

Learning Project **8** Reading Stories

Inquiry Activity 8-2: Answering Questions

Each of the questions for this passage is presented below. The IA encourages the learner to determine what kind of question is being asked before trying to answer it. We strongly encourage learners to begin with LPs #1, 2, and 3. If this is the learners' first LP, please have them do LP #1 to learn about the kinds of questions asked on the GED Reading test.

(Note: Italicized portions should be directed to students.)

1. Identifying the Problem (Supplemental Test Items 34 – 40)

Read the passage and the test questions. Don't try to answer the questions yet.

The question refers to the excerpt from a passage introduced in Inquiry Activity 8-1.

34. Which one of the following words best describes the attitude of Chig's father toward his brother GL?

- (1) admiration
- (2) caution*
- (3) envy
- (4) thoughtfulness
- (5) resentment

35. What does the author suggest about Chig's father when he says, "His father had never talked much about his family...?"

Chig's father recalled that he had

- (1) abandoned his family by leaving home
- (2) only a few happy childhood memories
- (3) never really knew any of his brothers
- (4) no interest in a relationship with his family*
- (5) been unable to find his mother and brothers

36. According to the passage, why did Chig's father leave home at fifteen?

- (1) to support his family
- (2) to find his father
- (3) to help his brother
- (4) to get an education*
- (5) to look for a job

37. On the basis of what the author states in the passage, what happens to Chig's father after he left home at fifteen?

He

- (1) achieved most of his personal goals*
- (2) regretted his decision to leave his mother and brothers
- (3) worked to provide financial support for his mother
- (4) wandered around trying to understand his family
- (5) suffered many disappointments with his own son



38. What is the purpose of paragraph six?

- (1) to explain the grandmother's feelings for Chig
- (2) to tell why Charles had left home
- (3) to describe Chig's grandmother*
- (4) to introduce Charles's brothers and their wives
- (5) to reveal why Charles had come home

39. How does the grandmother react when she recognizes Chig as her grandson?

She is

- (1) amazed how tall he has grown
- (2) surprised that he had come to visit her*
- (3) angry that he did not have a gift for her
- (4) anxious for him to meet his Uncle GL
- (5) irritated that his mother was not with him

40. What is the author's purpose in this passage?

To reveal

- (1) Chig's relationship with his father's family
- (2) the father's feelings about his brothers
- (3) Charles's activities since he left home
- (4) the grandmother's dislike of Chig's mother
- (5) Chig's father's reunion with his mother*

2. Becoming Familiar with the Problem

Remember, in this step, we are focusing on becoming familiar with the questions through pre-reading strategies, not answering them from the passage.

Preview the Questions: What do you see? What kinds of questions are these? How would you go about **clarifying** anything you might not understand in the questions?

Activate/Build from Prior Knowledge: Have you seen questions like these before? What do you know about questions like these?

Consider/Build Interest: Why would you be interested in answering these questions?

Set a Purpose: What do the questions ask you to do?

3. Planning, Assigning, and Performing Tasks

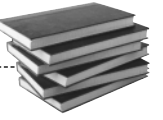
Planning: Determine if you want to work individually, with a partner, or in a small group.

Doing the Work: As you read the questions and reread the passage, do the following:

Clarify:

Scan the passage, find and mark any words you might not know. See if the passage gives you enough information to **clarify** the meaning of those words. If not, find the meaning by asking somebody or looking it up.

Were there any places in the passage where you did not understand what was going on?

**Analyze:**

Read the questions and the answer choices. Based on what the questions are asking you to do, find the words in the passage that provide the answers. Continue doing this until you have completed reading the passage.

Read the answer choices for each question and decide if the information in the answer is:

- not in the passage,
- the opposite of the information in the passage, or
- not accurate.

Going through this process allows the test-taker to find this answer, which is directly stated. Test-takers should do this step each time; when they find the answer they can stop.

Remind yourself what the questions are asking you to do.

Some students may prefer the graphic presented in IA 2-2. Others can identify whether the answers are in the passage, the opposite of what is in the passage, or not in the passage. The model for this graphic is in Appendix C.

Determine which answer choices have the support from the passage by looking at your graphic.

