

1. Decide whether the following statements are true or false. (T/F)

- _____ a. The narrator warned the workmen not to leave the wet cement unwatched.
- _____ b. The narrator remembers having left his own mark in wet cement when he was a teenager.
- _____ c. The narrator knew that his brother had new girlfriends by looking at the different trees he had carved.
- _____ d. The narrator has at least four children.
- _____ e. It is a tradition in the narrator's family to carve your name on the chair that you use at the dinner table.
- _____ f. The narrator enjoys reading the graffiti left by students on their school desks.
- _____ g. The narrator believes that it's human nature to leave a mark in the world.

2. Answer the following questions in your own words. Paraphrase or summarize what you have read.

- a. What did the workmen do when they finished the cement work?
- b. What did the students do when they saw wet cement unguarded?
- c. Where did the narrator's brother take him when he was a teenager? Why?
- d. What was the purpose of the carving of initials on trees?
- e. Why is the narrator's fourth son called "the sniffer"?

f. Why does the narrator believe that the desire to leave one's mark in the world is insatiable?

g. When does the narrator occupy his thoughts with the deciphering of students' graffiti?

3. Reading for clues. Search the text for detailed answers, use your own words to answer the questions and quote the paragraph(s) that support(s) your response.

a. Was the cement work necessary?

b. Why would the students "disbelieve" that the wet cement was left unprotected?

c. What was distinctive about the narrator's brother's bike?

d. What did the narrator and his brother find scattered on the ground?

e. What did the narrator's fourth son use to carve his name on the chair?

f. What did the other two sons do when the youngest carved his name on his chair?

g. What are graduating students asked to do every year?

C. Vocabulary

1. Pick the word or expression that is closest in meaning to the underlined word or expression in the following passages.
 - a. A group of workmen from City Hall congregated outside my school office window.
 - worked
 - stopped
 - gathered
 - talked
 - b. Steve finally decided to take me to his secret hideout in a local wooded area.
 - home
 - place
 - cabin
 - tree house
 - c. We rode double on his new Mustang bike, which was equipped with the latest innovation.
 - novelty
 - equipment
 - technology
 - modernization
 - d. The coveted sparkling red “banana seat.”
 - famous
 - covered
 - bright
 - desired
 - e. I immediately noticed a number of cigarette butts and beer bottle caps strewn over the ground.
 - ashes
 - ends
 - packages
 - smoke

- f. I immediately noticed a number of cigarette butts and beer bottle caps strewn over the ground.
- lying
 - left
 - scattered
 - lost
- g. Steve had wanted to bring me to this hallowed spot of tranquility to show me what to do when I acquired a girlfriend.
- sacred
 - secret
 - hidden
 - favorite
- h. He then whittled both his and his girlfriend's initials inside the shape.
- wrote
 - spelled
 - drew
 - carved
- i. He refuses to eat anything until his nose has cleared it as edible.
- fresh
 - eatable
 - good
 - cooked
- j. Now I see this insatiable human desire to leave one's mark at my place of employment.
- home
 - City Hall
 - school
 - staff meetings
- k. I occupy my thoughts by deciphering messages and codes.
- copying
 - memorizing
 - erasing
 - decoding

- l. We must [. . .] cultivate their passion.
- nurture
 - tame
 - control
 - guide
- m. In a more formal way, these write-ups are “marks” allowing individual students to share significant rites of passage that have created memories which will last a lifetime.
- school years
 - marks
 - events
 - memories
2. Place the following words in the given sentences. Make sure that the word form suits the sentence in which it is used.

showcase appropriate graffiti momentarily tranquility
whittle accommodate debris

- a. Since she has moved to the city, Mary misses the _____ of the countryside very much.
- b. After the plane crash, the families of the victims were allowed to go through the _____ in order to see if they could find anything that had belonged to their loved ones.
- c. When I wake up from a very deep sleep, I _____ forget where I am and who I am.
- d. Eli was horrified to find some _____ on his wife’s tombstone.
- e. We transformed our study into a bedroom in order _____ some friends who are visiting from Asia.
- f. The music teacher is going to organize a recital in order _____ our work.

3. Use the following words and their synonyms and antonyms in your own sentences.

obligatory:

Synonyms: mandatory, compulsory, imperative, requisite, necessary, required.

