

**15-16 ELA Benchmark 3 Grade 6**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the passage. Then answer questions 1—6.****A Trip to the Empire State Building**

1 Looking up from the sidewalk, Meredith could not see the tip of the radio antenna that topped this great architectural structure. True, she was shorter than average and could rarely see the top of anything, but this was entirely different. She leaned as far back as she could, but it was of no use. There was no way her small size would allow her to see the top. She was shaking like a leaf as the time approached for her and her family to go straight up into the sky.

2 Meredith and her family were on vacation in New York City; they had driven many hours to get to the destination. Now Meredith and her family would get to see the spectacular view of New York City from the observatory on the 86th floor of the Empire State Building. There was only one minor problem: Meredith was extremely frightened of heights. It would be a struggle to get her to look out of the large, glass windows of the 86th floor.

3 Meredith's brother, Malcolm, was enormously excited about going to the top of the second tallest skyscraper in the United States. He was so eager that he was actually willing, and probably very able, to run, not walk, up the 1,860 steps that led to the very top of the Empire State Building. He had once read about a guy who ran up the stairs of the Empire State Building in under ten minutes. He wanted to try this, but his parents would not even consider it. Meredith thought he was **absurd** for even thinking about it.

4 Now it was the Moore family's turn to climb into the elevator and travel over 1,000 feet upward to the observation deck. Malcolm was so thrilled that he looked like he was going to burst. His excitement was making Meredith feel less than fabulous. Meredith, in stark contrast to her brother, was an absolute, trembling wreck. She was visibly shaking and had turned as white as a ghost. Meredith thought about the time when she was just six years old and her family had ridden a ski lift in the summer. It was on this trip that Meredith realized that she was terrified of heights. She remembered the sick feeling that had suddenly swept over her as the lift climbed the side of the mountain. She had closed her eyes that entire time and had made her parents immediately turn around and descend down the mountain. Meredith did not want to repeat that event. Meredith knew that it was now crunch time, and there was no going back. She needed to face the situation. Her mother tried to comfort her. "I know this is no bed of roses for you, but it'll be all right, honey; I promise."

5 Meredith tried to convince herself that she was completely fine, even though she felt very uneasy about going up in the elevator. She began sweating freely. It felt as if the **butterflies in her stomach** seemed to become more active, making her feel as if she might get sick. Still, she did her best to make the butterflies flutter away. She closed her eyes, trying not to think about how high the elevator was going. She slowly opened her eyes and looked at the numbers lighting up above the elevator door: 35...36...37...38...She closed her eyes quickly. The higher the numbers got, the more Meredith wanted to get off the elevator, but she pushed these thoughts away. She had to conquer her fear. She wanted to get in another elevator that was going down to the **desirable** lobby below. That would please her immensely, but Meredith was determined to fight her fears and go to the observation deck to look at the beautiful city of

New York from above. She knew that she needed to prove to herself and to her family that she could defeat this fear.

6 "We're almost there," yelled Malcolm excitedly, and he began counting as the floors passed, "80...81...82..."

7 Meredith's legs were getting weak, but she tried to be strong. She was trying to put herself in a happy place, so she would not think about how high she and her family were above the bustling city of New York.

8 "83...84," Malcolm continued counting, "85...ding!" Malcolm made a dinging noise as the elevator reached the 86th floor. "We're here," he screamed and bolted out the opening elevator doors. His parents yelled to him, but it was too late. He had already pressed his face against the glass and was staring out across New York's skyline. "This is cool!" he called to Meredith. "You've got to see this; it's incredible."

9 As Meredith stood side-by-side with her brother, her fears were forgotten as she took in the beautiful sites of the city.

1. In paragraph 4, how does the flashback about the family's trip up a ski lift fit into the development of the story's plot?
  - A. The flashback shows that Meredith's family takes annual vacations.
  - B. The flashback shows why Meredith is determined to face her fear of heights.
  - C. The flashback shows that Meredith is scared of taking risks.
  - D. The flashback shows how Meredith's parents listen to her concerns.

2. How does the author's use of figurative language in the following sentence impact the meaning of the passage?

"It felt as if the butterflies in her stomach seemed to become more active, making her feel as if she might get sick."

- A. The sentence shows that Meredith is developing a cold.
- B. The sentence shows how quickly butterflies can flutter.
- C. The sentence shows that Meredith is nervous.
- D. The sentence shows that the skyscraper is extremely high.

