

January Common Assessment

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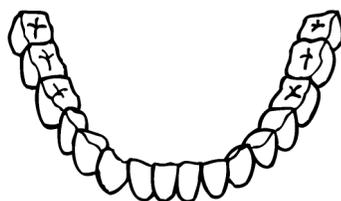
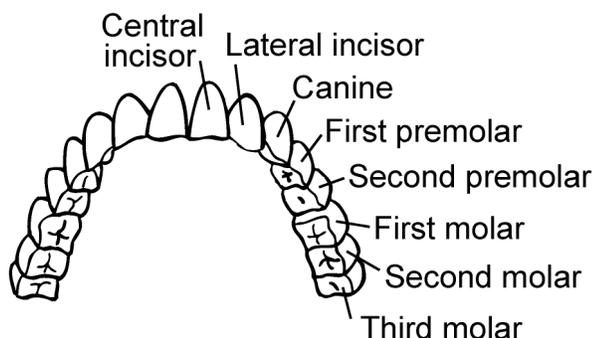
Date _____

Class/Grade _____

Directions: Please read the passage "Smart Teeth" carefully and answer the questions that follow.

SMART TEETH

by Sandy Capel



There are many different kinds of teeth in your mouth. The incisors cut food; the canines tear food. The molars grind and chew food. In each section of the mouth, humans have two premolars and three molars on each side of the mouth. Third molars are often called wisdom teeth. They received their nickname because they usually erupt later in life than other teeth. Wisdom teeth usually appear between the ages of 16 and 24.

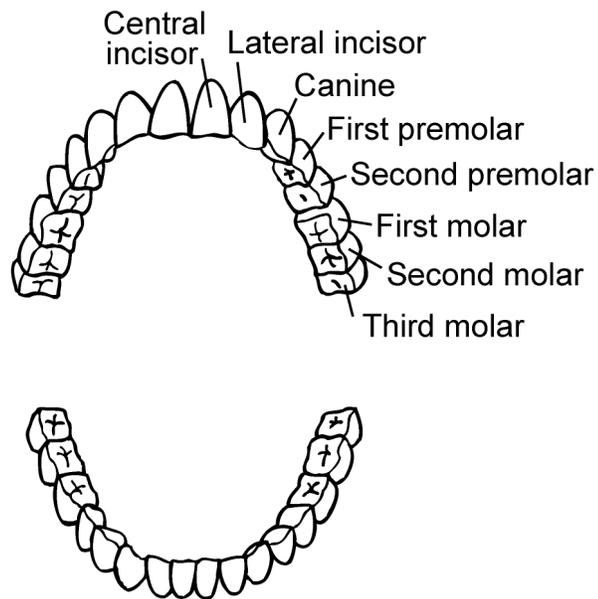
Wisdom teeth no longer have a purpose. In earlier times, when tooth loss in early adulthood was common, an additional molar had the potential to fill in a gap left by the loss of another tooth. It is also possible that the third molars helped in the digestion of raw plant matter. As the human diet

changed, a smaller jaw was selected by evolution, yet the third molars, or "wisdom teeth," still commonly develop in human mouths. Now, most dentists agree that wisdom teeth aren't needed and should be removed to avoid potential dental issues: crowded teeth, severe pain, decay, cavities, gum infection, and tooth loss.

If your wisdom teeth have come through or if you're having trouble with your wisdom teeth, contact your dentist and schedule a checkup. Your dentist will let you know if they have erupted properly and if it's in your best interest to have them removed.

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- 1 The illustration below was included with this passage to show readers



- (A) the role of different teeth.
(B) what crowded teeth look like.
(C) where wisdom teeth are located.
(D) the smaller jaws selected by evolution.
- 2 Read the following sentence from the passage.

In each section of the mouth, humans have two premolars and three molars on each side of the mouth.

This sentence is important to the passage because

- (F) it tells readers how third molars receive their nickname.
(G) it shows readers how wisdom teeth can crowd other teeth.
(H) it shows readers how many wisdom teeth people have.
(I) it tells readers the important role of wisdom teeth.

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3 To which genre does this question belong?

