from a speech.



EXAMPLE Which of the following is the *best* revision of sentence 4?

- I think that Jackie Joyner-Kersey is, like, really cool. She never gave up.*
- F I think that Jackie Joyner-Kersey is a great person and she never gave up.
 - G I think that Jackie Joyner-Kersey is admirable and never gave up.
 - H I admire Jackie Joyner-Kersey because she never gave up.
 - J I really like Jackie Joyner-Kersey. She never gave up.

READING ANALYSIS

9.3 The student will read and analyze a variety of literature.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- Identify format, text structure, and main idea.
- Identify the characteristics that distinguish literary forms.
- Use literary terms in describing and analyzing selections.
- Explain the relationships between and among elements of literature: characters, plot, setting, tone, point of view, and theme.

(Units 1, 3, 9)

About the Example

Some standardized test questions will ask you to identify a **literary form** (such as a drama or a type of sonnet) or characteristics of a literary form (such as the ridicule in satire or the three quatrains and concluding couplet in a Shakespearean sonnet). Here is an example of this type of question.



EXAMPLE Based on the structure and rhyme scheme of "Sonnet 30," you can conclude that it is a—

- soliloquy
- haiku
- Shakespearean sonnet
- poem

What it Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- Explain the relationship between the author's style and literary effect.
- Describe the use of image and sounds to elicit the reader's emotions.
- Explain the influence of historical context on the form, style, and point of view of a written work.

(Units 1, 8, 10)

About the Example

When you read literature, you should also study an author's use of image and sounds. **Imagery** is language that appeals to the senses. **Sounds** are created by the careful use of words to elicit a particular emotion or feeling when they are read aloud. Some standardized test questions will ask you to identify the emotions that a piece of literature is meant to evoke, or bring out. Here is such a question.



EXAMPLE What feeling does Walter Dean Meyer create in his poem "Summer"?

- sadness
- lack of hope
- insanity
- lightheartedness

9.4 The student will read and analyze a variety of informational materials (manuals, textbooks, business letters, newspapers, brochures, reports, catalogs) and nonfiction materials, including journals, essays, speeches, biographies, and autobiographies.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- a) Identify a position / argument to be confirmed, disproved, or modified.
- b) Evaluate clarity and accuracy of information.
- c) Synthesize information from sources and apply it in written and oral presentations.

(Units 2, 5, 10)

About the Example

When you read informational or nonfiction materials, you should identify the author's **thesis**, or the point of the selection, and **evaluate** how well he proves it. As a writer, you can pull information from such materials and use them to prove your own thesis on a given subject. On a test, you may be asked to read an essay or report and then to answer questions about its clarity and accuracy.

What it Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- d) Identify questions not answered by a selected text.
- e) Extend general and specialized vocabulary through speaking, reading, and writing.
- f) Read and follow instructions to complete an assigned project or task.

(Units 1, 3, 9)

About the Example

Some texts give instructions on how to do something or how to build something. It is important when you read such a text to follow the instructions. A test question, such as the one below, may ask you to identify a particular step in a process.



EXAMPLE Which of the following sentences would *best* elaborate the ideas presented in the passage?

- A The road to a constitution was difficult but ultimately successful.
- B Americans had intense arguments about the Constitution.
- C The Constitution solved more problems that it created.
- D George Washington played an important role at the Constitutional Convention.



EXAMPLE Which of these tasks should be completed first in the process?

- F Paint the squares.
- G Drill holes in three of the wood squares.
- H Cut the wood into two-inch squares.
- J Gather your materials.

9.5 The student will read dramatic selections.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- Identify the two basic parts of drama: staging and scripting.
- Compare and contrast the elements of character, setting, and plot in one-act plays and full-length plays.

(Units 3, 8, 9)

About the Example

Reading drama is a bit different from watching it performed on stage. When you read a play, you are able to “see” all the “unspoken” **staging** directions that indicate what happens with lights, sound, or props as well as the **scripting** cues that indicate how actors move or what they do with a prop. Standardized tests will ask you questions, such as the one shown here, about staging and scripting.



EXAMPLE The words that appear in brackets in this passage indicate which of the following?

- the chorus's lines
- stage directions
- scripting cues
- the main character's lines

What it Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- Describe how stage directions help the reader understand a play's setting, mood, characters, plot, and theme.

(Unit 8)

About the Example

Stage directions help readers understand a play's setting, mood, characters, plot, and theme in many ways: by directing actors to behave in a certain way and by directing prop handlers to adjust or move props to indicate the passage of time, the change of location, or any number of other dramatic elements. A test question might ask you to read part of a play that includes stage directions and then to answer questions about how the directions affect the reader's or audience's understanding of what is happening.



EXAMPLE How do the stage directions in this scene from *The Dancers* help clarify Emily's character?

- They describe Emily and indicate that she has a problem.
- They indicate that Elizabeth Crews is a domineering mother.
- Readers learn the year that the play takes place.
- They help the reader picture the drugstore.