3. In paragraph 3, Meredith's brother wants to run up the 1,860 steps in under ten minutes. Meredith thinks he is **absurd** for even thinking about it.

What meaning is the author trying to convey by using the word **absurd**?

- A. The author wants to convey that Meredith's brother running up all those steps is ridiculous.
  - B. The author wants to convey that Meredith's brother running up all those steps is immature.
  - C. The author wants to convey that Meredith's brother running up all those steps is creative.
  - D. The author wants to convey that Meredith's brother running up all those steps is sensible.
4. Your teacher has asked you to write a summary paragraph of this narrative. Which of the following would be the best topic sentence for your summary?
- A. It is important to have fears to overcome.
  - B. It is important to face your fears in order to overcome them.
  - C. It is important to face your fears with your family.
  - D. It is important to spend time with the ones you love.
5. How does the author develop the mother's point of view when she says, "I know this is no bed of roses for you, but it will be alright, honey; I promise"?
- A. The mother is becoming impatient and frustrated with Meredith's fears.
  - B. The mother is concerned that Meredith will not be able to overcome her fear.
  - C. The mother is understanding and encourages her daughter to overcome her fears.
  - D. The mother presents a flower to Meredith to soothe her reluctance to climb to the top.
6. Which of the following sentences uses pronouns correctly?
- A. Meredith and her family were on vacation in New York City; they had driven many hours to get to their destination.
  - B. Meredith and her family were on vacation in New York City; they had driven many hours to get to her destination.
  - C. Meredith and her family were on vacation in New York City; they had driven many hours to get to our destination.
  - D. Meredith and her family were on vacation in New York City; they had driven many hours to get to his destination.

Read the passage. Then answer questions 7-15.

### The Empire State Building

1 Today, New York's Empire State Building is one of the most famous structures in the world. It stands hundreds of feet taller than the skyscrapers that surround it and is visible from far away in Long Island and New Jersey. But it isn't the tallest building in the world. Since the recent completion of One World Trade Center, it isn't even the tallest building in New York City!

2 However, when the Empire State Building was constructed in the 1930s, it was more than just another skyscraper. It was the tallest, most remarkable building on earth—and it stayed that way for close to forty years.

3 The Empire State Building was built at the site of the famous Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. A group headed by the former New York governor Alfred E. Smith proposed to build an office building there—not just any office building, but the greatest in the world. At the time the Empire State Building was built, there was fierce competition to see who could build the tallest building on earth. They felt they had found a solution to the overcrowded population of the district. The nearby Chrysler Building was set to claim the title, but Smith and his friends, believing **the sky's the limit**, wanted to steal it from them by building something so big that it would be years before anyone could top it.

4 There was just one little problem: The Great Depression. The stock market crashed at the end of 1929, destroying banks, emptying savings accounts, and leaving millions out of work. But the men behind the Empire State Building would not be stopped!

5 Construction began on the bottom floors even before the designs for the top floors had been finalized. Once it started, it went fast. *The New York Times* described the process as "a chase up into the sky, with the steel workers going first and all the other trades following madly after them."

6 To illustrate this, reporters produced some staggering figures:

- The building of the skyscraper represents an investment of \$50,000,000 and all other figures are in proportion.
- More than 50,000 tons of steel, 10,000,000 bricks, and 200,000 cubic feet of stone will be used before the frame is completed.
- There will be seventy□ five miles of water mains and 2,000,000 feet of electric light and power wiring.
- More than 3,000 men are daily at work, including 225 carpenters, 290 bricklayers, 384 brick laborers, 328 arch laborers, 107 derrick men.


7 Each day, those 3,000 men walked to work past long unemployment lines, which reminded them how lucky they were to have such well□ paying jobs. Building the Empire State Building was a dangerous job, performed without hard hats, harnesses, or any of the safety equipment required today. Imagine walking out on a narrow steel beam 1,000 feet above the street and then having to work up there all day!

8 On each floor, there was a miniature railway system to haul the steel, wood, and marble brought up from street level. To keep the men from having to go all the way down to eat lunch, there were restaurants at various levels of the building designed for the workers. At night, when the bosses went home, the workers could relax. They would pick a specific floor of the building and throw a party—laughing and having fun, knowing that they were higher above the city than any of the richest men in town.

9 The building was finished in just over a year. Although the Empire State Building is no longer the world's tallest building, it is still visited by millions of tourists each year and has been featured in over ninety movies ranging from *King Kong* to *Sleepless in Seattle*.