- (A) Historical fiction
- (B) Folk tale
- (C) Nonfiction
- (D) Legend

4 According to the passage and the encyclopedia excerpt below, how can wisdom teeth help cause health problems?

Extraction wisdom teeth are extracted for two reasons: either the wisdom teeth have already become impacted, or the wisdom teeth could become problematic if not extracted. One potential problem caused by wisdom teeth is the risk of infections caused by food particles trapped in the jaw area behind the wisdom teeth where regular brushing and flossing is difficult and ineffective. Such infections may be frequent, and cause considerable pain and medical danger.

- (F) They create gaps or cavities in the jaw by pushing other teeth out of the way.
- (G) Their eruptions cause considerable pain, and therefore cause the need for medication.
- (H) Their removal leads to tooth infection, and therefore causing cavities.
- (I) Their location makes them hard to clean, and therefore susceptible to infection.

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- 5 Read this sentence from the passage.

As the human diet changed, a smaller jaw was selected by evolution.

What is the meaning of the word *diet* in this sentence?

- (A) a limitation on the amount of food eaten
 - (B) to regulate food intake
 - (C) the stomach capacity of an individual
 - (D) the foods eaten by a certain group
- 6 Which of the following statements is an opinion?
- (F) On each side of the mouth, humans have three molars.
 - (G) Wisdom teeth often erupt later in life than other teeth.
 - (H) There are different kinds of teeth.
 - (I) Wisdom teeth have no purpose anymore.

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Directions: Read the passage "The Oldest Fire in the World." Then answer the questions that follow.

THE OLDEST FIRE IN THE WORLD

by Laura Bresko



The oldest fire in the world has been burning for over 40 years, right here in the United States, and will probably continue for many years to come. In 1962, a fire in a landfill set off a blaze that still burns today. The landfill was built in an abandoned coal-mining pit. Tunnels dug in the walls of the pit led to an enormous seam of anthracite, an extremely dense form of coal. Flames from burning trash traveled through one of the mining tunnels and set off the coal. Although the fire stayed underground, it spread for acres and caused incredible damage. The resulting fumes, heat, and ground instability forced evacuations of local residents from the late

1960s through the early 1990s. The fire continues to spread and cause damage today. No known technology can extinguish the subterranean fire.

Until 1828, few people knew how to ignite anthracite and use it for fuel. Anthracite was so compacted that no ordinary flame could make it burn. Then a Scotsman named James Neilson invented the hot blast furnace. The air produced in the first chamber of the furnace was blown over anthracite, located in the second chamber. The hot air caused the surface of the anthracite to ignite. Because it was so dense, anthracite could produce enough heat to melt iron ore. It was also plentiful and a little went a long way, lowering the cost of iron production. Once the hot blast technique was perfected, anthracite was in demand all over the world. In the United States, anthracite is found exclusively in Pennsylvania. As a result, Pennsylvania's mining industry boomed during the nineteenth century. When newer fuels replaced anthracite in the twentieth century, the black gold rush ended and most anthracite mines were abandoned.

Abandoned mines dot the landscape in Pennsylvania's anthracite country. Towns often use the sites for landfills. Such was the case in Centralia, a small town built directly atop an anthracite seam. When the Centralia landfill caught fire, no one was alarmed; it was down in the ground and contained. They did not realize that Centralia's landfill was similar to Neilson's hot blast furnace. The trash in the landfill provided the fuel to heat up the air in the pit. Dumping continued and the trash burned for weeks, stoking the fire and making it extremely hot. The hot air released by the burning trash traveled through the empty mining tunnels and into the abandoned anthracite mines, causing the coal to ignite.

Despite efforts to douse the fire with water, the landfill continued to burn. Experts were brought in to help with the situation. Readings of the smoke coming from the landfill determined that burning coal was indeed producing some of the smoke. The warning came too late, though. Local fire fighters

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poured thousands of gallons of water into the landfill but the fire flared up again in a few days. The fire had already started burning into the Buck Mountain anthracite coal seam lying underneath Centralia, and no one could stop it. State and federal governments spent \$3.3 million dollars on unsuccessful efforts to control the fire between 1962 and 1978.

