

ELA Benchmark 4 Grade 6

Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

Read the speech. Then answer questions 1 - 11.**Halitosis Must End!***by Melanie Chavez, 6th grade class president*

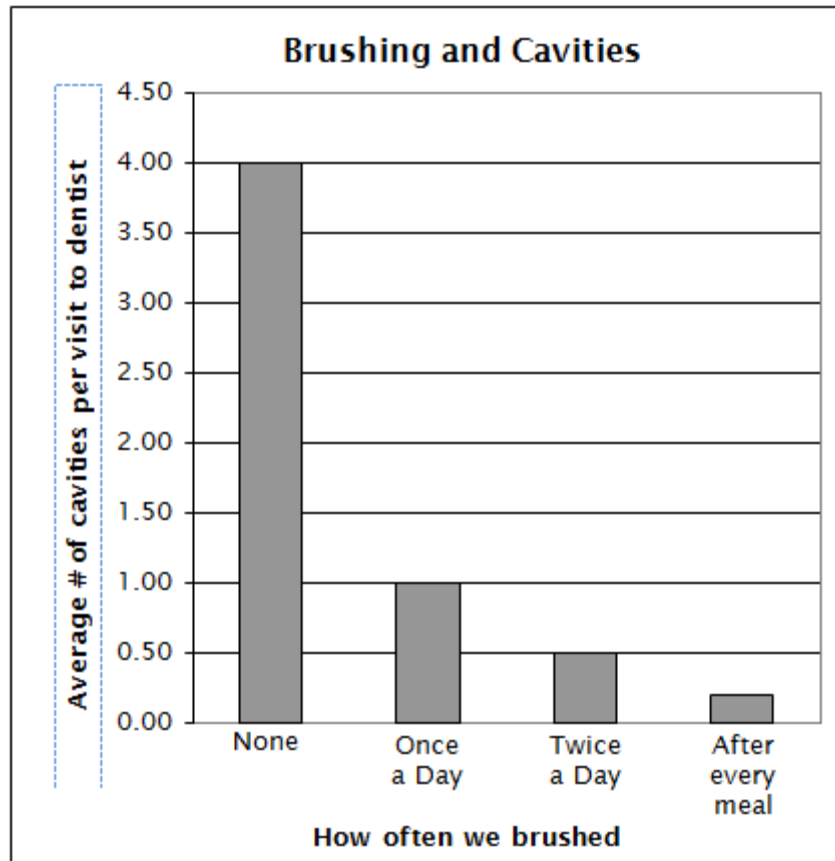
Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your warm welcome. It is an honor to speak to you today on the dreadful topic of *halitosis*. On television news shows we constantly see stories on outbreaks of flu, new diseases, and all manner of medical emergencies that bring despair. Of all these, halitosis is one of the most disgusting a person can have, and they [television news shows] ignore it. It very seldom gets included in their **dismal documents of doom**. Yet, all too many school-age children still suffer from it.

Now, some people don't think the health risks of halitosis are sufficient to call for painful public prevention practices, and I have to wonder if those people have ever had a friend or relative suffering with this condition. When you have halitosis, people always become aware of it. You can't hide it. They start to avoid you. They turn away or take two steps back when you talk, and then they talk about you behind your back. They make faces, and the ruder of them hold their nose. Yes, you've probably figured out what I'm talking about: bad breath! I mean really bad breath—the kind so bad that doctors made up a *Latin* word for it; the kind requiring mouthwashes that feel like you've shot a flame-thrower at your tongue; the kind that steams up your glasses, when you don't even wear glasses! I'm talking BAD breath! Oh, you laugh now, but I see some of you covering your mouth even as I speak!

Enough fun; let us get serious for a moment. Yes—bad breath can make your social life a mess—but more importantly halitosis can be a sign of a more serious illness. Everything from tooth decay to a sore throat can cause people to have bad breath. Most of these can be prevented or lessened with good oral hygiene. I'm here to remind you to brush your teeth regularly, use a mouthwash or rinse, and—here's the one that most of you hate—floss! Continually cleaning your mouth, tongue, and teeth will prevent tooth decay, as you know. What you should also know is that killing those germs lessens your chances of catching colds and other infections we take in through our mouths.

