New England Common Assessment Program

Released Items
2012

Grade 11
Reading

Reading

1. The prefix *peri-* in the words perimeter and periscope means

   A. around.
   B. distant.
   C. limit.
   D. measure.

2. Which word **most** clearly shows how strongly Juan feels about Elvis Presley?

   > Juan _____ the performer Elvis Presley so much that an entire room of his house is filled with CDs by Elvis, as well as photographs and statues of him.

   A. admires
   B. idolizes
   C. cherishes
   D. values

In this story, a weekend trip to a museum takes an unusual turn for the narrator and her friend. Read the story to find out what happens to them. Then answer the questions that follow.

Museum

Naomi Shihab Nye

I was 17, my family had just moved to San Antonio. A local magazine featured an alluring article about a museum called the McNay, an old mansion once the home of an eccentric many-times-married watercolorist named Marian Koogler McNay. She had deeded it to the community to become a museum upon her death. I asked my friend Sally, who drove a cute little convertible and had moved to Texas a year before we did, if she wanted to go there. Sally said, "Sure." She was a good friend that way. We had made up a few words in our own language and could dissolve into laughter just by saying them. Our mothers thought we were a bit odd. On a sunny Saturday afternoon, we drove over to Broadway. Sally asked, "Do you have the address of this place?" "No," I said, "just drive very slowly and I'll recognize it, there was a picture in the magazine." I peered in both directions and pointed, saying, "There, there it is, pull in!" The parking lot under some palm trees was pretty empty. We entered, excited. The museum was free. Right away, the spirit of the arched doorways, carved window frames, and elegant artwork overtook us. Sally went left, I went right. A group of people seated in some chairs in the lobby stopped talking and stared at us.

2 "May I help you?" a man said. "No," I said. "We're fine." I didn't like to talk to people in museums. Tours and docents* got on my nerves. What if they talked a long time about a painting you weren't that interested in? I took a deep breath, moved on to another painting—fireworks over a patio in Mexico, maybe? There weren't very good tags in this museum. In fact, there weren't any. I stood back and gazed. Sally had gone upstairs. The people in the lobby had stopped chatting. They seemed very nosy, keeping their eyes on me with irritating curiosity. What was their problem? I turned down a hallway. Bougainvilleas and azaleas pressed up right against the windows. Maybe we should have brought a picnic. Where was the Moorish courtyard? I saw some nice sculptures in another room, and a small couch. This would be a great place for reading. Above the couch hung a radiant print by Paul Klee, my favorite artist, blues and pinks merging softly in his own wonderful way. I stepped closer. Suddenly I became aware of a man from the lobby standing behind me in the doorway. "Where do you think you are?" he asked. I turned sharply. "The McNay Art Museum!" He smiled then, and shook his head. "Sorry to tell you. The McNay is three blocks over, on New Braunfels Street. Take a right when you go out of our driveway, then another right." "What is this place?" I asked, still confused. He said, "Well, we thought it was our home." My heart jolted. I raced past him to the bottom of the staircase and called out, "Sally! Come down immediately! Urgent!" I remember being tempted to shout

*docents: tour guides

something in our private language, but we didn't have a word for this. Sally came to the top of the stairs smiling happily and said, "You have to come up here, there's some really good stuff! And there are old beds too!" "No, Sally, no," I said, as if she were a dog, or a baby. "Get down here. Speed it up. This is an emergency." She stepped elegantly down the stairs as if in a museum trance, looking puzzled. I just couldn't tell her out loud in front of those people what we had done. I actually pushed her toward the front door, waving my hand at the family in the chairs, saying, "Sorry, ohmygod, please forgive us, you have a really nice place." Sally stared at me in the parking lot. When I told her, she covered her mouth and doubled over with laughter, shaking. We were still in their yard. I imagined them inside looking out the windows at us. She couldn't believe how long they let us look around without saying anything, either. "That was really friendly of them!" "Get in the car," I said sternly. "This is mortifying."

The real McNay was fabulous, splendid, but we felt a little nervous the whole time we were there. Van Gogh, Picasso, Tamayo. This time, there were tags. This time, we stayed together, in case anything else weird happened.

We never told anyone.

Thirty years later, a nice-looking woman approached me in a public place. "Excuse me," she said. "I need to ask a strange question. Did you ever, by any chance, enter a residence, long ago, thinking it was the McNay Museum?"