By 1979, large pits in the earth began opening up where the underlying coal had turned to ash. The process, known as subsidence, swallowed roads and destabilized buildings. Pennsylvania Route 61 crumbled despite thousands of dollars spent by the state in 1983 to repair the road. Ground temperatures rose as high as 1000 degrees Fahrenheit just feet below the soil in some areas of town. Smoke rose from cracks in the ground, poisonous gases escaped, and plants withered. Centralia's gas stations closed from fear of explosions. Though residents desperately wanted to leave, they couldn't. Insurance companies canceled their homeowner policies and banks threatened foreclosure. The residents of Centralia were trapped.

In 1984, the U.S. Congress intervened. It appropriated \$42 million for the State of Pennsylvania to buy homes from Centralia residents. Congress called this evacuation effort "voluntary acquisition" since the residents could choose not to sell their homes and remain in Centralia. Between 1985 and 1991, 545 residences and businesses were relocated. In 1992, the state government began condemning homes threatened by subsidence and noxious gases such as carbon monoxide. Some diehard residents remained in Centralia, though. According to the state's Department of Environmental Protection, Centralia's former population of 1,100 dropped to 46 by 1996. The current population stands at around ten.

Today, Centralia is an eerie ghost town. The wafting smoke and shifting soil are too dangerous for most to brave. The detour signs on Route 61 give no indication of the troubles in Centralia; most cars just veer around the smoldering town. But for those who are fascinated by the fire, Centralia has become a sort of Mecca. Tourists come to stare at the devastated landscape, and conspiracy theorists gather to share their outlandish ideas. The most hopeful of the visitors are the research teams. They study Centralia's soil, plants, and animals and believe that the effects of the fire will shed light upon the processes that created this planet. Though a terrible tragedy, the Centralia fire may someday lead to breakthroughs in science and technology.

- 7 Which sentence in the fifth paragraph best supports the author's opinion that the residents of Centralia suffered?
- (A) Though residents desperately wanted to leave, they couldn't.
 - (B) The residents of Centralia were trapped.
 - (C) Centralia's gas stations closed from fear of explosions.
 - (D) Insurance companies canceled their homeowner policies and banks threatened foreclosure.

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- 8 Which statement best supports the author's purpose in writing this passage?
- Ⓕ They did not realize that Centralia's landfill was similar to Neilson's hot blast furnace.
 - Ⓖ Until 1828, few people knew how to ignite anthracite and use it for fuel.
 - Ⓗ As a result, Pennsylvania's mining industry boomed during the nineteenth century.
 - Ⓘ In 1984, the U.S. Congress intervened.
- 9 What is the meaning of the word *seam* as it is used in this passage?
- Ⓐ a deposit, or band, of coal beneath the earth
 - Ⓑ a device used by firefighters in mines
 - Ⓒ the point where coal touches another mineral underground
 - Ⓓ a line in clothing where the fabric is sewed
- 10 Which of the following is the best summary of "The Oldest Fire in the World"?
- Ⓕ In 1962, the town of Centralia located a landfill in an abandoned anthracite pit. The anthracite caught on fire and has been burning to this day. No one knows how to extinguish the fire. From 1985 through 1991, the federal government forced people to leave their homes in Centralia and move to other locations. From a population of 1,100, only ten remain.
 - Ⓖ The town of Centralia is an eerie ghost town. Where once 1,100 people lived, now there are less than 50. The world's oldest burning fire is under ground in Centralia. Started in a landfill, the fire spread and no one knows how to extinguish it.
 - Ⓗ In 1962, the town of Centralia chose an abandoned coal pit as the site for a landfill. Burning trash ignited an underground seam of anthracite, a very dense form of coal. The underground fire has been burning for over 30 years; no one knows how to extinguish it. The government helped to relocate the residents of Centralia. From a population of 1,100, only about ten remain.
 - Ⓘ The town of Centralia was once home to 1,100 people. Then a fire broke out in the town's landfill. The fire has been burning for over 30 years. It is underground and has destroyed many acres of land. The government forced people to relocate and now there are around ten residents left.