Good mouth care will get rid of the less harmful forms of halitosis. If you have bad breath that just won't go away, do something more. Ask your parents to take you to your dentist or a doctor to examine your mouth and throat. Finding illnesses early helps cure them, especially many of the sicknesses that cause bad breath, such as tonsillitis, mouth ulcers, canker sores, and minor lung infections. We live in a time when there are many great and nearly miracle making medicines, but the best health starts with cleanliness. Cleanliness is so easy, it's obviously absurd not to put out the effort for your health.

So, I'm here to remind you to wash your hands, wash your clothes, and wash your mouth! Thank you and your teachers for letting me speak to you today.



1. Which characteristic below distinguishes this passage as a speech?
 - A. The author strongly expresses an opinion.
 - B. The author uses humor to get people's attention.
 - C. The author has a tremendous amount of voice.
 - D. The author directly addresses an audience.

2. How does the author use paragraph 2 to contribute to the development of the ideas in the passage?
 - A. The author uses humor to engage the audience.
 - B. The author convinces the audience members to use good oral hygiene.
 - C. The author informs the audience on ways to make friends.
 - D. The author informs the audience how to act when a friend has bad breath.

3. While keeping the original meaning, what is the best way to edit the following compound sentence from paragraph 3?

“Yes—bad breath can make your social life a mess — but more importantly, halitosis can be a sign of more serious illnesses.”

- A. “Yes. Bad breath can make your social life a mess; but more importantly halitosis can be a sign of a more serious illness.”
 - B. “Yes bad breath can make your social life a mess but more importantly halitosis can be a sign of a more serious illness.”
 - C. “Yes, bad breath can make your social life a mess, but more importantly halitosis can be a sign of a more serious illness.”
 - D. “Yes, bad breath can make your social life a mess — halitosis can be a sign of a more serious illness.”
4. What is the best transitional word to use between the two sentences below to clarify their relationship?
- “Good mouth care will get rid of the less harmful forms of halitosis. If you have bad breath that just won’t go away, do something more.”
- A. However,
 - B. Similarly,
 - C. In fact,
 - D. Moreover,
5. Based on paragraph 3 of the speech, what can the audience infer about people who have good oral hygiene?
- A. They will be healthier and live longer.
 - B. They will have fewer illnesses and infections.
 - C. They will be the most popular students at school.
 - D. They will save a lot of money by not going to the dentist.

6. Using context clues, determine the meaning of the word **condition** as it is used in this passage.

“Now, some people don’t think the health risks of halitosis are sufficient to call for painful public prevention practices, and I have to wonder if those people have ever had a friend or relative suffering with this **condition**.”

- A. situation
- B. circumstance
- C. form
- D. illness

7. Reread the author’s concluding statement. Which would be the most effective statement to better conclude the argument presented in the speech?

“So, I’m here to remind you to wash your hands, wash your clothes, and wash your mouth! Thank you and your teachers for letting me speak to you today.”

- A. “So, now that I have told you about the importance of oral hygiene, grab your toothbrush, dental floss, and mouthwash, and get started!”
- B. “Sure, it takes extra effort, but simply brushing, flossing, and using mouthwash will promote better breath and prevent more serious medical complications.”
- C. “So, if you don’t want bad breath, I suggest you start brushing, flossing, and using mouthwash daily.”
- D. “Sure, even though it seems like a lot of work, it could ultimately reduce the number of doctor visits.”

8. How does the author’s use of figurative language in the following passage impact the meaning of the passage?

“Of all these, halitosis is one of the most disgusting a person can have, and they [television news shows] ignore it. It very seldom gets included in their **dismal documents of doom**.”

- A. It emphasizes that doctors believe halitosis leads to depression.
- B. It emphasizes that the news media is uninformed about halitosis.
- C. It emphasizes that the news media focuses on more serious illnesses other than halitosis.
- D. It emphasizes that halitosis is too disgusting to document on the news.

