



New York State Testing Program

English

Language Arts Test

Book 1

Grade

6

January 14–18, 2008

TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some suggestions to help you do your best:

- Be sure to read carefully all the directions in the test book.
- Plan your time.
- Read each question carefully and think about the answer before choosing your response.

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Reading

***D*irections**

In this part of the test, you will do some reading and answer questions about what you have read.

Go On

Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 1 through 7.

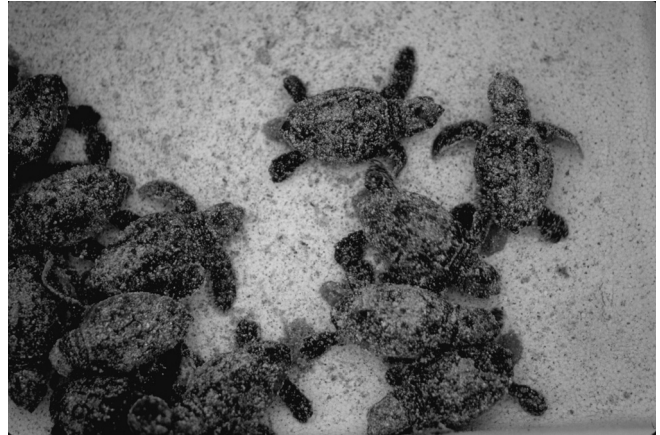
Mira Sees the Light

by Lenah Trowbridge

One warm September night, on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, soft sea breezes filled the air. The moon was full. Mira could feel the energy in the air. She felt something exciting was going to happen. She loved everything about the ocean, and this evening she had come down to the beach to enjoy the salty night air and hear the waves lapping gently against the sand.

Mira closed her eyes and listened to the waves. The gentle rolling sound was calming. Suddenly, Mira could hear another sound, too. She listened carefully. The sound was so faint she could barely hear it. She held her breath. The sound was still there.

*Scratch Scratch, Scratch . . . Scuffle Scuffle . . .
Scratch Scratch, Scratch . . . Scuffle Scuffle . . .*



Mira opened her eyes and looked down at the sand. It was moving! All of a sudden she could see a tiny head poking out. Then, she saw four tiny flippers and a shell. A turtle had emerged!

Mira looked in amazement at the baby turtle. In the moonlight she could just make out the green and brown pattern on its quarter-sized shell. It was so small! She looked closely and saw that it had a little bitty beak with a sharp point.

Mira watched with wonder as other baby turtles began to emerge. One by one they struggled out of their underground nests. Soon the beach was like a moving carpet of tiny turtles.

Mira knew the turtles should head towards the waves and swim away, so she was puzzled when they began to pull themselves towards the dunes. Why would the turtles be going away from the ocean? Suddenly, she remembered something her grandmother had told her.

“Loggerhead sea turtles come back here every year, in April. They bury their eggs on the beach and in the first week of September those baby turtles hatch and head back down to the sea. But some of them never make it. Sometimes they die going across the dunes, trying to find those bright

lights on the houses. Every day there are more houses being built on the dunes. That means more and more lights to confuse the sea turtles.”

Mira looked out across the dunes at her house. It was a simple house with weathered wooden shingles and a small back porch. Mira saw her mother and father, sitting on the porch sipping lemonade and rocking her baby sister. She could see them because her house had two bright lights that lit up the porch.

Mira began to run. She raced over the dunes and didn’t stop running until she reached the house.

Her words came out in a frenzy, “The turtles are hatching! We have to help the turtles!” With that, Mira ran into the house and turned off the bright porch lights.

“Come and see!” she shouted. In a rush she was off running down the dunes, with her whole family trailing behind her.

They reached the beach just in time to see the tiny turtles slipping silently into the waves. Mira watched as the last turtle entered the water. As the turtle swam away, it looked back at Mira. In the moonlight, Mira thought she saw it smile.