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- 11 The author's main purpose in writing this passage was to
- (A) inform about an environmental disaster.
 - (B) explain how to avoid environmental dangers.
 - (C) inform about the dangers of conspiracy theorists.
 - (D) explain how to study the effects of blast furnaces.
- 12 What might happen to Centralia in the future?
- (F) It will disintegrate.
 - (G) There will be no residents.
 - (H) People will move back after the fire is put out.
 - (I) Research teams will discover a solution.
- 13 Which sentence in the final paragraph does not contain an opinion of the author?
- (A) Though a terrible tragedy, the Centralia fire may someday lead to breakthroughs in science and technology.
 - (B) Tourists come to stare at the devastated landscape and conspiracy theorists gather to share their outlandish ideas.
 - (C) Today, Centralia is an eerie ghost town.
 - (D) They study Centralia's soil, plants, and animals and believe that the effects of the fire will shed light upon the processes that created this planet.

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Directions: Read the passage "A Brief History of Weather Reporting." Then answer the questions that follow.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WEATHER REPORTING

by Mona Gedney

INTRODUCTION

Keeping track of the weather has always been a matter of national interest. Everyone watches weather reports on television, listens to them on the radio, and reads them in the newspaper or online. Like most people that live near the ocean, Floridians take a keen interest in what Mother Nature might have in store for us. Today we take weather reports for granted—but we didn't always have them. Nevertheless, keeping track of the weather has always been a matter of national interest.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Americans have been fascinated by the weather from the country's birth. In 1776, Thomas Jefferson began recruiting the first volunteer weather observers in Virginia. Fifteen years later, there were 2,000 stations in the new United States of America, all of them manned by volunteer weather observers. These observers kept logs of local weather conditions and shared the information with others. Even George Washington kept a daily journal in which he recorded the details of that day's weather.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

In 1814, the Army Surgeon General first tried to gather weather observations from Army posts in a systematic way. By the 1850s, volunteer observers scattered across the country were reporting their weather to the new Smithsonian Institution by telegraph. Not until 1870, however, was the National Weather Bureau established under the control of the Army Signal Corps. In 1890, the Smithsonian officially took charge of the voluntary weather observers. In 1891, the Weather Bureau became part of the Department of Agriculture.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In 1902, the Weather Bureau made an important technological leap with wireless telegrams. For the first time it was able to notify a ship at sea of weather predictions. In 1905, the first ship sent a weather bulletin to the Bureau while at sea. Another change occurred in 1910 when the Weather Bureau began to present weekly forecasts. They were intended to help the farmers with their planning. In 1915, the state of Illinois was the subject of an experiment. Daily forecasts were published using the new wireless technology. These informed farmers and other growers about such matters as imminent frosts and storms. Such information was vital to growers in all states, of course. Having enough advance warning could help to save citrus groves and other crops vulnerable to abrupt changes in weather. The experiment was so successful that before long, daily forecasts were in every newspaper in the country.

In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt made the Weather Bureau a part of the Department of Commerce. He could see that knowing about the weather was important to the burgeoning aviation industry, and therefore to other businesses, too. In the 1940s, the Weather Bureau established a radar network that increased the amount of weather information. Radar provided valuable information about the movement of hurricanes so that residents had enough time to prepare themselves. Computer technology appeared in the 1950s, marking still another change in the kind of information available to weather forecasters.

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In 1970, the Weather Bureau was renamed the National Weather Service and became a part of a larger organization in the Commerce Department called the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The National Weather Service continued to make ever greater use of computers and radar, and it began to gather information from satellites as well.

Voluntary weather observers (now called Cooperative Weather Observers) remain a vital part of the chain of information. They were once the only source of weather information but that is no longer true. However, since weather conditions cannot be forecasted with 100% certainty, the observers still play a vital role in providing information on actual local conditions. The information they continue to provide will ultimately help with the improvement of weather forecasting models. It is estimated that today there are 12,000 volunteers at work in the country. In Florida, there are many Cooperative Weather Observers. Their centers are located at the National Weather Service Offices in Jacksonville, Key West, Melbourne, Miami, Tallahassee, Tampa Bay, and—for the West Florida counties—Mobile, Alabama.

