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QUESTION NO: 1

A student is writing an article about safety in high school athletics. Read the draft of the article and complete the task that follows.

Just how safe are high school athletics? Critics would argue that most sports are highly dangerous to those teens who participate in them. Recently football has been the most closely scrutinized. The dangers of the high school gridiron are many: head injuries, knee injuries, and heat exhaustion. It seems as if every year more studies are released implicating the immediate and long-term effects of this highly physical sport. Football, however, is not the only sport that has drawn attention. Any sport that involves contact (basketball, hockey, lacrosse) can leave its players vulnerable to injury. The question then becomes: what is being done to prevent these injuries?

Steps are being taken to reduce the most serious complications of all sports. One way that these issues are being addressed is through the development of new equipment. Another way is through more stringent rules that govern practices as well as game time situations. Most importantly, educating players, coaches, and parents to the real dangers of athletics has taken a new priority. Through education, regulations, and equipment, high school sports can continue to be a source of entertainment, not danger.

Choose the two sentences that provide the best evidence to support the main idea of the paper.

- A.** It has been estimated that nearly half of all high school participates in athletics on some level.
- B.** This school district reports that each high school has a minimum of five varsity sports; this number does not include junior varsity or community leagues.
- C.** Bob Jones, Southern High's athletic director, added this comment: "We had a very successful season; injuries did not play a measurable role in our record."
- D.** District wide data indicates that students are injured on school property at a relatively low rate; last year only thirty-three accidents were reported that resulted in student injury.
- E.** One of the most visible educational campaigns has been launched by the National Football League (NFL); it is entitled "Heads UP" and trains coaches and student athletes on techniques to avoid head injuries.
- F.** In a 2010 study, American University found that close to 80 percent of high school athletes had reported injuries during their athletic careers; approximately 25 percent of these injuries were considered serious.

ANSWER: E F

QUESTION NO: 2

Read the text and answer the question.

Blue Crabs Provide Evidence of Oil Tainting Gulf Food

Weeks ago, before engineers pumped in mud and cement to plug the gusher, scientists began finding specks of oil in crab larvae plucked from waters across the Gulf coast.

The government said last week that three-quarters of the spilled oil has been removed or naturally dissipated from the water. But the crab larvae discovery was an ominous sign that crude had already infiltrated the Gulf's vast food web—and could affect it for years to come.

"It would suggest the oil has reached a position where it can start moving up the food chain instead of just hanging in the water," said Bob Thomas, a biologist at Loyola University in New Orleans.

"Something likely will eat those oiled larvae . . . and then that animal will be eaten by something bigger and so on."

Tiny creatures might take in such low amounts of oil that they could survive, Thomas said. But those at the top of the chain, such as dolphins and tuna, could get fatal "megadoses."

Marine biologists routinely gather shellfish for study. Since the spill began, many of the crab larvae collected have had the distinctive orange oil droplets, said Harriet Perry, a biologist with the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Laboratory.

"In my 42 years of studying crabs I've never seen this," Perry said.

She wouldn't estimate how much of the crab larvae are contaminated overall, but said about 40 percent of the area they are known to inhabit has been affected by oil from the spill. While fish can metabolize dispersant and oil, crabs may accumulate the hydrocarbons, which could harm their ability to reproduce, Perry said in an earlier interview with Science magazine. She told the magazine there are two encouraging signs for the wild larvae—they are alive when collected and may lose oil droplets when they molt.

Tulane University researchers are investigating whether the splotches also contain toxic chemical dispersants that were spread to break up the oil but have reached no conclusions, biologist Caz Taylor said.

If large numbers of blue crab larvae are tainted, their population is virtually certain to take a hit over the next year and perhaps longer, scientists say. The spawning season occurs between April and October, but the peak months are in July and August.

How large the die-off would be is unclear, Perry said. An estimated 207 million gallons of oil have spewed into the Gulf since an April 20 drilling rig explosion triggered the spill, and thousands of gallons of dispersant chemicals have been dumped.