-
- 1** This story is **mainly** about
- A** enjoying the ocean
 - B** turning lights off at night
 - C** saving helpless animals
 - D** learning from grandparents
- 2** Where does **most** of the story take place?
- A** on a beach at night
 - B** in a house near the dunes
 - C** on a front porch in the evening
 - D** in the shallow water of the ocean
- 3** Why does Mira run to her house?
- A** to get a flashlight
 - B** to turn off the porch lights
 - C** to ask her grandmother about the lights
 - D** to have some lemonade with her parents

Go On

4 How does Mira know the lights confuse the turtles?

- A** She read it in a book.
- B** Her grandmother told her.
- C** She learned about the turtles at school.
- D** Her parents taught her about the turtles.

5 Read this sentence from the story.

They reached the beach just in time to see the tiny turtles slipping silently into the waves.

The phrases “tiny turtles” and “slipping silently” are examples of

- A** alliteration
- B** hyperbole
- C** metaphor
- D** simile

6 How does Mira change during the story?

- A** At first she is nervous, then she is confident.
- B** At first she is careful, then she is reckless.
- C** At first she is angry, then she is happy.
- D** At first she is calm, then she is excited.

7 “Mira Sees the Light” is **most** like

- A** a folktale
- B** a mystery
- C** realistic fiction
- D** historical fiction

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 8 through 12.

Nadia Begay: Native All-American

by Andrea N. Whittaker

Basketball player Nadia Begay is a flash of inspiration across the New Mexico plains for the people of the Navajo Nation.

Nadia Begay's basketball career has been like a storm brewing in Kirtland, New Mexico. It started quietly but has gained momentum and strength each year.

In March of 2003, the 5'8" senior two-guard led Kirtland Central High School to its 15th state championship. She scored a combined 67 points in the semi-final and championship games and finished her prep career with 1,639 points.

You'd think that a school with 15 state titles (Kirtland has made the tournament 25 years in a row) would have sent a few players to big-time colleges. But that September, Begay became the first Kirtland player to be recruited by a Division 1 college straight from high school.

Division 1 = colleges with large athletic programs

Why? Begay is a Navajo Native American. Like many Native American players in the southwest, she has lived on or near reservations her entire life. The areas are remote, so there are few opportunities for a player to be seen by national coaches.

Begay will play hoops and study sports medicine at Boise State University on a scholarship. But she might not have been noticed if it hadn't been for her determination to break through.



Hoop Dreams

Begay was born on a Navajo reservation in Tuba City, Arizona. Her mother, Jackie, played guard for Kirtland and is a former high school coach. Growing up, Begay learned to play basketball from her mom and always shot hoops in the backyard. "There isn't a house on the reservation that doesn't have a basketball goal," she says with a smile.

Go On

Begay joined her first organized team in fourth grade. By eighth grade, she had developed a smooth shooting stroke and made Kirtland's junior varsity team. She watched women's college games and thought, *Man, I want to be on TV. I want to show I can play with them.*

But she knew that college coaches weren't going to come looking for her. "Kirtland is a one-stoplight town," she says. "No Division 1 coach would come down just to watch Kirtland."

Opening the Door

In 1995, Begay's mother organized a traveling team. The team played in tournaments in Oklahoma, Oregon, and Nevada. Playing in those tournaments helped the hardworking guard with the sweet scoring touch grab the attention of Division 1 coaches.

"She always talked about playing Division 1," says friend Kym Simpson. "She worked hard, throughout the seasons and off-seasons. It paid off."

Begay and her mom sent videotapes of her highlights to Division 1 colleges around the country. By her sophomore year, schools such as San Diego State, BYU, and Penn were sending

her recruiting letters. She decided to attend Boise State after visiting the school.

"I liked the campus, the coach is new, and I thought I might fit there," she says.

Welcome to the Show

Boise's guard-friendly system should complement Begay's all-around scoring ability. In the opening minutes of the 2003 state final, Begay showcased her skills. She scored Kirtland's first four baskets by splitting the defense for a layup, going coast-to-coast for a deuce, scoring on her own steal, and draining a corner jumper. She finished with 31 points in the 89–59 win.