9. Based on the stem **-itis** meaning “inflammation,” what does the word **tonsillitis** mean?
- A. the disease of the throat
 - B. the removing of the tonsils
 - C. the infection of the tonsils
 - D. the loss of voice
10. Based on the graph at the end of the passage, what is the **best** way to lessen your trips to the dentist?
- A. brushing after every meal
 - B. doing nothing
 - C. drinking plenty of milk
 - D. brushing once a day
11. Which of the claims below does the speaker NOT support with evidence?
- A. “Good mouth care will get rid of the less harmful forms of halitosis.”
 - B. “...bad breath can make your social life a mess...”
 - C. “Most of these [illnesses] can be prevented or lessened with good oral hygiene.”
 - D. “Halitosis can be a sign of a more serious illness.”

Read the article. Then answer questions 12 - 21.

What is Halitosis?

More than 80 million people suffer from chronic halitosis or bad breath. In most cases it originates from the gums and tongue. The odor is caused by wastes from bacteria in the mouth the decay of food particles other debris in your mouth and poor oral hygiene. The decay and debris produce a sulfur compound that causes the unpleasant odor.

What causes bad breath?

Bad breath is primarily caused by poor oral hygiene but can also be caused by retained food particles or gum disease.

Does bad breath come from other sources than the mouth?

Bad breath also may occur in people who have a medical infection, diabetes, kidney failure, or a liver malfunction. Xerostomia, dry mouth, and tobacco also contribute to this problem. Cancer patients who undergo radiation therapy may experience dry mouth. Even stress, dieting, snoring, age, and hormonal changes can have an effect on your breath. An odor that comes from the back of your tongue may indicate postnasal drip. Mucus secretion

comes from the nose and moves down your throat. These secretions get stuck on the tongue and cause an odor.

Why is saliva so important in the fight against bad breath?

Saliva is the key ingredient in your mouth that helps keep the odor under control because it helps wash away food particles and bacteria, the primary cause of bad breath. When you sleep, salivary glands slow down the production of saliva, allowing the bacteria to grow inside the mouth. To **alleviate** "morning mouth," brush your teeth and eat a morning meal. Morning mouth is also associated with hunger or fasting.

Do certain foods cause bad breath?

Very spicy foods, such as onions and garlic, and coffee may be detected on a person's breath for up to 72 hours after digestion. Onions, for example, are absorbed by the stomach, and the odor is then excreted through the lungs. Studies even have shown that garlic rubbed on the soles of the feet can show up on the breath.

How do I control bad breath?

It is important to practice good oral hygiene, such as brushing and flossing your teeth at least twice a day. Proper brushing, including brushing the tongue, cheeks, and the roof of the mouth, will remove bacteria and food particles. Flossing removes accumulated bacteria, plaque and food that may be trapped between teeth. To **alleviate** odors, clean your tongue with your toothbrush or a tongue scraper, a plastic tool that scrapes away bacteria that builds on the tongue. Chewing sugar-free gum also may help control odor. If you have dentures or a removable appliance, such as a retainer or mouthguard, clean the appliance thoroughly before placing it back in your mouth. Before you use mouthrinses, deodorizing sprays or tablets, talk with your dentist, because these products only mask the odor temporarily and some products work better than others.

What is my dentist's role?

Visit your dentist regularly, because checkups will help detect any physical problems. Checkups also help get rid of the plaque and bacteria that build up on your teeth. If you think that you suffer from bad breath, your dentist can help determine its source. He may ask them to schedule a separate appointment to find the source of the odor. Or, if your dentist believes that the problem is caused from a systemic (internal) source, such as an infection, he or she may refer you to your family physician or a specialist to help remedy the cause of the problem.

12. Based on the evidence in the introductory paragraph, what inference can you make about halitosis?
- A. Preventing halitosis is expensive and difficult.
 - B. The causes of halitosis remain unknown.
 - C. Halitosis is a very common condition.
 - D. Halitosis is an incurable condition.