Scientists will be focusing on crabs because they're a "keystone species" that play a crucial role in the food web as both predator and prey, Perry said.

Richard Condrey, a Louisiana State University oceanographer, said the crabs are "a living repository of information on the health of the environment."

Named for the light-blue tint of their claws, the crabs have thick shells and 10 legs, allowing them to swim and scuttle across bottomlands. As adults, they live in the Gulf's bays and estuaries amid marshes that offer protection and abundant food, including snails, tiny shellfish, plants and even smaller crabs. In turn, they provide sustenance for a variety of wildlife, from redfish to raccoons and whooping cranes.

Adults could be harmed by direct contact with oil and from eating polluted food. But scientists are particularly worried about the vulnerable larvae.

That's because females don't lay their eggs in sheltered places, but in areas where estuaries meet the open sea. Condrey discovered several years ago that some even deposit offspring on shoals miles offshore in the Gulf.

The larvae grow as they drift with the currents back toward the estuaries for a month or longer. Many are eaten by predators and only a handful of the 3 million or so eggs from a single female live to adulthood.

But their survival could drop even lower if the larvae run into oil and dispersants.

"Crabs are very abundant. I don't think we're looking at extinction or anything close to it," said Taylor, one of the researchers who discovered the orange spots.

Still, crabs and other estuary-dependent species such as shrimp and red snapper could feel the effects of remnants of the spill for years, Perry said.

"There could be some mortality, but how much is impossible to say at this point," said Vince Guillory, biologist manager with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Perry, Taylor and Condrey will be among scientists monitoring crabs for negative effects such as population drop-offs and damage to reproductive capabilities and growth rates.

Crabs are big business in the region. In Louisiana alone, some 33 million pounds are harvested annually, generating nearly \$300 million in economic activity, Guillory said.

Blue crabs are harvested year-round, but summer and early fall are peak months for harvesting, Guillory said.

Prices for live blue crab generally have gone up, partly because of the Louisiana catch scaling back due to fishing closures, said Steve Hedlund, editor of SeafoodSource.com, a website that covers the global seafood industry.

Fishers who can make a six-figure income off crabs in a good year now are now idled – and worried about the future.

"If they'd let us go out and fish today, we'd probably catch crabs," said Glen Despaux, 37, who sets his traps in Louisiana's Barataria Bay. "But what's going to happen next year, if this water is polluted and it's killing the eggs and the larvae? I think it's going to be a long-term problem." Excerpt from "Blue Crabs Provide Evidence of Oil Tainting Gulf Food Web" by John Flesher.

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Choose the two sentences from the text that best support the inference that blue crabs may be less impacted by the oil spill than some scientists predict.

- A. Tiny creatures might take in such low amounts of oil that they could survive, Thomas said.
- B. "In my 42 years of studying crabs I've never seen this", Perry said.
- C. She told he magazine there are two encouraging signs for the wild larvae—they are alive when collected and may lose oil droplets when they molt.
- D. "Crabs are very abundant. I don't think we're looking at extinction or anything close to it," said Taylor, one of the researchers who discovered the orange spots.
- E. Still crabs and other estuary-dependent species such as shrimp and red snapper could feel the effects of remnants of the spill for years, Perry said.

ANSWER: C D

QUESTION NO: 3

Read the text and answer the question.

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The government said last week that three-quarters of the spilled oil has been removed or naturally dissipated from the water. But the crab larvae discovery was an ominous sign that crude had already infiltrated the Gulf's vast food web – and could affect it for years to come.

"It would suggest the oil has reached a position where it can start moving up the food chain instead of just hanging in the water," said Bob Thomas, a biologist at Loyola University in New Orleans.

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If large numbers of blue crab larvae are tainted, their population is virtually certain to take a hit over the next year and perhaps longer, scientists say. The spawning season occurs between April and October, but the peak months are in July and August.

How large the die-off would be is unclear, Perry said. An estimated 207 million gallons of oil have spewed into the Gulf since an April 20 drilling rig explosion triggered the spill, and thousands of gallons of dispersant chemicals have been dumped.