After the game, Begay signed autographs for a swarm of young Navajo girls. Those girls will surely be tracking Begay's college career. Some may even follow her path.

"I think [my recruitment] opens up a lot for the Navajo Nation," says Begay. "Every Division 1 coach I've talked to, I'm like, 'Why don't you come check out this other player?'"

And her plans for next season? "My goal is to start, but we'll see," she says. "I just hope to make a difference."

That's one goal Begay has already achieved.

8 According to the article, living on or near a Native American reservation made it difficult for Nadia

- A** to play basketball as a child
- B** to play on her high school team
- C** to be noticed by national coaches
- D** to learn basketball from her mother

9 The information under the subheading "Hoop Dreams" is **mainly**

- A** a look back at Nadia's start in basketball
- B** a prediction about Nadia's future in basketball
- C** a summary of how Nadia received a basketball scholarship
- D** an explanation of how Nadia achieved her basketball goals

10 Nadia Begay seems to believe that her recruitment by several Division 1 colleges will

- A** cause more people to move to Kirtland
- B** lead to opportunities for other Navajo athletes
- C** allow Kirtland to build a larger basketball gym
- D** inspire Navajo students to study sports medicine

11 In the “Opening the Door” section of the article, Nadia’s friend, Kym Simpson, makes some comments. Based on the comments, it is reasonable to conclude that Nadia’s work habits have

- A** allowed her to reach her lifelong goal
- B** been overshadowed by her great talent
- C** let her relax after the basketball season
- D** prevented her from reaching her potential

12 Which statement **best** explains why Nadia Begay is called a “flash of inspiration” to Navajos?

- A** Navajos know that Nadia learned to play basketball from her mom.
- B** Navajos know Nadia started playing basketball at a very young age.
- C** Navajo girls now believe they can earn an athletic scholarship to a major college.
- D** Navajo athletes now know they can help Kirtland Central High School win a state title.

Go On

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 13 through 16.

