

“By the Water”

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories

Directions: Read the story. Then answer the questions below.

I live in a house by the water.
I sit by the water each day.

I take my bag there with me. In it, I pack a book and a blanket. I also carry a chair and a basket of food.

I walk down my back steps and sit in the same spot along the grass.

When I go out to the water in the morning, I am alone.

I hear the water.
I see the boats.
I feel calm.

It is the part of the day I like best.

Later, some children come to play by the water.
It is afternoon.
I hear them laughing.
I see them play ball.

“Nestor, Nestor!” the children yell when they see me on the beach.
I wave and smile.
“Play ball with us, Nestor!” the children shout.
“No, thanks,” I say. “I am too old to play ball. I walk with a cane and my hands are no longer good at catching.”

I try to read my book, but it is hard with all the noise.

I watch mothers and fathers fish along the shore. I am happy.
I hear the water.
I see the boats.
I eat my lunch.

Later, the **sky gets dark**.
I gather all of my things and go back to the house.
I get in bed. I hear the water through my open window.
The sound puts me to sleep.



Questions:

1) Where does Nestor live?

- A. on a farm
- B. on a mountain top
- C. in a boat on the water
- D. in a house by the water

2) What does Nestor do each day?

- A. He sits by the water.
- B. He plays by the water.
- C. He runs by the water.
- D. He swims in the water.

3) Which of the following things does Nestor bring with him to the water?

- I. food
- II. a blanket
- III. a fishing pole

- A. I only
- B. I and II
- C. II and III
- D. I, II, and III

4) Nestor lives in a house “*by the water.*” What is another way to write this?

- A. in the water
- B. over the water
- C. close to the water
- D. far away from the water

5) What do the children do by the water?

- I. fish
- II. laugh
- III. play ball

- A. I only
- B. I and II
- C. II and III
- D. I, II, and III

6) When do the children come to the water?

- A. in the morning
- B. in the afternoon
- C. in the evening
- D. at night

7) What kind of person does Nestor seem to be?

- A. calm
- B. sad
- C. loud
- D. young

8) What does the children's noise make it hard for Nestor to do?

- A. eat
 - B. catch fish
 - C. read
 - D. sleep
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Questions (continued):

9) Who fishes?

- A. Nestor
- B. the children
- C. mothers and fathers
- D. all of the above

10) Why doesn't Nestor play with the children?

- I. He is too tired.
 - II. He cannot catch.
 - III. He feels he is too old.
- A. I only
 - B. I and II
 - C. II and III
 - D. I, II, and III

11) How do Nestor's feelings change during the story?

- A. from calm to sleepy to happy
- B. from sleepy to calm to happy
- C. from calm to happy to sleepy
- D. from happy to sleepy to calm

12) What does Nestor mean when he says that the "sky gets dark"?

- A. that it is night
- B. that it is raining
- C. that the wind is blowing
- D. that the sky is angry

13) What is Nestor's favorite part of the day?

- A. the morning
- B. when he is watching the children
- C. the afternoon
- D. the night

14) When does Nestor hear the water?

- A. only in the morning
- B. only in the afternoon
- C. only in the night
- D. all the time

15) Nestor says, "It is the part of the day I like best." What is another way to write this sentence, while keeping its original meaning?

- A. I do not like this part of the day.
- B. I love this part of the day.
- C. It is my favorite part of the day.
- D. I like all parts of the day.

What is your favorite part of the day? Why?

Answers and Explanations

1) **D**

In paragraph 1, the speaker says, "I live in a house by the water." In paragraph 8, the speaker of the story describes some children calling to him. They yell, "Nestor, Nestor." This lets us know the speaker's name is Nestor. From this information, we know that Nestor lives in a house by the water, so **(D)** is correct.

The story does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)** and **(B)**. Therefore they are incorrect. Nestor says, "I see the boats," but he does not live on a boat. This means **(C)** is incorrect.

2) **A**

In paragraph 1, Nestor says, "I sit by the water each day." Therefore **(A)** is correct. In the middle of the story, it says that the children "play by the water," but Nestor does not play with them. This means **(B)** is incorrect. The story does not provide information to support answer choices **(C)** and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

3) **B**

In paragraph 2, we learn that Nestor packs a "basket of food." This supports **option (I)**. In paragraph 2, we learn that Nestor packs a "blanket." This supports **option (II)**. Even though Nestor lives beside the water and he watches other people "fish along the shore," Nestor does not bring a fishing pole. This eliminates **option (III)**. Therefore **(B)** is correct.

