

Name: _____

Date: _____

Right in Your Own Backyard

I have become very interested in taking care of the environment. This happened because of my neighbor, Mr. Edwards. But he is not your typical neighbor. You will not see Mr. Edwards working in his backyard. He works in everyone's backyard, which is Planet Earth!

He has spent many years working for environmental causes. But he never brags about the valuable work he does. Mr. Edwards believes it is people's duty to protect their home, Planet Earth. "Earth is one big backyard. We have to start in our own backyards and work outward," Mr. Edwards always says. Mr. Edwards has turned his words into action. First, he was named tree commissioner for our town. As commissioner, he oversees the planting of trees and teaches people about their environmental benefits. "If I can encourage one person to plant a tree, then I have done my job. Just think of how wonderful it would be if each person planted a tree," Mr. Edwards says. He has encouraged several citizens to plant more trees. In fact, our town has won the *Tree City USA Award* for the past nine years because of Mr. Edwards's work.

Just last year, Mr. Edwards adopted a highway. Throughout the year, he and his friends clean up the litter along his highway. One afternoon, when I was out in my own yard, Mr. Edwards stopped by. He asked me if I wanted to join his highway clean-up group. It is hard work, but also a lot of fun. We wear bright orange safety vests so people can see us on the roadside. We use sticks to pick up the litter, and the town comes and picks up our bags at the end of the day. One of my friends asked me why I clean up the highway when people keep littering anyway. My answer surprised us both.

"Earth is one big backyard. We have to start in our own backyards and work outwards," I proudly replied. We both laughed. I sounded just like Mr. Edwards. "May I join the highway clean-up group?" my friend then asked. "Sure!" I exclaimed with a smile.

1. This passage is an example of

- A. a letter.
- B. a story.
- C. a drama.
- D. a folk tale.

2. According to the passage, the author

- A. helps Mr. Edwards plant trees.
- B. helps clean up litter along Mr. Edwards's highway.
- C. works in Mr. Edwards's backyard.
- D. adopted a highway.

3. What would be another good title for this passage?

- A. How to Adopt a Highway
 - B. The Planet Earth
 - C. It's Everyone's Backyard
 - D. My Neighbor, the Tree Commissioner
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4. When the author says, "I sounded just like Mr. Edwards," what does she mean?

- A. Mr. Edwards tells people what to say.
 - B. She learned from Mr. Edwards.
 - C. Mr. Edwards is a very smart man.
 - D. Her voice sounded like Mr. Edwards's.
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5. Why do the highway workers wear orange vests?

- A. so they can be seen easily by drivers
 - B. because that is the city color
 - C. so all of the workers have matching outfits
 - D. so people know that they are working
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Dear Principal Smith,

I am so proud of what we just learned in school that I thought you should know about it. After doing a unit on New England, in which we learned about how the Pilgrims ate in their times, our teacher decided to teach a unit on nutrition in celebration of National Nutrition Month. At first many of the students in class groaned. But when we started learning about the food pyramid, a new way of organizing foods to help people eat healthier, we began having a lot of fun. I did not know that there were so many tasty fruits like kiwis, peaches, and mangos. They are so sweet. Plus they give you a lot of energy. Boy, the kids in my class love to play. So having a lot of energy from eating the right foods is a good thing.

To finish our nutrition unit, our teacher planned something that everyone was excited about! We had a nutrition luncheon. The class was divided into the five healthy food pyramid groups. Each group decided on foods to bring in for the other kids in class to sample. On the day of the luncheon, the teacher spread out a big blanket on the floor of the class. It was like we were having a picnic. We all tasted healthy foods from the five groups. There were celery and cream cheese boats, broccoli pieces with yogurt dip, crackers with cheese, sweet pineapple halves, casseroles and more! We had a feast! Everything had such delicious flavor. Some students even asked for recipes.

Who would have thought that foods that were healthy for you could taste so good? Now instead of bringing in jellybeans and other candy for a treat, students bring in raisins and apples lightly covered with peanut butter. At lunch, one student brought homemade fruit cocktail with grapes, pineapples, and pears.

We all had such a fun time learning in this unit. Maybe next April, the whole school could celebrate in the same way.

Sincerely,

Sam Vail

6. What kind of passage is this?

- A. report
- B. story
- C. poem
- D. letter

7. Why did the children have a nutrition luncheon?

- A. to learn how to cook
- B. to eat like the Pilgrims
- C. to taste foods from the five food groups
- D. to give a party for Sam

8. Sam probably wrote this passage to

- A. encourage the principal to have the entire school celebrate nutrition month next year.
- B. invite the principal to a picnic where only healthy food is served.
- C. ask the principal for his favorite fruit recipes.
- D. tell the principal about what his class learned about the Pilgrims' food.

Gentle Monster of the Deep

The green sea turtle could be called the gentle monster of the deep. It has lived on earth for a long, long time. The meat of this turtle makes excellent soup. So many green turtles have been caught for food that they are now an endangered species.

Endangered species are animals in danger of becoming extinct. This means that someday soon they may no longer exist on earth. Some people are working hard to save the sea turtle by studying its life cycle.

The female turtle returns to the same beach every 2–3 years. She digs a nest with her flippers and lays a clutch of 100 eggs or more. Then she buries the eggs and returns to the sea.

In about two months the baby turtles hatch. The turtle uses a special tooth on its nose to break out of its shell. After hatching, the turtles work together to climb out of the nest and begin a short but dangerous journey to the ocean.

The turtles must hurry to the ocean because sea gulls try to catch them. In the ocean more dangers await them. The turtles must escape many large fish.

The turtles then disappear for a year or more. Experts aren't sure what happens at this time. In about two years, when the turtles are large enough to protect themselves, they can be seen again in the sea.

Volunteer groups now watch and protect turtle nests. They want to make sure that as many turtles as possible return to their life in the sea.

9. The MOST important idea in this passage is that

- A. sea turtles work together to get out of their nest
- B. females return to the same beach to lay eggs
- C. sea gulls and fish use the baby turtles for food
- D. the sea turtle is an endangered species

10. **This passage is an example of**

- A. a poem
- B. a report
- C. a folk tale
- D. a friendly letter

Answer Key

1. B) a story.
2. B) helps clean up litter along Mr. Edwards's highway.
3. C) It's Everyone's Backyard
4. B) She learned from Mr. Edwards.
5. A) so they can be seen easily by drivers
6. D) letter
7. C) to taste foods from the five food groups
8. A) encourage the principal to have the entire school celebrate nutrition month next year.
9. D) the sea turtle is an endangered species
10. B) a report