Scientists will be focusing on crabs because they're a "keystone species" that play a crucial role in the food web as both predator and prey, Perry said.

Richard Condrey, a Louisiana State University oceanographer, said the crabs are "a living repository of information on the health of the environment."

Named for the light-blue tint of their claws, the crabs have thick shells and 10 legs, allowing them to swim and scuttle across bottomlands. As adults, they live in the Gulf's bays and estuaries amid marshes that offer protection and abundant food, including snails, tiny shellfish, plants and even smaller crabs. In turn, they provide sustenance for a variety of wildlife, from redfish to raccoons and whooping cranes.

Adults could be harmed by direct contact with oil and from eating polluted food. But scientists are particularly worried about the vulnerable larvae.

That's because females don't lay their eggs in sheltered places, but in areas where estuaries meet the open sea. Condrey discovered several years ago that some even deposit offspring on shoals miles offshore in the Gulf.

The larvae grow as they drift with the currents back toward the estuaries for a month or longer. Many are eaten by predators and only a handful of the 3 million or so eggs from a single female live to adulthood.

But their survival could drop even lower if the larvae run into oil and dispersants.

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Fishers who can make a six-figure income off crabs in a good year now are now idled – and worried about the future.

"If they'd let us go out and fish today, we'd probably catch crabs," said Glen Despaux, 37, who sets his traps in Louisiana's Barataria Bay. "But what's going to happen next year, if this water is polluted and it's killing the eggs and the larvae? I think it's going to be a long-term problem."

Excerpt from "Blue Crabs Provide Evidence of Oil Tainting Gulf Food Web" by John Flesher.

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Read the sentence from the text.

The government said last week that three-quarters of the spilled oil has been removed or naturally dissipated from the water.

What does the use of the word dissipated suggest? (Choose two.)

- A. Some of the spilled oil has left the Gulf waters.
- B. Some of the spilled oil has been made non-toxic.
- C. Some of the spilled oil has intensified in strength.
- D. Some of the spilled oil has separated into smaller parts.
- E. Some of the spilled oil has been consumed by ocean organisms.

ANSWER: A D

QUESTION NO: 4

Two circles that have the same radius but different centers are _____.

- A. congruent and similar
- B. congruent but not similar
- C. neither congruent nor similar

D. not congruent but similar

ANSWER: A

QUESTION NO: 5 - (HOTSPOT)

HOTSPOT

Emma is standing 10 feet away from the base of a tree and tries to measure the angle of elevation to the top. She is unable to get an accurate measurement, but determines that the angle of elevation is between 55 degrees and 75 degrees.

Decide whether each value given in the table is a reasonable estimate for the tree height. Choose Reasonable or Not Reasonable for each height.

Hot Area:

	Reasonable	Not Reasonable
4.2 feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.7 feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.4 feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33.9 feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39.1 feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58.7 feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANSWER:

	Reasonable	Not Reasonable
4.2 feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14.7 feet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.4 feet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33.9 feet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39.1 feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
58.7 feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Explanation:

QUESTION NO: 6

A student is writing an informational essay about the impact of global warming on polar bears in the Arctic.

As climate change and the effects of global warming are felt worldwide, scientists have determined that polar bears in the Arctic are just one of the many species facing extinction from our rapidly warming planet. As the ocean waters warm, the main food source for the bears is disappearing. Shortages of food are literally causing these creatures to die of starvation.

Whereas bears could previously walk out onto the sea ice and wait for a seal to poke its snout through, shrinking sea ice means the bears must now walk or swim much farther than they did before to find food. These longer migrations to find food are taking their toll on the bear population.

Seals are a polar bear’s main source of protein. They are also another victim of global warming. With the sea ice melting earlier in the warmer springtime and forming later in the warmer winters, seals struggle with finding a safe place to raise their pups. As a result, their numbers are starting to drop, meaning they are also no longer a plentiful food source for the bears

Read the attached passage and then answer this question about it. Choose the transition

sentence that would improve the links between the first and the second paragraph.