4) **C**

In paragraph 1, we learn that Nestor lives "by the water." He walks to the beach. This means he is close to the water. If something is "by" something, it is "close to" it. The following words are all part of the same family, and have almost the same meaning: close to, by, beside, next to, near. This means **(C)** is correct.

Nestor's house is not in the waters, so **(A)** is incorrect. Nestor's house is not over the water, which would mean on top of the water. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. We know Nestor's house is not far from the water because Nestor walks to the water every morning. This makes **(D)** incorrect.

5) **C**

In paragraph 10, Nestor watches the "mothers and fathers fish." The children do not fish. This eliminates **option (I)**. In paragraph 7, Nestor hears children "laughing." This supports **option (II)**. Also, Nestor sees the children "play ball." This supports **option (III)**. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

6) **B**

The first sentence of paragraph 7 says, "Later, some children come to play by the water." The second sentence states, "It is afternoon." This lets us know that the children come to the water in the afternoon, so **(B)** is correct. The

story does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

7) **A**

In the last sentence of paragraph 5, Nestor says, "I feel calm." Therefore **(A)** is correct.

We know Nestor is not sad because in paragraph 10 he says, "I am happy." This makes **(B)** incorrect. He is not loud because he does not make noise in the story. This means **(C)** is incorrect. In paragraph 8, Nestor says, "I walk with a cane and my hands are no longer good at catching." This lets us know that he is not young, so **(D)** is incorrect.

8) **C**

In paragraph 9, Nestor says, "I try to read my book, but it is hard with all the noise." This means **(C)** is correct. The story does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

9) **C**

In paragraph 10, Nestor says, "I watch the mothers and fathers fish along the shore." This makes **(C)** correct. The story does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

10) **C**

The story does not say that Nestor is tired. This eliminates **option (I)**. In paragraph 8, we learn that the children ask Nestor to play ball. Nestor says, "I am too old to play ball. I walk with a cane and my hands are no longer good at catching." This information tells us he cannot catch. This supports **option (II)**. These sentences also tell us that he feels he is too old to play. This supports **option (III)**. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

11) **C**

In paragraph 5, Nestor says, "I feel calm." Later, in paragraph 10, Nestor says, "I am happy." Finally, in paragraph 11, Nestor goes to bed. He says that the "sound of the water" puts him to sleep. We can understand that this means that he is sleepy. So Nestor's feelings change from calm to happy to sleepy. This means **(C)** is correct.

The story does not provide information to support answer choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

12) **A**

In paragraph 11, Nestor says, "The sky gets dark." We know that the time has passed from morning to afternoon, and now it is night. The sky gets dark at night, so he means that it is night. This makes **(A)** correct.

The sky can get dark when it is raining, but the story does not say anything about rain. Therefore **(B)** is incorrect. The story does not provide information to support answer choices **(C)** and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

13) **A**

In paragraph 4, Nestor says he goes out to the water “in the morning.” In paragraph 6, he tells us, “It is the part of the day I like best.” We can understand that morning is the time of day that Nestor likes best. Another way to say that you like something best is to say that it is your favorite. Morning is Nestor’s favorite time of day, so **(A)** is correct.

The story does not provide information to support answer choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)**. Therefore they are incorrect.

14) **D**

In the first part of the story, which takes place in the morning, Nestor says, “I hear the water.” The second part of the story takes place in the afternoon, and then Nestor also says, “I hear the water.” At the end of the story, Nestor is in bed and can hear the water through his open window. Therefore, Nestor hears the water in the morning, afternoon, and night. This means **(D)** is correct.

Since Nestor hears the water throughout the entire day, it is incorrect to say he only hears it in the morning, or in the afternoon, or in the night. Therefore **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)** are incorrect.

15) **C**

In the middle of the story, Nestor says, “It is the part of the day I like best.” Another way to say that you like something best is to say it is your favorite. Therefore **(C)** is correct.

Since Nestor likes that part of the day best, we can understand that he does like it, so **(A)** is incorrect. Sometimes we love the things that we like the best, but not always. Nestor does not say he loves this part of the day. He says he likes it best. This means **(B)** incorrect. Nestor chooses one part of the day to like best. Liking something best is different than liking everything. We do not know if Nestor likes all parts of the day, so **(D)** is incorrect.