Vocabulary Skill Check

Grade 6 · Figurative language · Try 1

Name or code _____ Date _____

Read each passage. Circle the letter that gives the best meaning in that passage.

Passage 1

When the student council announced its project vote, Luca tried to appear calm. He folded his hands and looked toward the window, but his friends saw the smile spreading across his face.

When his proposal was named, his shoulders lifted and his eyes shone. Anyone watching could tell how delighted he felt, even before he said a word.

Luca was **an open book**. His sister laughed and told him that keeping his feelings secret had never been his strongest skill.

1. As used in this passage, what does the phrase “an open book” most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A a person reading while others are speaking

B a person who successfully hides every emotion

C a person who has memorized many facts

D someone whose emotions are easy to read

Passage 2

A librarian’s suggestion gave a struggling theater group **a spark of hope**.

The group had searched for weeks for a place to rehearse after its usual room closed. Every available space seemed too small, too costly, or already booked. The group was beginning to think it would have to cancel the spring performance.

The librarian had mentioned an unused meeting room. It was only one small possibility, not a confirmed solution, but it made members believe that the performance might still be possible after all.

2. As used in this passage, what does the phrase “a spark of hope” most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A a dangerous sign that a fire has started

B a guarantee that every problem is solved

C a small feeling that success may come

D a strong belief that failure is certain

Passage 3

Before the debate final, Ines had practiced her opening statement in an empty classroom. She knew each sentence and had timed the speech twice, yet walking onto the stage felt different. The hall was filled with students from several schools, and nearly every seat was occupied.

In front of her stretched **a sea of faces**. She could not pick out a single familiar person among the many people looking toward the stage.

Taking a slow breath, she focused on the first point she wanted to make.

3. As used in this passage, what does the phrase "a sea of faces" most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A a very large crowd of people

B one familiar person standing apart

C people floating together on actual water

D a group whose faces all look identical

Passage 4

The final model glider circled above the field as the team waited to see whether its new wing design would work. A gust pushed it toward the boundary, and everyone stopped calling out advice.

Even the students keeping time looked up from their watches. Nobody spoke or moved while the glider wavered above the grass.

For a moment, the whole team **held its breath**. Then its wings steadied, and the students shouted as it passed safely over the finish marker at the far end.

4. As used in this passage, what does the phrase "held its breath" most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A stopped breathing because the air was unsafe

B waited silently in tense anticipation

C forgot why everyone had gathered

D became too tired to continue an activity

Passage 5

From the lookout, Malia studied the valley below. A distant river looked like **a silver ribbon** in the afternoon light.

Pines covered the slopes, and patches of pale stone broke through the grass near the footpath. Farther away, the river curved between dark fields before disappearing behind a low hill.

Its narrow, winding surface reflected a bright line across the darker land. Malia sketched the view, trying to capture the smooth shape of the water without drawing every bend in the distant valley.

5. As used in this passage, what does the phrase “a silver ribbon” most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A a length of metal fabric tied in a bow

B a broad area with no visible edges

C a route that is completely straight and dark

D a thin, bright, twisting river

Passage 6

The class offered to restore a neglected courtyard before the end of term. At first, the plan sounded simple: clear a path, paint two benches, and prepare a small display. Once students inspected the space, they discovered damaged planters, tangled storage boxes, and a long list of repairs.

They faced **a mountain of work**. The tasks seemed so numerous that finishing them would require careful planning and many afternoons of effort.

The group divided the jobs into smaller stages instead of attempting everything immediately.

6. As used in this passage, what does the phrase “a mountain of work” most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A work hidden where nobody can find it

B one difficult task that is already finished

C an enormous amount of work to complete

D work that must be completed on a high slope

Teacher use: ____ / 6