WRITING

9.6 The student will develop narrative, expository, and informational writings to inform, explain, analyze, or entertain.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- a) Generate, gather, and organize ideas for writing.
- b) Plan and organize writing to address a specific audience and purpose.
- c) Communicate clearly the purpose of the writing.
- d) Write clear, varied sentences.

(Units 1, 6, 10)

About the Example

A standardized test question may ask you to read a piece of writing and to identify the writer's intended audience or **purpose**. You will need to watch for the type of language used and to identify the writer's thesis statement.



EXAMPLE The purpose of John F. Kennedy's speech "The New Frontier" was to—

- A** inform the audience about the space program
- B** persuade the audience to support the space program
- C** tell a story
- D** explain a process



EXAMPLE Where would more specific instructions about how the ice breaker works *best fit*?

- F** after lines 8–9 (After finding... ourselves.)
- G** after line 10 (I ran... brown sandal.)
- H** after lines 22–23 (After a few... for lunch.)
- J** after lines 23–24 (As I walked... freshman year.)

What it Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- e) Use specific vocabulary and information.
- f) Arrange paragraphs into a logical progression.
- g) Revise writing for clarity.
- h) Proofread and prepare final product for intended audience and purpose.

(Units 1, 3, 10)

About the Example

Some standardized tests will ask you to read a text in which the paragraphs have been numbered and then identify the correct order in which the paragraphs should be organized. Here is such a question. Remember to look for the **logical progression** of a writer's ideas.

9.7 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraphing.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- a) Use and apply rules for the parts of a sentence, including subject/verb, direct/indirect object, and predicate nominative/predicate adjective.

(Units 1, 6, 10)

About the Example

Sometimes a test question asks you to find an error in subject-verb agreement. This is an example of such a question.



EXAMPLE Hitchcocks' film *The Birds* were based on Du Maurier's work.

How would you correct the above sentence?

- A Change **Hitchcocks' film *The Birds* were Hitchcocks' film *The Birds* were**
- B Change **Hitchcocks' film *The Birds* were to Hitchcocks' film *The Birds* were**
- C Change **Hitchcocks' film *The Birds* were to Hitchcocks' film *The Birds* was**
- D Change **Hitchcocks' film *The Birds* were to Hitchcocks' film *The Birds* are**

What it Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- b) Use parallel structures across sentences and paragraphs.

(Units 5, 10)

About the Example

Parallelism in writing is a balance that writers create to express several related ideas. It can be used within a sentence, among several sentences, or among different paragraphs. One of the ways you can create **parallel structure** in your own writing is to use the same form of a word, the same part of speech, or the same organizational style. Most standardized test questions concerning parallelism will ask you to identify the best way to revise a sentence to make it parallel. Here's an example.



EXAMPLE Chen Li has to work hard to get good grades in writing, but he is a whiz at working mathematical problems, memorizing scientific theories, and to understand historical concepts.

What is the best way to revise this sentence?

- F Change working to worked.
- G Change to work hard to working hard.
- H Change memorizing to is memorizing.
- J Change to understand to understanding.

9.7 The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraphing.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- c) Use appositives, main clauses, and subordinate clauses.

(Units 5, 6)

About the Example

Sometimes a test question asks you to choose the best way to combine phrases and clauses. Here is an example.



EXAMPLE Choose the *best* way to rewrite these sentences.

He did not, however, think that slavery should be established. It should not be established in territories. That were still to be settled.

- A** He did not, however, think that slavery should be established in territories that were still to be settled.
- B** He did not, however, think that slavery should be established in territories. That were still to be settled.
- C** He did not, however, think that slavery should be established and it should not be established in territories that were still to be settled.
- D** He did not, however, think that slavery should be established or territories that were still to be settled.

What it Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- d) Use commas and semicolons to distinguish and divide main and subordinate clauses.

(Units 1, 3, 9)

About the Example

The writing portion of the Virginia SOL test includes questions that ask you to choose the best correction for a sentence that is punctuated incorrectly. Some of these questions deal with using commas and semicolons to divide main and subordinate clauses. Here is such a question.



EXAMPLE Read the sentences and answer the question that follows.

Terrence was shy. He soon made new friends at his school.

Which of the following is the *best* way to combine these sentences?

- F** Terrence was shy and he soon made new friends at his school.
- G** Terrence was shy; however, he soon made new friends at his school.
- H** Terrence was shy; he soon made new friends at his school.
- J** Terrence was shy, moreover, he soon made new friends at his school.

RESEARCH

9.8 The student will credit the sources of both quoted and paraphrased ideas.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- a) Define the meaning and consequences of plagiarism.

(Unit 7)

About the Example

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without giving credit for them. When you write, you must give credit to the sources from which you quote or paraphrase ideas. On a standardized test, you may be asked to identify which sentence in a paragraph should be credited to a source the writer used. Here is such a question.