Thirty years later, my cheeks still burned. "Yes. But how do you know? I never told anyone."

"That was my home. I was a teenager sitting with my family talking in the living room. Before you came over, I never realized what a beautiful place I lived in. I never felt lucky before. You thought it was a museum. My feelings changed about my parents after that too. They had good taste. I have always wanted to thank you."

3. A synonym for the word eccentric is

A. artificial.
B. interior.
C. unusual.
D. confusing.

4. Why do the narrator's mother and Sally's mother think that the girls are "a bit odd"?

A. They use words that no one else knows.
B. They do not plan trips carefully enough.
C. They spend their weekends in museums.
D. They laugh at things for no reason.

5. What is the **most likely** reason the author points out that the girls do not have the museum's address?

A. to dramatize how hard the building is to find
B. to foreshadow the error the girls make
C. to characterize the girls as disorganized
D. to increase the amount of tension in the scene

6. What do the narrator and her friend Sally have in common that may have contributed to their mistake?

A. They are not knowledgeable about paintings.
B. They have not been driving for very long.
C. They are not familiar with many museums.
D. They have not lived in the region very long.

7. Describe the series of clues the girls miss that could have revealed their mistake to them sooner. Use details from the story to support your answer.

8. Which word **best** describes the feeling the narrator has about being stared at?

A. concern
B. nervousness
C. annoyance
D. anger

9. How does the narrator's reaction to the incident contrast with Sally's?

A. The narrator fails to find the humor in the incident.
B. The narrator is less shocked than Sally is by the incident.
C. The narrator is surprised by the reaction of the people inside.
D. The narrator ends up being more disappointed by the house than Sally is.

10. In the last line of paragraph 2, the word <u>mortifying</u> means

A. depressing.
B. humiliating.
C. shocking.
D. exhausting.

11. What is the **most likely** reason the author devotes only three lines to the girls' time at the real McNay museum?

A. The girls are too upset to spend much time at the real museum.
B. The real museum is a disappointment compared to the house.
C. The significant events all occur in the house they think is the real museum.
D. The real museum lacks enough artwork to interest the girls.

12. Explain how the conversation at the end of the story changes the narrator's view of the events that took place thirty years earlier. Use details from the story to support your answer.

Read this passage to find out how a man accomplishes his lifelong goal in an improbable way. Then answer the questions that follow.

"Wrong-Way" Corrigan

E. Randall Floyd

1 As a teenager growing up in post–World War I California, Douglas Corrigan was obsessed with the idea of owning his own airplane. His dream, one that followed him into early adulthood, was to someday fly that airplane across the Atlantic Ocean.

In the mid-1930s, part of Corrigan's dream finally came true when he scraped up enough money to buy himself a plane. It wasn't much—just an old wood-framed Curtiss Robin monoplane with a leaky cockpit and worn-out engine—but it was all the young aviation mechanic could afford at the time. Besides, he told friends and neighbors, he'd have the old heap fixed up and airworthy in no time.

3 While he worked on the plane, he continued to dream about that solo transatlantic flight. Sometimes he'd talk about those plans with others. "I'm gonna go, you just wait and see," he boasted, ignoring the sneers and jeers as he continued to patch up wings, repair the propeller, tighten up the flaps and replace landing gear.

When questioned about his lack of aviation experience, he'd point proudly to his years as an aviation mechanic. Not only did he know airplanes, he'd taught himself how to fly. He'd even worked on the *Spirit of St. Louis*, the airplane owned by his idol—world-famous aviator Charles Lindbergh, whose exciting, transatlantic solo flight to Paris had made him an international celebrity.

Lindbergh's success inspired Corrigan to duplicate the feat. He obtained his pilot's license in December 1927, and an air transport license three years later. He barnstormed for a few years, and, in 1933, for $325, bought the OX5 Robin that would eventually bring him fame.

By 1937 Corrigan was ready. He installed extra fuel tanks and overhauled his Robin. The only thing left to do was apply for permission from the United States Bureau of Air Commerce for clearance to fly the Atlantic. A mere formality, he mused—until his request was rejected.

The next summer, after having spent many months refitting the aircraft, Corrigan was given official permission to make a three-thousand-mile solo flight from Los Angeles to New York—but no more.