- A. Polar bears are not the only ones having a difficult time finding food.
- B. There are many reasons why the polar bears are starving.
- C. Polar bears are having a difficult time finding food.
- D. Scientists suggest that climate change is a result of the Earth’s natural cycle of heating exacerbated by man-made causes.

ANSWER: A

QUESTION NO: 7

The tip of a wall clock's minute hand measures 2.0 m from the floor at 10:00. At 10:30 it measures 1.7 m from the floor. If the motion of the minute hand is modeled as a cosine graph over a time of several hours, what would be the period and amplitude of the graph?

- A. Period = 45 min Amplitude = 2.0 m
- B. Period = 30 min Amplitude = 0.30 m
- C. Period = 60 min Amplitude = 0.15 m
- D. Period = 15 min Amplitude = 0.15 m

ANSWER: C**QUESTION NO: 8**

Sarah took 8 tests in her history class. Her highest score was 94 and her lowest score was 82.

On the 9th test of the semester, she got a 96.

Using this information, how did her mean score change when the last test was included?

- A. It was unchanged
- B. It cannot be determined from the given information
- C. It increased.
- D. It decreased.

ANSWER: C**QUESTION NO: 9**

A student is writing a research report about the Iditarod Trail and annual dogsled race in northern Alaska. Read the paragraphs from her report and the directions that follow.

Alaska's Iditarod National Historic Trail has a long and rich history of travel and trade routes, including during the Gold Rush of the nineteenth century. Located close to the Arctic Circle, the one-thousand-mile trail system is known for its rugged terrain and harsh winters. But it is primarily known for the internationally famous Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, commonly referred to as simply the Iditarod. The Iditarod was founded in the 1970s by a few Alaskans determined to commemorate the state's rich history of dogsledding and to honor a famous event: the halt of a serious diphtheria epidemic in 1925, when a crucial medical serum was delivered by dogsled to the Alaskan citizens in need.

'The Iditarod is an epic challenge for man and man's best friend: it's a grueling 1150-mile trek from Anchorage to Nome, Alaska. Although held in early spring, the conditions are extremely harsh. Each team consists of a human captain (also called a musher) leading a team of more than a dozen sled dogs—mostly Siberian Huskies, Alaskan Malamutes, or Eskimo

Dogs. Together, they brave frigid conditions, including frozen tundra and icy forests. "The Last Great Race on Earth," as it is also called, starts during the first week in March with teams generally reaching home in 10-15 days.

Choose two credible sources that would most likely give the student more information for her paragraphs.

A. "Snow Huskies" Commercial Film

This 1998 PG-13 film is a heartwarming tale about a team of ragtag Alaskan Malamutes who save their owner's ranch by winning the nation's premier dogsled race.

B. www.northernparks.com

This website has information about all of Alaska's state parks for tourists planning a visit to the country's largest state.

C. www.racetheiditarod.com

Our business will provide you with all the information you will need to race in the Iditarod. Let our team of experts help you register your dogs, find local veterinarians, and secure housing and supplies.

D. Balto: Our Hero by C.R. Benson

This book, first published in 1957 by children's literature author C.R. Benson, tells the true dramatic tale of Balto, the lead sled dog in a race against time to deliver serum during the 1925 diphtheria epidemic in Nome, Alaska.

E. "The Iditarod Trail Dog Sled Race"

United States Geographical Society www.usgeog.com/iditarod

In celebration of its 100-year history of documenting our planet's uniqueness, our staff ventured to the 49th state to cover the Iditarod. This article chronicles the history of one of the most grueling competitions in the world, nicknamed "The Last Great Race."

F. "MUSH! Alaska's Most Challenging Race"

Documentary Film

This 2007 six-hour miniseries documentary by award-winning filmmaker, Bernard Kerns, details the history and route of the famous Iditarod.

ANSWER: E F

QUESTION NO: 10

Read the text and answer the question.