7. Read the webpage below then answer the question that follows.

**ADDRESS@** <http://www.Skyscrapers.org/EmpireStateBuilding.htm> **>>GO**



# SKYSCRAPERS.ORG

**SEARCH**  
by Location

**SEARCH**  
by Name

**SEARCH**  
by Size

**SEARCH**  
by Year Built

[History of Skyscrapers](#)

[Construction Skyscrapers](#)

[in the News](#)

[Statistics](#)

[Empire State Building/Facts](#)

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## Interesting Facts about the Empire State Building

If asked to name the most famous skyscraper in the world, many people would say the Empire State Building in New York City. Although it's not the tallest or even the most recent to be built, it is still one of the most well known of all skyscrapers. Here are some interesting facts about the Empire State Building.

- It took more than 3,000 workers a little more than a year to build.
- Its steel frames weigh 60,000 tons.
- Looking out from its observatory on a clear day, one can see 80 miles in all directions.
- It contains more than 10 million bricks; 6,000 windows; 70 miles of water pipes; 3,194,547 light bulbs; and more than 4,500 miles of electrical wire.
- It has 1,576 steps between the lobby and the 86th floor.
- It is the workplace for about 25,000 people. They move through the building using 73 elevators.
- For 41 years, it was the tallest skyscraper in the world.
- Each month it produces about 1,000 tons of garbage. That is the same as the weight of about 20 adult elephants.
- Each year it is visited by more than 3 million tourists.

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What do you think both the author of "The Empire State Building" and the author of the webpage above **most** want you to understand about the Empire State Building?

- A. The Empire State Building took just over a year to build.
- B. The Empire State Building is no longer the tallest building in the world.
- C. The Empire State Building is a truly amazing skyscraper.
- D. The Great Depression slowed construction of the Empire State Building.

8. What type of evidence does the author use to show how much effort it took to complete the Empire State Building?
- A. The author provides facts and figures.
  - B. The author explains it took just over a year to build.
  - C. The author states that it remained the tallest building for forty years.
  - D. The author provides information about the miniature railway system.
9. Why does the author choose to use the idiom "the sky's the limit" in paragraph 3 of the passage?
- A. to show that Smith and his friends feel limited by how tall the building can be.
  - B. to show that Smith and his friends are afraid of heights
  - C. to show that Smith and his friends will stop at nothing to steal the blueprints for the Chrysler Building
  - D. to show that Smith and his friends believe nothing can stop them from building the tallest building in the world
10. How does the following sentence in paragraph 3 contribute to the development of the idea that construction of the Empire State Building faced obstacles?
- "The stock market crashed at the end of 1929, destroying banks, emptying savings accounts, and leaving millions out of work."
- A. It might have been more difficult to find enough workers to build the Empire State Building during the Great Depression.
  - B. It might have been more difficult to find a location to build the Empire State Building during the Great Depression.
  - C. It might have been more difficult to find enough money to build the Empire State Building during the Great Depression.
  - D. It might have been more difficult to find enough steel to build the Empire State Building during the Great Depression.
11. In which paragraph of the passage would this sentence best be added to develop the topic?
- "The Empire State Building was finished on May 1, 1931—45 days ahead of schedule and about five million dollars under budget."
- A. paragraph 5
  - B. paragraph 9
  - C. paragraph 2
  - D. paragraph 6

12. What is the best transition to use between the two sentences below to clarify their relationship?

"But it isn't the tallest building in the world. Since the recent completion of One World Trade Center, it isn't even the tallest building in New York City!"

- A. In fact
- B. Such as
- C. However
- D. Finally

13. Read the sentence below from the passage.

"*The New York Times* described the process as a '**chase** up into the sky, with the steel workers going first and all the other trades following **madly** after them."

Why does the author include the words **chase** and **madly**?

- A. The author wants to show the worker's anger over the Depression and lack of jobs.
- B. The author wants to show the rush of energy that went into the building's construction.
- C. The author wants to show that the building was put together too quickly.
- D. The author wants to show that the other trades wished they could have been first.

14. How could the author ensure the essay is written in a more formal style?

- A. The author could use more personal pronouns.
- B. The author could use more contractions.
- C. The author could use fewer contractions.
- D. The author could delete facts to back up his claims.

15. In the conclusion, why did the author most likely include information about movies featuring the Empire State Building?

- A. The author wants to show the popularity of movies.
- B. The author wants to prove that the Empire State Building is well-known.
- C. The author wants to emphasize the height of the building.
- D. The author wants to convince the reader to visit the Empire State Building.