Vocabulary Skill Check

Grade 7 · Figurative language · Try 1

Name or code _____ Date _____

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

Passage 1

Editors of a student newspaper wanted to report a disagreement about cafeteria food. They needed to describe students' complaints honestly, but they also wanted to avoid presenting rumors as established facts.

If the article ignored complaints, readers would not understand the issue; if it repeated every accusation without checking, it could unfairly damage someone’s reputation. The editors had to balance accurate reporting with responsible treatment of the people involved.

The assignment was **a tightrope**. They interviewed several sources and distinguished observations from opinions. Before sending the story to print, they checked each quotation against their notes and removed a claim that nobody could confirm. They kept the documented complaints in the final article.

1. As used in this passage, what does “a tightrope” most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A an agreement that removes every source of risk

B a simple choice with only one reasonable answer

C a narrow rope suspended above the ground

D a difficult balance between competing needs

Passage 2

Students proposed opening the school library for one extra afternoon each week. Winning approval became **an uphill battle**.

They found support from readers, but the plan required volunteers, a supervisor and a change to the building's closing schedule. Every step revealed another obstacle, and the students had to revise their proposal repeatedly before anyone could commit resources. Their enthusiasm alone would not carry the plan forward. They gathered examples of demand and divided the remaining tasks among several groups. At the next meeting, they brought a volunteer schedule and a revised closing plan, ready to answer the questions that had delayed approval.

2. As used in this passage, what does "an uphill battle" most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A a task that becomes easier without effort

B a hard struggle against repeated obstacles

C a contest held on a steep mountain path

D a disagreement that has already been settled

Passage 3

The robotics team had built a machine that could sort several shapes accurately. Its frame was sturdy, its instructions were clear, and repeated classroom trials had produced excellent results.

The battery connection, however, was its **Achilles' heel**. A slight bump could disconnect the power and stop the entire machine, despite the strength of the other components. During the final trial, the sorter stopped while every shape was still lined up correctly on the belt.

The team tested a new fastening before the exhibition. They left the frame and sorting instructions unchanged, then ran the trial again to see whether securing the connection would keep the machine working.

3. As used in this passage, what does "Achilles' heel" most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A the feature that makes success certain

B a small detail unrelated to the final result

C a weakness in otherwise capable work

D an injury caused by walking too far

Passage 4

A company offered the school free materials for its student newspaper. At first, the proposal seemed generous: the company would provide paper, printing and a set of colorful photographs for every issue.

Buried in the agreement was a requirement giving the company control over which student articles could appear. What looked like help would secretly remove the students' freedom to choose their own topics.

A closer reading showed that the offer was **a Trojan horse**. The newspaper committee declined the proposal and explained its decision. Members underlined the approval requirement and sent the agreement back, asking whether the company would provide materials without choosing the newspaper's stories.

4. As used in this passage, what does "a Trojan horse" most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A an appealing offer hiding a harmful aim

B a wooden animal used as a decoration

C an honest warning about an obvious risk

D a useful solution with no disadvantages

Passage 5

The school website committee expected a simple decision when it agreed to let every club choose its own page design. Instead, the decision opened **Pandora's box**.

Members had thought that the change would save time by removing the need for a common template. Yet different menus confused visitors, some pages could not be read easily on phones, and every requested correction raised another disagreement about who could approve changes. Fixing the navigation did not settle the complaints about access, and the queue of requests kept growing.

The committee eventually restored a shared framework while allowing clubs to choose their photographs. Members worked through the remaining requests one at a time before approving any further changes.

5. As used in this passage, what does "Pandora's box" most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A a container holding valuable gifts

B a plan that keeps all problems safely contained

C a situation releasing many complications

D a secret that solves every disagreement

Passage 6

When a neighborhood workshop began sharing free repair lessons, its organizers did not expect attention from other communities. They simply wanted residents to learn useful skills and reduce the number of objects thrown away.

Over time, the workshop became **a beacon** for nearby groups. Its success showed them that a practical, welcoming repair program was possible and gave them a model to follow. Several visited to ask how volunteers were trained and materials were collected.

One visiting group had almost abandoned its plans after losing a meeting space. After watching the lessons, its members arranged to meet in a library and asked the workshop organizers to help them plan their first session.

6. As used in this passage, what does “a beacon” most likely mean?

Circle ONE letter.

A a source of guidance and encouragement

B a rule that forces everyone to act alike

C a lamp that sends a visible signal

D a barrier that keeps newcomers away

Teacher use: ____ / 6