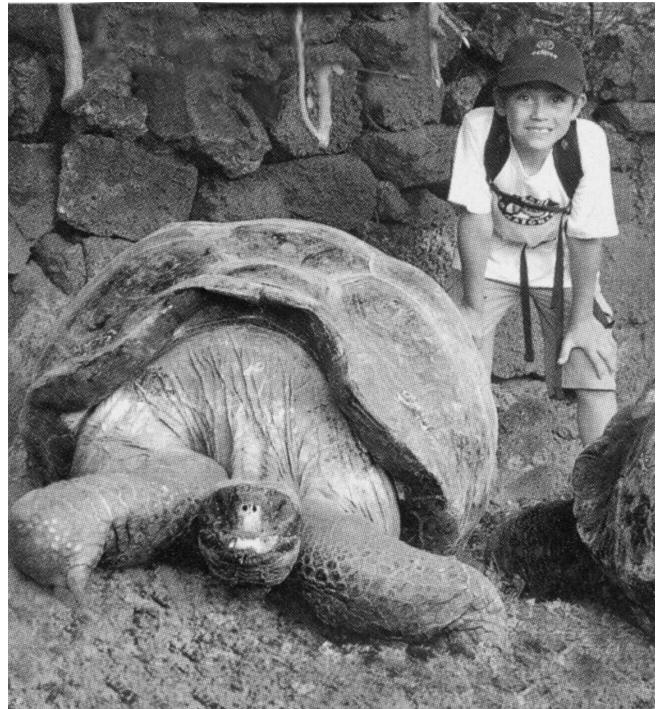
Galápagos Islands Vacation

by Melina Gerosa Bellows

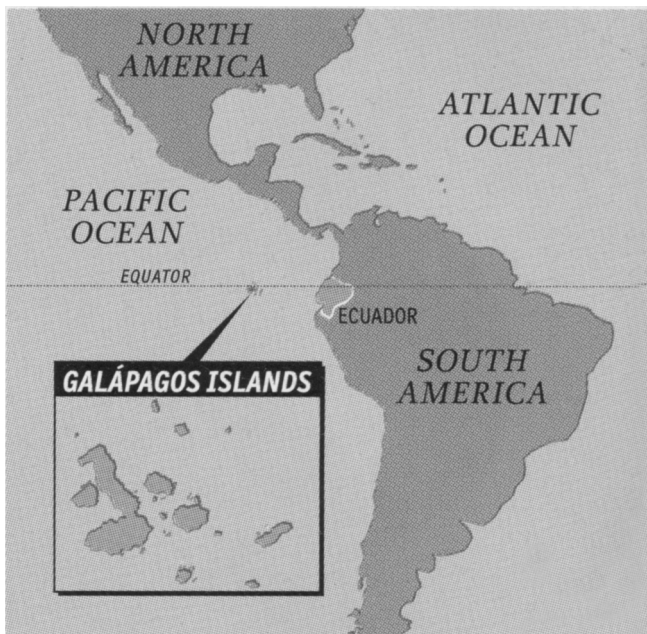
Dozens of Pacific green sea turtles are slowly gliding by me as I snorkel along a rugged reef. Suddenly a snorkeler cuts me off. Then another. “Hey!” I think. “Watch where you’re going!”

Then I realize: These aren’t snorkelers. They’re sea lions! Darting this way and that, the creatures blow bubbles at me and the group of 11 kids I’m on vacation with. The sea lions bonk us on our backs and swim off—only to zoom back for more.

My name is Melina Gerosa Bellows. I’m the editor in chief of *National Geographic Kids* magazine. I took this amazing trip to the Galápagos Islands, a group of islands straddling the equator near Ecuador, in South America. My hotel was a yacht called the *Eclipse* that had a pool and all the desserts we could eat. But the ship was nothing compared with the animals I met.



Jackson Prindle and a giant tortoise



Zoo Without Cages

Humans aren’t allowed to live on most of the Galápagos Islands. In fact, the only way you can experience this magical place is by taking a small motorboat called a “panga” from your floating hotel to all the islands. The lack of human threat makes the animals very friendly. “The animals in the Galápagos don’t know enough to be scared of humans,” says our guide, Klaus Fielsch.

The kids and I experience that firsthand. When we return to Santiago Island after our snorkeling adventure, we discover two sea lions lying right next to our backpacks! To Fielsch, it’s no big deal. He walks right up to the gigantic creatures as if they are sunbathers and gets our stuff.

As we walk along the black sand formed from pulverized lava, we see even more wildlife. A fur seal yelps for its mother. Bright red crabs cling to the rocks. Flashes of shiny black-and-white orcas splash in the distance.

“We had to search to see any animals when we vacationed in the rain forest,” says 12-year-old Harry Ashman of London, England, in the United Kingdom. “But here they’re just out in the open.”

Breaking the Rules

The following morning we again leave the *Eclipse* on the panga. It bumps along the waves until we reach Fernandina Island, known for its volcano.

We walk along the hardened lava, which looks like dark-chocolate frosting. Black marine iguanas lounge¹ on top of each other like tires in a junkyard. Flightless birds called cormorants build their nests on the rocks. Nearby are waddling Galápagos penguins. Standing about 13 inches tall, they’re the second smallest species of penguin.

¹lounge: lie in a relaxed manner

“The Galápagos Islands seem to break all the rules of nature,” says 14-year-old Hannah, Harry’s sister. “You’ve got penguins on the equator, iguanas that can swim, and birds that don’t fly!”

At the edge of a lagoon, we stop to watch a foot-long octopus. Suddenly a young sea lion pokes its head out of the water and pulls itself onto the rock where 9-year-old Jackson Prindle of Santa Monica, California, sits. Like a dog, the sea lion curiously sniffs Jackson and then backflips into the water.