13. In the section with the subheading “**Do certain foods cause bad breath?**” why did the author include the following sentence?

“Very spicy foods, such as onions and garlic, and coffee may be detected on a person’s breath for up to 72 hours after digestion.”

- A. to discourage readers from eating spicy foods
 - B. to illustrate the sensitivity of the digestive system
 - C. to list the only causes of halitosis
 - D. to inform readers of foods that cause halitosis
14. What is the correct way to punctuate this sentence from paragraph 1?
- “More than 80 million people suffer from chronic halitosis or bad breath.”
- A. “More than 80 million people suffer from chronic halitosis; or bad breath.”
 - B. “More than 80 million people suffer from chronic halitosis, or bad breath.”
 - C. No Change
 - D. “More than 80 million people suffer from chronic halitosis. For example, bad breath.”
15. Read the sentences below from the final paragraph. What is the best way to write the sentences to demonstrate an appropriate pronoun shift?
- “If you think that you suffer from bad breath, your dentist can help determine its source. He may ask them to schedule a separate appointment to find the source of the odor.”
- A. “If you think that you suffer from bad breath, your dentist can help determine its source. He may ask him to schedule a separate appointment to find the source of the odor.”
 - B. “If you think that you suffer from bad breath, your dentist can help determine its source. He may ask us to schedule a separate appointment to find the source of the odor.”
 - C. “If you think that you suffer from bad breath, your dentist can help determine its source. He may ask you to schedule a separate appointment to find the source of the odor.”
 - D. “If you think that you suffer from bad breath, your dentist can help determine its source. He may ask her to schedule a separate appointment to find the source of the odor.”

16. What is the best transitional word to use between the two sentences below to clarify their relationship?
- “Mucus secretion comes from the nose and runs down the throat. These secretions get stuck on the tongue and cause an odor.”
- A. Consequently
 - B. Instead
 - C. For example
 - D. However
17. Using context clues, determine the meaning of the word **alleviate** as it is used in the passage.
- “To **alleviate** odors, clean your tongue with your toothbrush or a tongue scraper, a plastic tool that scrapes away bacteria that builds on the tongue.”
- A. to make less severe
 - B. to increase or create
 - C. to aggravate or worsen
 - D. to hide from notice
18. Which sentence below could be added to the section “**Why is saliva so important in the fight against bad breath?**” if the author wanted to better develop the topic?
- A. Fish oils in sushi are notorious for lingering in your mouth.
 - B. Those who skip breakfast beware, because the odor may reappear even if you’ve brushed your teeth.
 - C. Carrying dental floss with you is a great way to refresh your mouth.
 - D. Controlling your halitosis may make you popular with your dentist and your friends.
19. How does the following sentence from the introductory paragraph contribute to the development of the central idea of the passage?
- “The decay and debris produce a sulfur compound that causes the unpleasant odor.”
- A. It explains one of the causes of bad breath.
 - B. It persuades the reader to practice good oral hygiene.
 - C. It provides a solution to bad breath.
 - D. It indicates the dangers of poor oral hygiene.

20. What is the connotation of the word **hunger** as it is used in the following sentence?
- “Morning mouth also is associated with **hunger** or fasting. Those who skip breakfast, beware, because the odor may reappear even if you’ve brushed your teeth.”
- A. positive, because it shows self-control
 - B. negative, because it can contribute to halitosis
 - C. positive, because it indicates good hygiene
 - D. negative, because it leads to starvation
21. What is the best way to combine the following sentences while keeping the same meaning?
- “To alleviate 'morning mouth,' brush your teeth and eat a morning meal. Morning mouth is also associated with hunger or fasting.”
- A. To alleviate “morning mouth,” brush your teeth each morning because it is important.
 - B. No Change
 - C. It is vital to brush your teeth when you miss breakfast to alleviate bad breath.
 - D. Because "morning mouth" is associated with hunger or fasting, brushing your teeth and eating a morning meal can help alleviate bad breath.