At last, Corrigan thought as he climbed into the cockpit of the dilapidated Robin to set forth on what would become one of the most incredible flights in aviation history.

Nobody believed it when the quaking plane, smoking and hissing, finally lifted off the runway in Los Angeles for the twelve-hour flight to New York. When the plane landed on time at Floyd Bennett Field in New York, everyone took it to be a miracle. Not only had crew and mechanics scurried out of the way when they stared in disbelief at the ragged old heap approaching them, some apprehensive workers threatened to quit and leave town if the amateurish pilot was allowed to take off again.

A couple of days later he was given permission to take off anyway, in spite of a light fog. Officials in the control tower and on the ground watched terror-stricken as the shuddering aircraft dragged itself, heaving and panting, up from the runway into the air.

What happened over the next several hours remains one of aviation's greatest mysteries of all time. There is no official record, of course—only Corrigan's own word about the astounding events that followed.

Beaming with confidence and pride—his picture already in all the papers—Corrigan settled back inside the quaking cockpit for the long, bumpy ride back west. There was no radio, and the main compass on the control panel was out of order. His only functioning directional device was a smaller compass attached to the floor, which he could hardly make out from his angle.

A few hours out, Corrigan later revealed, strange things started happening. First, the plane drifted into a chilling blanket of fog that never seemed to lift. Then, just when he thought he should be over New Mexico or Arizona, instead of warm sunshine and soft clouds, he ran into snow and ice.

By then he had been airborne some twenty-six hours, a matter that greatly troubled the wayward pilot. Then, dipping low to get a bearing, he spotted something that made his blood run cold—a vast expanse of ocean, with nothing but windblown crests as far as the eye could see.

Without panicking, Corrigan simply figured he had missed the Los Angeles airport and somehow shot out over the Pacific Ocean. But this ocean looked strange—"not blue and calm the way the Pacific is supposed to," he thought.

Curious, he decided to keep on going "until I either sighted land or ran out of gas."

Some figs and chocolate were the only food on board—"the most delicious meal I ever tasted."

Corrigan pushed onward, without benefit of either radio or compass. Finally, just when his engine began sputtering, he spotted land—green hills and green fields and green forests. "It was the most beautiful sight I had ever seen," he related. "Yet, I still didn't have the foggiest notion where I was."

Beyond the hills lay a large coastal city, which Corrigan later admitted to recognizing immediately. It was Dublin, Ireland! Somehow, this bumbling, amateur aviator piloting a ramshackle monoplane with nothing left but fumes in his fuel tank had flown all the way across the Atlantic Ocean from New York to Dublin, Ireland—all without benefit of either radio or compass!

Corrigan had no difficulty landing the airplane at Baldonnel Airport. After taxiing to a stop near a hangar, he crawled outside the cockpit, stiff and cold from the twenty-seven-hour flight, and announced who he was and the unbelievable mission he had just accomplished.

"I am Douglas Corrigan," he reportedly told startled onlookers. "Just got in from New York. Where am I? I intended to fly to California."

The next day, with thousands of well-wishers looking on, Corrigan was officially welcomed as a hero by the Irish prime minister and by the American ambassador to England, Joseph P. Kennedy. When he returned to the United States, he was given another tumultuous hero's welcome, in spite of his "mistake" in navigational skills.

Amid ticker tape and parades and speeches, some found Corrigan's incredible story too hard to believe. Just how had a third-rate pilot with no map-reading skills or transatlantic experience managed to fly so far off course—and survive?

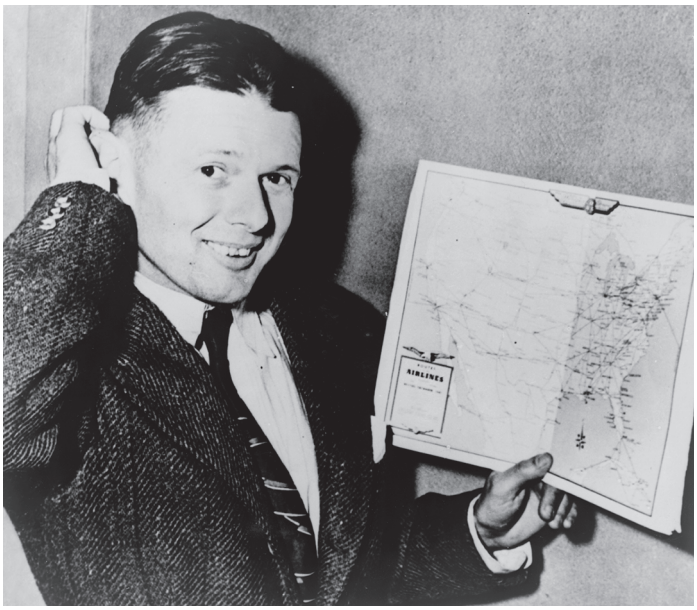
While "Wrong-Way" Corrigan's antics were hailed by millions of Americans, the Commerce Department was not amused. He was held in "open detention," had his pilot's license temporarily revoked and watched while government workers dismantled his plane as punishment.