Antonyms: optional, elective, discretionary, alternative, voluntary.

obligatory:

mandatory:

imperative:

optional:

discretionary:

insatiable:

Synonyms: unslakeable, unquenchable, unappeasable.

Antonyms: satisfied, fulfilled, replete, allayed, sated.

insatiable:

unslakeable:

unquenchable:

fulfilled:

sated:

D. Comprehension

1. Choose the sentences that best explain the following textual excerpts.

- a. It was a glorious day. (par.1)
- The weather was absolutely gorgeous.
 - It was a perfect day to go outdoors.
 - It was a perfect day to do something glorious.
- b. As the workers went about their task. (par.1)
- As the workers were leaving their job.
 - As the workers started their work.
 - As the workers were doing their job.
- c. Upon completion of the cement work. (par.1)
- When they had filled the hole with cement.
 - When their job was over.
 - When they ran out of cement.
- d. He refuses to eat anything until his nose has cleared it as edible. (par.4)
- He needs to clean his nose before he eats anything.
 - He refuses to eat anything unless he likes the smell of it.
 - He refuses to eat anything that doesn't smell fresh.
- e. At the Lattimer household. (par.4)
- At the narrator's residence
 - In the narrator's mansion
 - As a Lattimer's house rule
- f. Only momentarily, .. (par.4)
- Aaron is left without a chair only once in a while.
 - Aaron always finds a chair before too long.
 - The narrator was going to buy him a chair very soon.
- g. ..,mind you. (par.4)
- ..,bear in mind.
 - ..,let me remind you.
 - ..,if you don't mind.

- h. Two of his older brothers were so impressed by this feat that they followed suit. (par.4)
- Two brothers helped Aaron finish his carving on the chair.
 - Two brothers admired his carving and urged everyone in the family to do the same.
 - Two brothers admired his carving and carved their own names on their chairs.
- i. If the meeting starts to drag, I occupy my thoughts by deciphering messages and codes. (par.5)
- If the meeting does not concern me, I spend time imagining how I would draw my graffiti on the table top.
 - Once the meeting becomes boring, I kill time by interpreting the messy writings on the table top.
 - Decoding graffiti is the only thing that interests me in meetings.
- j. Even graffiti will, at times, have me pondering both the medium and the message. (par.5)
- I sometimes wonder why certain graffiti were placed on a particular surface.
 - I sometimes wonder why graffiti exist and if they have underlying messages.
 - Sometimes I am curious about the kind of individual who leaves certain graffiti.
- k. In a more formal way, these write-ups are “marks” allowing individual students to share significant rites of passage that have created memories which will last a lifetime. (par.5)
- Through yearbook write-ups, students remember the school forever.
 - Through yearbook write-ups, students create everlasting memories.
 - Through yearbook write-ups, students record their most memorable experiences.

2. Determine the underlying meaning of each of the following excerpts, and choose the sentence that best explains it.
- a. The workmen left *en masse*. (par.1)
- The workmen left quickly.
 - All the workmen left at once.
 - The workmen left suddenly.
- b. This simple action was like a call to arms to all able bodied adolescents. (par.1)
- This simple action invited all normal teenagers to do something mischievous.
 - This simple action encouraged the students to become violent and to do something dangerous.
 - This simple action intrigued all the teenage students to arm themselves for something violent.
- c. This was just a guess, he said, adding that he too was puzzled by the debris. (par.2)
- Steve is truly surprised by the cigarette butts and the beer bottle caps.
 - Steve probably is lying; he likely knows who smokes and drinks beer at the hideout.
 - Steve does not really know what other people do at the hideout.
- d. I began to realize his need to use additional tree trunks for new announcements. (par.3)
- Steve loved his girlfriend so much that he carved their initials in several trees.
 - The narrator is being funny about the fact that Steve kept changing girlfriends.
 - The narrator is criticizing Steve for carving too many initials in too many trees.

3. Writing analysis.

The narrator uses humor in his descriptions of people and their behavior. Pick a few passages in which he uses humor and explain what is funny about them.

The narrator has a very benevolent attitude towards children and teenagers. Find the passages in which this benevolence is made clear.

E. Discussion

1. Do you agree with the narrator that it is important to nurture teenagers' creativity? Why?
2. What do you think are the best ways in which teenagers can leave their marks in the world? Why?
3. Imagine that your class has been designated to do something special for the school. How would you (as a class) leave your mark on the school? Why?

(END OF SAMPLER)