CONCLUSION

No longer do we have to wait for a weekly or daily forecast. The computer offers immediate access to the weather in our own area, as well as information about weather around the globe. Improvements in communication have transformed weather forecasting just as they have all other aspects of our lives. Even with all of our technological advances, however, Mother Nature remains unpredictable. We are light years ahead of where we were two hundred years ago, but we still have far go to. In the meantime, the weather will remain a fascinating and extremely important subject.

- 14 In which part of the passage can you find information on actions taken by President Franklin D. Roosevelt?
- (F) Introduction
 - (G) The Eighteenth Century
 - (H) The Nineteenth Century
 - (I) The Twentieth Century
- 15 The organizational pattern of the passage could best be described as
- (A) question and answer.
 - (B) cause and effect.
 - (C) order of importance.
 - (D) chronological.

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16 Which kind of information does the author use most in this passage?

- (F) expert opinions
- (G) personal observations
- (H) historical facts
- (I) scientific facts

17 According to the passage, what do the Army Signal Corps and the Department of Agriculture have in common?

- (A) Both have made use of radar to gather information.
- (B) Both have been in charge of the National Weather Bureau.
- (C) Both are concerned with the production of crops.
- (D) Both were established by President Thomas Jefferson.

18 Read this sentence from the passage.

Having enough advance warning could help to save citrus groves and other crops vulnerable to abrupt changes in weather.

What do the words *vulnerable to* mean?

- (F) able to resist
- (G) easily injured by
- (H) able to endure
- (I) quickly changed by

19 In what way is weather reporting today like weather reporting two hundred years ago?

- (A) Field offices for the Weather Bureau are scattered across the country.
- (B) Ships at sea send their weather observations.
- (C) Volunteers still record their weather observations.
- (D) Daily forecasts are shared publicly.

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- 20 Voluntary weather observers are important because they supply
- (F) data that is enjoyable to local communities.
 - (G) data not available from other sources.
 - (H) information for technological advances.
 - (I) information for weekly weather forecasts.

Directions: Please read the passage "Music Therapy" carefully and answer the questions that follow.

MUSIC THERAPY

by Mona Gedney

It is widely known that music has a powerful effect on human beings. Bugles and drums have led armies into battle; musicians have entertained countless millions. In the middle of the last century, a singer named Elvis Presley became famous in households around the globe. However, only in recent decades has music been deliberately used to help people. Music therapy has become a powerful tool.

The first program offering a degree in music therapy began in 1944. Today music therapy degrees are offered in many universities both here and abroad. Music therapists assess emotional well-being, physical health, and cognitive skills through musical responses. Then they create music sessions for their patients using musical improvisation, receptive music listening, song writing, lyrics discussion, performance, and learning through music.

Music therapists serve a wide variety of purposes. They can be found in hospitals, schools, and senior centers. Therapists plan treatments according to the needs of the individual, which may range from managing stress to alleviating pain. Group programs may also be used. For instance, they were offered in the New York City area in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Music therapy offers us a way to maintain and improve our physical, mental, and emotional health.

- 21 What information do you expect after reading the first paragraph of the passage?
- (A) a description of music therapy
 - (B) a description of how to become a music therapist
 - (C) an account of the various uses of music
 - (D) an account of the accomplishments of musicians

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22 Which organizational pattern best describes the structure of the passage?

- (F) proposition and support
- (G) cause and effect
- (H) compare and contrast
- (I) chronological

23 In the passage, music therapy is compared to

- (A) battle.
- (B) an attack.
- (C) a tool.
- (D) treatment.

24 Read this sentence from the passage.

However, only in recent decades has music been deliberately used to help people.

What does the word *deliberately* mean in this sentence?

- (F) actually
- (G) importantly
- (H) intentionally
- (I) greatly

25 To which genre does this passage belong?

- (A) biography
- (B) science fiction
- (C) historical fiction
- (D) nonfiction