Was it all a hoax? Had Corrigan deliberately set out from New York to cross the Atlantic, just as he had always dreamed, following in the footsteps of his hero Charles Lindbergh?

Lie detector tests affirmed he was telling the truth. So did investigations by police and aviation authorities. "Anybody can make an honest mistake," he told a newspaper reporter.

Half a century later, while reassembling his plane for display at a small airport in California, he reportedly told another reporter that the flight had been a mistake all along. When asked if he was being honest, "Wrong-Way" Corrigan grinned and said, "I was never really known to be honest, you know."

28 Douglas "Wrong-Way" Corrigan went to his grave in 1995 with the secret of his amazing flight still shrouded in mystery.



NOTE: Released items 13 through 17 are reported with corresponding student performance on the Fall 2012 Item Analysis Report – Reading. Released items 18 through 22 are not reported on the Fall 2012 Item Analysis Report – Reading due to space limitations; however, the New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island Departments of Education have chosen to publish these items in the Released Items and the Released Items Support Materials documents in order to provide the complete item set associated with the passage *"Wrong-Way" Corrigan*.

13 Based on paragraphs 1 through 3, which word **best** describes the young Corrigan?

A. tactless
B. confident
C. distracted
D. respected

14 After Corrigan left New York, what was the **first** indication that he had gone off his original course?

A. the unusual weather conditions
B. a bizarre compass reading
C. a strange land sighting
D. the many hours that had passed

15 In paragraph 28, the word <u>shrouded</u> means

A. described.
B. pressured.
C. concealed.
D. debated.

16 Which quotation **most clearly** shows the author's attitude toward Corrigan?

A. "Nobody believed it when the quaking plane, smoking and hissing, finally lifted off the runway . . ."
B. "Beaming with confidence and pride—his picture already in all the papers—Corrigan settled back inside the quaking cockpit . . ."
C. "Somehow, this bumbling, amateur aviator piloting a ramshackle monoplane with nothing left but fumes in his fuel tank . . ."
D. "After taxiing to a stop near a hangar, he crawled outside the cockpit, stiff and cold from the twenty-seven-hour flight . . ."

17 The passage never directly states whether Corrigan's transatlantic flight was accidental or intentional. Evaluate the evidence in the passage that supports **each** possibility. Use information from the passage to support your answer.

18 Corrigan's **main** goal was always to

A. fly farther than anyone had before.
B. become a world famous celebrity.
C. duplicate the flight his hero had made.
D. build a plane that was superior to others.

19 What is the **most likely** reason Corrigan was finally granted permission to make a solo flight from Los Angeles to New York?

A. He had become more experienced as a pilot.
B. He impressed bureau officials with his spirit.
C. He had improved the condition of his plane.
D. He received a lot of support from the public.

20 A synonym for the word dilapidated is

A. rundown.
B. ancient.
C. continual.
D. smooth.

21 Why were people surprised when Corrigan's plane landed at Floyd Bennett Field in New York?

A. The field was not where Corrigan had planned on landing.
B. Corrigan's plane did not look as if it could fly that far.
C. No small plane had ever made it as far as Corrigan's.
D. Corrigan was too unskilled to successfully land a plane.

22 Describe the challenges that "Wrong-Way" Corrigan faced while trying to fulfill his dreams as an aviator. Use information from the passage to support your answer.

Acknowledgments

The New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Maine Departments of Education wish to acknowledge and credit the following authors and publishers for use of their work in the reading portion of the *New England Common Assessment Program*—2012.

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