As we ride the panga back to the *Eclipse*, six penguins on a rock stand like soldiers and seem to bid us goodbye. It is our last day, and none of us wants to leave this special place. But we know our trip to the Galápagos Islands has changed the way we think about the world.

“I’m really interested in saving the environment,” Hannah says. “More than ever, this trip makes me want to make sure these animals are kept safe.”

13 How does the author organize the article?

- A** She explains a problem and how it is solved.
- B** She presents ideas in order of their importance.
- C** She compares a present situation with one from the past.
- D** She describes an experience and its effect on those involved.

14 A “panga” is important on a Galápagos Islands trip because it

- A** transports visitors to each of the islands
- B** provides a place for visitors to stay at night
- C** allows visitors to feed the animals more easily
- D** protects visitors who are snorkeling along the reefs

Go On

15 According to information in the article, watching animals on the Galápagos Islands is **different** from watching animals in a rain forest because Galápagos Islands' animals are

- A** easier to find
- B** more numerous
- C** more dangerous
- D** harder to approach

16 After their vacation on the Galápagos Islands, the children in the group **most likely** believe that

- A** humans should be allowed to live on more of the islands
- B** the rain forest is a more interesting place for humans to visit
- C** humans have a responsibility to protect the natural environment
- D** the animals on the islands need to be taught to stay away from humans

Directions

Read this passage about a girl trying out for a soccer team. Then answer questions 17 through 21.

Soccer Cinderella

by Monica A. Harris

Cindi sometimes felt different from her friends. She liked sports, baseball caps, and chewing gum, all things that her friends were definitely *not* interested in.

In early spring, a flyer arrived in the mail. *City Co-Ed Soccer Team Tryouts! Saturday only.* This was it! A chance to be herself.

Saturday seemed to take forever to arrive. “Soccer shoes, water bottle, sweatpants, and, oh, can’t forget my lucky cap,” Cindi said, packing her bag.

As she parked her bike at the field, her heart sank. Her eyes searched from one end of the field to the other. “Please . . . oh please . . . let there be just one,” she thought. How could her luck be so bad? Of the 50 kids there, not one was a girl! Cindi felt as though she stuck out like a sore thumb.

“Time for Plan B,” she sighed, and darted behind the concession stand. She pulled on the sweatpants and tucked her hair up into her cap. Her heart raced as she tied her shoes. “Calm down,” she thought, “just try to blend in.” Keeping her head down, she walked over to the field.

The coach’s assistant handed out numbers to wear. “13, just perfect,” Cindi sighed.

The first tryout drills divulged Cindi’s many talents. Cindi dribbled the ball with ease, ran the fastest through the footwork obstacle course, and made passes that were always on target. “Nice work, 13,” the assistant said. Cindi was thrilled.

For the final tryout, the kids were to kick the ball past the goalie. He was the star of last year’s team and was tough to beat. When Cindi faked to the left, the goalie moved in for the block, but she wheeled around and shot to the right. Goal! The coach jotted something on his clipboard.

Each player made several attempts. A few of the boys got the ball past him, but Cindi scored every time. On the final round of shots, Cindi decided to try a direct kick over his head. Unknown to her, someone had stepped on her shoelace, and it was now untied. As she made the final kick, not only did the ball go flying into the net, but it was followed by her shoe! All the kids laughed and pointed. The assistant let out a cheer, “Double goal!”

Cindi was horrified! As she felt the tears begin to pool in her eyes, she ran to her bike. She rode home as fast as she could. Her tears blurred her vision, and her heart felt like stone. Cindi ran through the front door and scrambled up the stairs to her room. She threw herself on the bed.

A few hours had passed when there was a knock at the door. Her mother called her to come downstairs. “What now?” she wondered. As she rounded the corner, she came face to face with the soccer coach and his assistant. Her heart skipped a beat.

