



**NEW ENGLAND
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items
2010**

**Grade 6
Reading**

Reading

- 1 Which sentence uses the word raise to mean “collect”?
- A. The dog will raise its ears as soon as it hears the doorbell.
 - B. The girls will be able to raise enough money for their trip.
 - C. The movie theater will raise the price of its tickets tomorrow.
 - D. The farmer will raise many kinds of crops on his land.
- 2 The prefix *auto-* in the words autobiography and autograph means
- A. new.
 - B. self.
 - C. first.
 - D. make.

Read this passage about what a girl discovers during a game of catch. Then answer the questions that follow.

Superhero

Zoe Quinn

“How about we go out back and play a little catch? Work off some of that ice cream?” Grandpa suggested when we’d finished our desserts.

“Okay.” I got up and headed for the back door.

Outside, the sky had gone soft and inky blue. It was that magical hour just before dusk when the world seems bathed in a special sort of light, and for a moment, a ray of fading sunlight surrounded Grandpa in such a way that I could have sworn he was actually . . . glowing.

“Okay, you go over there near the fence,” Grandpa said, tossing the baseball from one hand to the other.

I slipped on the extra baseball glove I kept in my grandparents’ garage and jogged toward the far edge of the lawn. At least, I meant to jog. My mind was thinking *jog*, but my feet seemed to have other plans, and the next thing I knew, I was running at top speed, skidding to a stop on the other side of the yard.

I wasn’t even out of breath.

Before I could say anything, Grandpa threw the ball.

It was a lob, really, that arced up toward the darkening sky, then began to drop at about the center point of the lawn, far short of where I’d somehow ended up.

I knew the ball would hit the ground before I could get to it, but I decided to at least try to reach the middle of the yard before it landed in the grass.

THUNK!

I made the catch.

I MADE THE CATCH.

I made the catch because all of a sudden I wasn’t at the far side of the yard. I was smack dab in the middle of it, under the ball.

But how?

I couldn’t have run that far in less than a second! I was fast, but I wasn’t *that* fast.

Or was I?

I blinked at the ball that had dropped squarely into the well-worn pocket of the old glove.

I looked at Grandpa; he didn’t seem to notice anything miraculous about the catch, so I threw the ball back to him. Expecting another short toss, I stayed in the center of the yard.

But this time, Grandpa Zack hurled the ball with all his might. It whizzed past my head like a comet, sailing toward the fence.

And in the next second I was sailing toward the fence, too, passing the ball, and turning around to catch it easily, with seconds to spare.

“Whoa.”

Grandpa laughed. “Whoa, indeed.”

“Grandpa . . .,” I began, gulping. “Do you smell . . . smoke?”

Grandpa nodded toward my feet. I looked down and saw that my sneakers were smoking.

MY SNEAKERS WERE SMOKING!

3 A synonym for the word ray is

- A. bit.
- B. beam.
- C. shade.
- D. spark.

4 After the girl catches the ball the first time, Grandpa is

- A. not surprised by her actions.
- B. not happy with his throw.
- C. proud of her ability.
- D. ready to switch places.

5 Some of the words are in large **bold** print to show how

- A. huge Grandpa's backyard is.
- B. amazed the girl is with her abilities.
- C. strong Grandpa's throws seem.
- D. serious the girl is about baseball.

6 The person telling the story is the one who

- A. asks to play catch.
- B. has a special glow.
- C. discovers a special power.
- D. thinks it is an ordinary day.

7 Explain why this is an important day for the girl **and** her grandpa. Use details from the passage to support your answer.

The Soap Box Derby is a youth racing program that started in 1933. Read this Web page to learn more about this yearly event. Then answer the questions that follow.

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All-American Soap Box Derby

by Catherine Clarke Fox
National Geographic Kids News
May 24, 2006



Akron, OH—July 22
Courtney Boucher, 16, from Bristol, Connecticut, leaves the starting line.

- 1 On July 22 crowds will gather at Derby Downs in Akron, Ohio, to cheer kids from 40 U.S. states and five foreign countries competing in the world championships of the All-American Soap Box Derby (AASBD).

This will be the 69th year the championships have been held.

- 3 Back in 1933, Ohio newsman Myron Scott photographed some boys coasting downhill in homemade cars. Those cars were crafted from soapboxes, orange crates, and scrap wood.

Scott got the idea of organizing a competition, and the All-American Soap Box Derby was born.

For this year-round sport, boys and girls ages 8 through 17 compete in three racing divisions: Stock, Super Stock, and Masters. As the level goes up, the cars get bigger and fancier.

AASBD sells kits that include everything from the shell of the car to the steering wheel. Masters racers have the option of learning about bodywork and building their racer from scratch.

Gravity, the force of nature that pulls objects down to the Earth, powers the cars downhill—some call the championships the Gravity Grand Prix. Derby cars can reach speeds of up to 30 miles (48 kilometers) an hour.

Kids race at rallies near their hometowns. Racers with enough points advance to the championships.

“Competing is so much fun,” said 17-year-old 2005 Masters World Champion Stephanie Inglezakis. The racer won a U.S. \$5,000 college scholarship.

“You meet people from all over—I have friends from California, Maine, Florida, and New York,” Stephanie said. “I learned about competing and about tools—screwdrivers, wrenches, and special alignment tools you use to make sure your wheels aren’t crooked when you go down the hill.”



Her grandfather got Stephanie and her brother into racing, and the whole family pitched in to help. “You learn a lot,” she said, “but the best part is spending tons of time having fun with your family!”

Fast Facts

- The basic soapbox car kit takes as little as five hours to put together.
- Nearly half of derby racers are girls.
- Kids can participate in almost 300 races across the United States each year.
- Famous derby winners include actor Frankie Muniz (who plays Malcolm on the TV show *Malcolm in the Middle*) and Heisman Trophy-winning football players Paul Hornung and Pete Dawkins.

Related Links

[All-American Soap Box Derby](#)

[Soap Box Derby More Than Racing](#)

More Kids News Stories

[Odyssey of the Mind’s “Wacky” World Finals](#)

[NG Kids Footprint Trail Wins World Record!](#)

[Prize Honors Young Environmental Heroes](#)

[Prize Honors Kids Who See a Need—And Help Fill It](#)

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/kids/2006/05/soapboxderby.html>

- 8 In the first paragraph, the term (AASBD) is in parentheses to show that it is
- A. a special kind of Soap Box Derby car.
 - B. the steps for building a Soap Box Derby car.
 - C. another name for Soap Box Derby contestants.
 - D. the short way to write the name of the Soap Box Derby.

- 9 In paragraph 3, the word crafted means
- A. constructed.
 - B. guarded.
 - C. bought.
 - D. traded.

- 10 How did Myron Scott help the future of the Soap Box Derby?
- A. He created scholarship opportunities for derby winners.
 - B. He donated materials to kids who wanted to build derby cars.
 - C. He was responsible for creating the official derby competition.
 - D. He was the first person to ride in a homemade derby car.

- 11 Which section from the Web page would provide more information about the All-American Soap Box Derby?
- A. **Other Fun Kid Features**
 - B. **Parents**
 - C. **Related Links**
 - D. **More Kids News Stories**

- 12 Explain how kids can benefit from participating in the Soap Box Derby. Use information from the Web page to support your answer.

Acknowledgments

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