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"It would suggest the oil has reached a position where it can start moving up the food chain instead of just hanging in the water," said Bob Thomas, a biologist at Loyola University in New Orleans.

"Something likely will eat those oiled larvae . . . and then that animal will be eaten by something bigger and so on."

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How large the die-off would be is unclear, Perry said. An estimated 207 million gallons of oil have spewed into the Gulf since an April 20 drilling rig explosion triggered the spill, and thousands of gallons of dispersant chemicals have been dumped.

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Adults could be harmed by direct contact with oil and from eating polluted food. But scientists are particularly worried about the vulnerable larvae.

That's because females don't lay their eggs in sheltered places, but in areas where estuaries meet the open sea. Condrey discovered several years ago that some even deposit offspring on shoals miles offshore in the Gulf.

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sets his traps in Louisiana's Barataria Bay. "But what's going to happen next year, if this water is polluted and it's killing the eggs and the larvae? I think it's going to be a long-term problem." Excerpt from "Blue Crabs Provide Evidence of Oil Tainting Gulf Food Web" by John Flesher.

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How does the last paragraph affect the presentation of information? (Choose three.)

- A. It illustrates the possible economic effects of the Gulf oil spill.
- B. It makes the report more personal by showing its effects on one individual.
- C. It provides a contrasting point of view to those expressed earlier in the text.
- D. It reinforces the idea that the oil contamination in the Gulf will have long-lasting effects.
- E. It summarizes the main types of damage scientists have identified in the Gulf ecosystem.
- F. It provides predictions about the length of time scientists expect the effects of the oil spill to last.

ANSWER: A B D

QUESTION NO: 11

Read the story attached.

"Roughing It" by Mark Twain

My brother had just been appointed Secretary of Nevada Territory – an office of such majesty that it concentrated in itself the duties and dignities of Treasurer, Comptroller, Secretary of State, and Acting Governor in the Governor's absence. A salary of eighteen hundred dollars a year and the title of "Mr. Secretary," gave to the great position an air of wild and imposing grandeur. I was young and ignorant, and I envied my brother. I coveted his distinction and his financial splendor, but particularly and especially the long, strange journey he was going to make, and the curious new world he was going to explore. He was going to travel! I never had been away from home, and that word "travel" had a seductive charm for me. Pretty soon he would be hundreds and hundreds of miles away on the great plains and deserts, and among the mountains of the Far West, and would see buffaloes and Indians, and prairie dogs, and antelopes, and have all kinds of adventures, and may be get hanged or scalped, and have ever such a fine time, and write home and tell us all about it, and be a hero. And he would see the gold mines and the silver mines, and maybe go about of an afternoon when his work was done, and pick up two or three pailfuls of shining slugs, and nuggets of gold and silver on the hillside. And by and by he would become very rich, and return home by sea, and be able to talk as calmly about San Francisco and the ocean, and "the isthmus" as if it was nothing of any consequence to have seen those marvels face to face.

What I suffered in contemplating his happiness, pen cannot describe. And so, when he offered me, in cold blood, the sublime position of private secretary under him, it appeared to me that the heavens and the earth passed away, and the firmament was rolled together as a scroll! I had nothing more to desire. My contentment was complete.

At the end of an hour or two I was ready for the journey. Not much packing up was necessary, because we were going in the overland stage from the Missouri frontier to Nevada, and passengers were only allowed a small quantity of baggage apiece. There was no Pacific railroad in those fine times of ten or twelve years ago – not a single rail of it. I only proposed to stay in Nevada three months—I had no thought of staying longer than that. I meant to see all I could that was new and strange, and then hurry home to business. I little thought that I would not see the end of that three-month pleasure excursion for six or seven uncommonly long years! I dreamed all night about Indians, deserts, and silver bars, and in due time, next day, we took shipping at the St. Louis wharf on board a steamboat bound up the Missouri River. We were six days going from St. Louis to “St. Jo.” – a trip that was so dull, and sleepy, and eventless that it has left no more impression on my memory than if its duration had been six minutes instead of that many days. No record is left in my mind, now, concerning it, but a confused jumble of savage-looking snags, which we deliberately walked over with one wheel or the other; and of reefs which we butted and butted, and then retired from and climbed over in some softer place; and of sand-bars which we roosted on occasionally, and rested, and then got out our crutches and sparred over.