Go On

“Hi Cindi. I believe I have something that belongs to you,” the coach said, slowly pulling her shoe from behind his back.

“Sorry, I’ve never seen that shoe before,” Cindi lied.

“That’s funny. It has ‘C. Rella’ written in it. You are Cindi, aren’t you?”

“Yeah,” she answered, “but that’s not my shoe.”

“Well, then it won’t hurt to try it on,” the assistant said.

Cindi rolled her eyes and sat down on the chair. She arched her foot as they tried it on, but luck wasn’t on her side. The shoe slipped on with ease and seemed to hug her foot perfectly.

“Okay, it’s mine,” she said while taking it off. “I’m sorry. I guess I shouldn’t have been there today.”

“First of all,” the coach said, “you had every right to be at the tryouts. The team is co-ed, which means it’s open to boys and girls. Unfortunately, we haven’t had any girls show up . . . until now.”

The coach knelt down so that he could see Cindi’s face. “We came by to ask you if you’d like to play on the team. You have a lot of talent, and we could use your help getting to the championship this year.”

Cindi was shocked. This was it! A chance to be herself. “I’d be honored,” she answered with a bow.



17 Why is Cindi disappointed when she arrives at the soccer field?

- A** None of her friends are there.
- B** There are only boys trying out.
- C** The players are bigger than she is.
- D** There are too many kids trying out.

18 Read this sentence from the passage.

Cindi felt as though she stuck out like a sore thumb.

Which phrase **best** explains how Cindi felt?

- A** concerned about playing with an injury
- B** unsure that she could play well enough
- C** confused as to how to change her clothes quickly
- D** uneasy about being different from the other players

19 When Cindi says, “Time for Plan B,” it means that she plans to

- A** try to look like a boy
- B** try to get a different number
- C** kick the ball over the goalie’s head
- D** ask her friends to try out for the team

20 Which words best describe Cindi’s emotions at the soccer field **before** and **right after** the tryouts?

- A** sad, then delighted
- B** nervous, then upset
- C** scared, then amused
- D** confident, then angry

21 Read these sentences from the passage.

The first tryout drills divulged Cindi’s many talents. Cindi dribbled the ball with ease, ran the fastest through the footwork obstacle course, and made passes that were always on target.

In the first sentence, what does “divulged” mean?

- A** exhausted
- B** limited
- C** repaired
- D** revealed

Go On

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 22 through 26.

This Land Is Your Land

by Ashirah Knapp

I used to think that the only way to get food and clothes was to buy them. And I thought the only people who lived off the land were Native Americans of the past. Now, at the age of 26, I can happily say that's not true! I live in Maine in a house my husband and I built. We grow most of our own food, provide our own electricity, and sew our own clothes. It's fun to live off the land. We provide for ourselves and we know where our food and other materials come from. I even sewed my wedding dress out of hand-tanned buckskin.



Ashirah Knapp and her husband in front of their log home.

We live in a log cabin made from trees that we cut down ourselves (one by one) and carried on our shoulders to the building site. The trees we picked had blown over or were sick. We left the healthy trees to keep growing. With help from friends, we built our home in only two months and we had lots of fun!

Our water comes from an underground spring. The water is so cold that we use it like a refrigerator and put containers of food in it to keep them from spoiling.

We also use some things from the modern world because our life is about learning from everyone—using both old and new ways—to create a healthy plan for living on earth. Our electricity comes from two solar panels.¹

Our way of life is also our job. We lead trips for a wilderness education school in Vermont called Kroka Expeditions. On the trips we teach people about living on the land. We teach them how to build fires, collect wild plants to eat, identify animal tracks, build shelters, find dry firewood in the rain, and cook over a fire. It gives people such a good feeling when they see they can care for themselves in the most basic ways. By learning to live on the land I hope people appreciate the earth's resources and want to use them responsibly.

¹**solar panels:** large panels used to absorb sunlight, whose energy can be stored in batteries and used to make electricity

A Day in the Life (of me!)