The correct answer for Question 34 is (2) Chig's father feels caution towards his brother GL. The description of cute, but potentially dangerous, supports that answer.

The correct answer for Question 35 is (4) he had no interest in a relationship with his family. The fact that he talks about them rarely, that the trip was not overtly planned, and that they had not gone before all support that choice.

The passage states that the father left home to go to high school in Knoxville. The correct answer question 36 is (4) to get an education.

In question 37, the correct answer is that (1) Chig's father had achieved most of his personal goals. The inference for this is the biggest stretch, and needs some extended synthesis from the reader. We know that most people who go to reunions are relatively satisfied with their lives, that as a teenager, the father valued education enough to leave his family and not return, that he can afford to travel from New York to unspecified Southern locations for an extended period of time, and that he and his son have taken this trip together. These facts argue that he has succeeded in his life.

The correct answer to question 38 is (3) to describe Chig's grandmother. The paragraph is filled with descriptive details of the tiny, elderly woman.

The answer for question 39 is (2) grandmother is surprised. She was not expecting this visit.

The correct answer to question 40 is (5) to reveal Chig's father's reunion with his mother. It is the only action that occurs in the passage, and the variety of intense and conflicting emotions are all about the two seeing each other again.

Whenever learners see a question asking author's purpose, they should not look for a direct answer; they should synthesize all the details the author provides. They will be looking for a broader answer.

4. Sharing with Others

Telling other people what you know helps you to understand the material better. So take this opportunity not only to share the knowledge, but also to learn it more completely.

Small Groups: Compare the answer you found with the others in the group. Discuss the methods you used to find the answer, the support for your answer in the passage, and the reasons why each learner thinks his/her answer and the support are correct.

Agree on the correct answer and a reading strategy you would use for answering questions that ask you to **recognize supporting detail**.

Whole Class: Report to the class the group's answers to the questions, the methods used to find the answers, the support for the answers chosen, and your group's strategy for answering questions that ask you to **recognize supporting detail**.



5. Reflecting, Extending, and Evaluating

Reflecting: *Think about how well you understood what you have done.*

Here are some questions to start you thinking about the experience you just had. Thinking about what you have experienced is part of the learning process. When the focus is only on the answer, you don't get much time to think about what you learned.

How might the activity you did when you read the passage in 8-1 help you answer the questions?

The author's purpose can be seen not only from the scenes and occurrences, but also in the words used and the emotions shown. In fiction, the author creates everything for the purpose, something that many learners have not considered.

How does supporting your answer from the passage help you in getting the answer?

Extending: *Extend what you learned to new situations.*

In extending, you are being asked to transfer the information presented in the Practice Test question to other information or situations.

This is the most contemporary of the fiction selections. You may see an opportunity to discuss how that makes it different from the other fiction passages.

Give an example of one kind of reading you do at home or on the job. What kinds of materials do you read: books, newspapers, magazines, memos, letters, newsletters, reports?

All your learners should be encouraged to do more reading; it is the best way to practice and develop the reading strategies they need. If they have one favorite kind of reading material, encourage them to extend their selections beyond that.

*What approaches (strategies) might you use to read that material to find **supporting details**?*

*Using the passage in 8-1, develop multiple-choice questions that ask for **supporting detail** that is different from the question in this Inquiry Activity. Pass your questions to other group members or the whole class and, using the strategies discussed in class to read the passage and the question and answer choices, answer the questions. Discuss.*

*What other Inquiry Activities discussed **inference**?*

*What do you remember about the discussions about **inference**?*

*Where else in your life has someone made an **inference**?*

*In your opinion, when is **inference** useful? When is it harmful?*

If the discussion about the choices varied widely, this might be a place to raise the issue of not being clear about the facts when readers make **inferences**.

Evaluating: *Assess what you learned and how you learned it.*

In this last step, you get a chance to review the methods used to learn. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; it is your chance to look more closely at your learning style and the opportunity to state how you benefited or didn't benefit from the content and/or methods presented in this IA.

What did you learn from this Inquiry Activity?

What parts of the activity worked best for you? Explain.

What parts did not work well for you? Explain.

What parts of this Inquiry Activity will you use when taking the GED test? Why?

How did reading this way make you feel?