EXAMPLE Which sentence in the paragraph has *not* been credited to a source the writer used?

- A sentence 2, in which the writer states his opinion about the problem
- B sentence 3, in which the writer mentions the results of a poll he took of his classmates about the problem
- C sentence 5, which contains national statistics about the problem
- D sentence 7, which summarizes the paragraph

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- b) Distinguish one's own ideas from information created or discovered by others.
- c) Use a style sheet, such as that of the Modern Language Association (MLA) or the American Psychological Association (APA), for citing sources.

(Units 3, 5, 7)

About the Example

A standardized test question may give you a list of sources presented in the MLA style and then ask you to identify which source is presented incorrectly. Here is such an example.



EXAMPLE Which source is *not* written in the MLA style for a bibliography?

- A Maynard Solomon. *Beethoven*. 2nd rev. ed. New York: Schirmer Books.
- B Solomon, Maynard. *Beethoven*. 2nd rev. ed. New York: Schirmer Books.
- C *Beethoven* by Maynard Solomon. 2nd rev. ed. New York: Schirmer Books, 2001.
- D Solomon, Maynard. *Beethoven*. 2nd rev. ed. New York: Schirmer Books.

9.9 The student will use print, electronic databases, and online resources to access information.

What It Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- a) Identify key terms specific to research tools and processes.
- b) Narrow the focus of a search.

(Units 1, 3, 10)

About the Example

When you prepare to write a research report, you must first decide on a general subject to research and then narrow the subject to a more specific topic. For example, you may choose sports as your subject, but your research report must be limited to a topic having to do with sports, such as the life or career of a famous gymnast. Some test questions ask you to choose the best topic for a research report on a particular subject. Here is an example of such a question.



EXAMPLE Which of the following is the *best* topic for a research report on the environment?

- A Earth and Space: The Old and New Frontiers
- B Recycling in the United States
- C The Ozone: The Past and the Future
- D The EPA's Clean School Bus Program

What it Means to You

In grade 9, you will:

- c) Scan and select resources.
- d) Distinguish between reliable and questionable Internet sources and apply responsible use of technology.

(Units 1, 2, 10)

About the Example

When you **evaluate** sources, you **analyze** them for their reliability and usefulness. One way to do this is to ask questions, such as the ones listed here.

- Is the source recent?
- Is the information in the source reliable and accurate?
- Is the information logical and well supported?
- Does the source contain information I need and can use?

A test question may ask you to choose the best source from a list of sources for a research report on a stated topic. Here is such a question.



EXAMPLE Which source from the list is the *best* one to use for a research report on Virginia in the nineteenth century?

- F *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane
- G *Downtown Roanoke, Virginia* by C. Nelson Harris
- H "Virginia Department of Historic Resources" Web site
- J "The Geology of Virginia" Web site



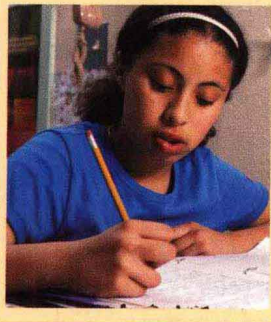
Standards of Learning Test-Taking Strategies

Multiple-Choice Questions

Most of the questions of the Virginia SOL Tests are multiple-choice. Use the hints below to help you answer these questions.

Remember...

- 1 Read the passage carefully and refer to it if the question requires you to do so.
- 2 Look for key words or facts before looking for the correct answer.
- 3 Underlined words in a question indicate that these words are important in determining the correct answer.
- 4 Be sure the question number sheet is the same as the question you are answering.



She liked to grocery shop. She loved it in the way some people love to drive long country roads, because doing it she could think and relax and wander. Her parents wrote up the list and handed it to her and off she went without complaint. . . . She had never told them how much she loved grocery shopping, only that she was "willing" to do it. . . .

Once inside the supermarket, her hands firmly around the handle of the cart, she would lapse into a kind of reverie and wheel toward the produce. Like a Tibetan monk in solitary meditation, she calmed to a point of deep, deep happiness; this feeling came to her, reliably, if strangely, only in the supermarket.

—"Checkouts, Fifteen," by Cynthia Rylant

1 Which statement gives the main idea of the passage?

- A Driving country roads is fun.
- B She doesn't tell her parents everything.
- C Tibetan monks know what is important.
- D She liked to grocery shop.

Make sure you refer back to the passage. The correct answer is D.

1

2 Which word best describes the girl in the supermarket?

- F deceptive
- G reckless
- H happy
- J excited

Pay close attention to italicized words. The correct answer is H.

2

3. Which statement best summarizes the passage?

- A A daughter shouldn't tell her parents everything.
- B A girl derives comfort from an ordinary chore.
- C A girl finds a substitute for long country drives.
- D Parents share their daughter's innermost feelings.

Look for key words in the question. The correct answer is B.

3