6:30 Get up.

6:30–7:00 Stretch, do strengthening exercises, and go outside to greet the day.

7:00 Eat breakfast.

7:30 or 8:00 Morning chores (sweep the cabin, fill the woodbox, split kindling, empty the compost bucket into the compost pile, and haul water from the spring).

9:00 The main morning work, which changes with the season: lately, we've been cutting sick or dying trees into logs and pulling them out of the woods on our wood-hauling sled. In the spring, we'll saw them into boards for building projects.

12:00–1:00 Lunch

1:00–1:30 Practice guitar.

1:30–2:00 More stretching.

2:00–3:30 Office work, return phone calls and answer mail.

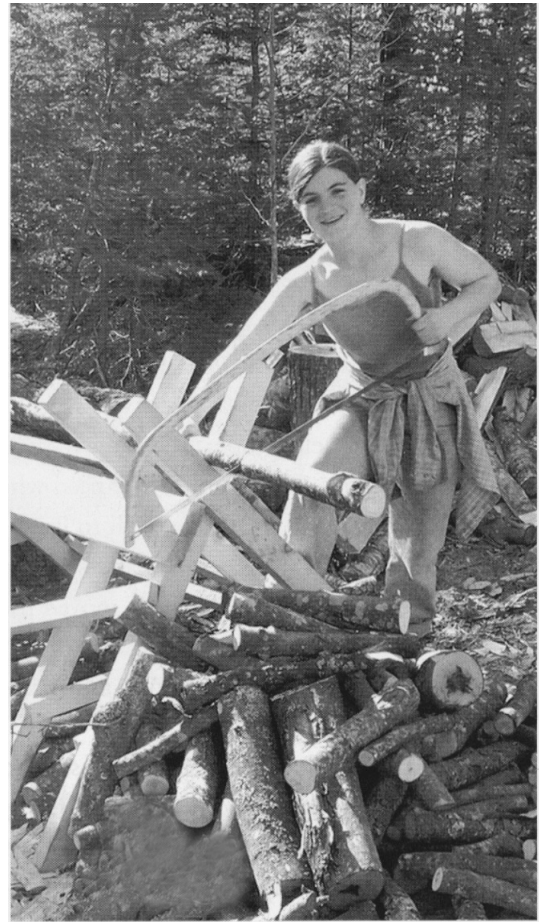
3:30–5:30 Cut firewood, weed garden, or go for a jog.

5:30–6:30 Clean up projects, put away tools, prepare supper.

6:30 Supper

7:30 Sew patches on clothes, read, write, indoor craft projects.

9:30 or 10:00 Bedtime!



22 How does the information in the box “A Day in the Life (of me!)” help the reader understand the article?

- A** It explains how the Knapps earn a living.
- B** It gives details about the daily tasks of living off the land.
- C** It gives instructions on how to perform important chores.
- D** It outlines the exercise program needed to live in this way.

23 How do the Knapps use a nearby spring to save electricity?

- A** They use the water to refrigerate food.
- B** They warm the water in the sun for bathing.
- C** They run the water through the solar panels.
- D** They use the water to cool the electrical battery.

Go On

- 24** How is the Knapps' home an example of "living off the land"?
- A** They lived in the cabin while it was being built.
 - B** They made the cabin out of wood their friends provided.
 - C** They cut down trees from their land to get wood to build their cabin.
 - D** They earned money to build the cabin by teaching wilderness classes.

- 25** Which sentence from the article expresses an **opinion**?
- A** "It's fun to live off the land."
 - B** "We live in a log cabin."
 - C** "Our water comes from an underground spring."
 - D** "Our electricity comes from two solar panels."

- 26** The **most important** lesson that Ashirah hopes people learn from her is
- A** how to collect wild plants safely
 - B** how to identify animal tracks quickly
 - C** how to use natural resources responsibly
 - D** how to treat other wilderness visitors respectfully

STOP



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