In fact, the boat might almost as well have gone to St. Jo. by land, for she was walking most of the time, anyhow – climbing over reefs and clambering over snags patiently and laboriously all day long. The captain said she was a “bully” boat, and all she wanted was more “shear” and a bigger wheel. I thought she wanted a pair of stilts, but I had the deep sagacity not to say so.

What is most likely the author’s intent in mentioning the difficult time when traveling from St. Louis to “St. Jo”?

- A. to show he now regrets accepting the offer to travel with his brother to Nevada Territory
- B. to show that riverboat captains were often unprepared for the hidden dangers in the rivers they navigated, which meant there were unnecessary delays
- C. to show the difficulty and drudgery of traveling in those days, which is juxtaposed against the excitement and anticipation he felt about the opportunity to travel earlier on in the passage
- D. to show how much railways eased the travel burden (Whereas the boat he traveled on kept getting caught on the sandbars and river bottom, making progress slow, a railroad would have sped up the trip immensely.)

ANSWER: C

QUESTION NO: 12

What is the vertex for $y = x^2 - 6x + 13$?

- A. (-4,3)
- B. (-3,4)
- C. (3,4)
- D. (4,3)

ANSWER: B

QUESTION NO: 13

You are asked to write an argumentative essay in support of paternity leave being extended to new fathers. Which of these sentences would not be important to include in support of the argument?

- A.** Granting men paternity leave helps increase mothers' incomes as women can re-enter the workforce sooner, giving both partners an increased sense of self-worth.
- B.** Studies suggest that fathers who take paternity leave have an increased role in child-care-related tasks, and their involvement may have lasting impact on their children's performance in school.
- C.** There is a social stigma associated with men who want to take paternity leave after the birth of a child, and he may face negative criticism for this decision from friends, coworkers, and even family members
- D.** A child's brain develops significantly in the weeks and months following birth, and the interactions, relationships, and experiences babies are exposed to can set the stage for the rest of their lives.

ANSWER: C

QUESTION NO: 14

A student is writing a report for class about her favorite sport. Choose two sentences that are correctly punctuated.

- A.** Basketball is a fun and exciting sport to play; but it takes hard work and dedication to develop the necessary skills to become a star player.
- B.** To be a good basketball player, a person must be in good condition; basketball requires a great deal of running up and down the length of the court.
- C.** Having one really goof player on a basketball team is great; however, basketball is a team sport that requires each person to perform his or her role.
- D.** Only five players from each team can be on the court at the same time during a basketball game, other sports; such as football and soccer; allow more players to be on the field.
- E.** A high school basketball game consists of four quarters and two halves separated by halftime; with players usually going to their locker rooms so the coaches can go over plays for the second half.
- F.** Learning to dribble the ball; using the correct form to shoot the ball; and making sure one makes good passes are all important skills; players must practice these skills a great deal if the team is going to win.

ANSWER: B C

QUESTION NO: 15

Read the text and answer the question.

Moving to the Back of Beyond

When my parents said the three of us were moving out to California, to a place just north of Los Angeles, my mind immediately went to thoughts of Disneyland and Hollywood, glitz and glamour. I imagined a Rodeo Drive shopping spree to pick out a bikini for the endless days I would be spending on the beach. However, I'd forgotten about my parents' penchant

for the unconventional; they're definitely "the road less traveled" kind of people. Mom had a gopher snake for a pet when she was younger, and Dad was never happier than when he was climbing near-vertical cliffs that only mountain goats could love. These are not city folk.

They had chosen to buy a 900-square-foot cabin under a 250-year-old oak tree in the high chaparral forest out in the back of beyond – so far away from Los Angeles that you couldn't even see the glow of the lights at night. When I first saw where we were going to live, I vacillated between feeling terrified and excited. This would be an adventure, for sure. But this was no camping trip where you could go home to civilization after a few days of roughing it; this was home, and roughing it was the new normal.

On move-in day, we drove fifteen miles out from Antelope Valley – where the nearest grocery store was located – on a two-lane road past llamas, cattle, and horses. Up and up we went, until finally we turned down a dirt road and headed into a canyon full of towering Coulter pines, bluegreen sagebrush, and ancient canyon live oaks. I didn't know the names of these plants then, of course; I learned them later. That first day all I saw then was a million shades of green.

We parked under an oak tree that shaded our cabin and a front yard of rock, sand, and sagebrush twice as large as the cabin itself. On the stone staircase that led to the front door, black lizards interrupted their push-ups to twist their heads and eye us as we passed. Scrub jays squawked and hummingbirds zoomed past the eaves, scolding us with their territorial calls.

No cars roared past. No radios blared from a neighbor's house. There were no neighbors – no human neighbors, anyway.

Our new home consisted of one bedroom, one bathroom, and one big room for everything else. A fireplace in the corner of the big room would be our sole source of heat in the winter. A swamp box (cooler) would blow a breeze over a big damp pad to keep us cool all summer, or so my father said. But it was early autumn that day, and the temperature was perfect in the shade of the oak tree. Our oak tree, I thought; I was settling in.

Mom wiped a layer of grime off the kitchen counter and muttered about getting a bottle of bleach on our next trip into town. That was the beginning of an important lesson about living in the back of beyond: you don't just zip over to the local convenience store anytime you need something out here. You have to make a careful list and check it twice so that you don't forget anything, because anywhere is a long way from here.

On my first walk around the property, I saw two horned toads, a red-tailed hawk, and some deer tracks. I wondered what else I might find deeper and higher in the canyon. Dad told me the real estate agent had mentioned that coyotes, bobcats, mountain lions, rattlesnakes, and even bears roamed these hills. To my surprise, I found I couldn't wait to see them. All of them. I felt my feet taking root in the earth, claiming this place as home.

With no street lamps timed to turn on at sunset, when night came it was darker than anything I had ever experienced. Mom and I went out to look at the stars while Dad tried to unplug the ancient toilet. In the city, or even in the suburbs where I had lived before, you could see only the brightest stars in the sky. But out here, it was like being in a planetarium, except there were no labels typed onto our sky. The sheer number and spread of stars was awe-inspiring.

That first night, we slept on air mattresses on the living room floor because the movers had not yet arrived. There were no curtains on the windows, so when the moon rose, it shone in as if moonbeams were an integral part of the cabin.

Eventually, I moved into the bedroom and Mom and Dad got a foldout bed for the living room. Over the next few months, I began to count the passage of time in full moons rather than by the pages of a calendar, and for the first time I really noticed the days growing shorter in winter and longer in summer.

It's hard to believe, but we've been here for six years now. I've been going to school in the valley, but I feel most at home up here with my wild fellow canyon dwellers. Soon, I will have to leave home for college, and I'm a little afraid of the culture shock I'm sure I will feel when I move back to civilization. Soon I'll be walking on pavement and well-mowed grass again, rooming with strangers, and eating meals in a cafeteria crowded with more people than live within twenty miles of this house. But I know I will come back. The back of beyond is home now.

1. chaparral: a dense thicket of shrubs and small trees

Read the sentence from the text.

When I first saw where we were going to live, I vacillated between feeling terrified and excited.

What does the author communicate to the reader with the use of “vacillated?” (Choose three.)

- A.** The narrator’s emotions were in conflict.
- B.** The narrator had trouble deciding how to feel.
- C.** The narrator was scared and thrilled at the same time.
- D.** The narrator kept changing her mind about the situation.
- E.** The narrator stopped being scared and began to feel happy.

ANSWER: A B D