

I had been looking forward to the summer all year. We would go to stay with my grandparents, who lived on a farm in Illinois. They had all kinds of things to do, and it was such a contrast to our life in the city. We would get up early and milk the cows, and then we would feed the chickens. It was such a change from living in the city. “It is like making a trip between **civilizations**. Consider how different it is to live in different ways--the rural and the urban, the agrarian and the industrial,” my brother said. He was studying history in college and liked to use big words like that.

The day came to go there, so of course I was excited, and so was my brother. My mother packed a lunch for us to eat along the way. Then we left, “our journey to another way of life,” my brother said. After about 3 hours we were halfway there, and I was anxious to arrive.

But then it started to rain. “The road is **treacherous**,” my mother said. “We could skid.” It was hard to see where we were on the road because the rain was so heavy. “This is much more than a little **precipitation**,” my brother said. “The forecast was for just light rain. This is severe weather, I am concerned about our safety.”

My mother took an exit ramp. We left the highway and went to a side road. There she stopped the car. “Better safe than sorry,” she said. “I will call and tell them to anticipate a late arrival.”

We were waiting there for about an hour when my brother said, “Let’s eat lunch.” We all thought that was a great idea, so we did.

“Imagine long ago when pioneers lived here,” my brother said. “It would have taken them weeks to travel as far as we have in three hours. It’s interesting to **envision** what life was like then. We have gone about 120 miles in complete comfort, with entertainment, too.” He had been playing his CDs in the car along the way.

“Changes in technology have really advanced how people travel,” my brother said. “I can’t imagine a world without cell phones, air conditioning, and fast cars.”

“But that is what we have when we are at the farm,” Mother replied. “That is how your grandparents live. They don’t have any cell phones, and they just have that truck.”

Just then the rain stopped. We finished our lunch with alacrity so we could get back on the highway. Then we used a lot of 21st century technology to get us to the farm. Our car’s navigation system told us how to get back on the highway. And I used the cell phone to let them know we would be there by 5 pm.

When we arrived, everyone was glad to be at the end of this trip and at the beginning of a great summer. “We have reached the end of our **expedition**,” said my brother, “and now the summer festival begins.”

Infer Meaning of Word from Context – Fiction

Questions developed for Chicago Public Schools by CUE, 2009.

Choose the best answer for each question.

1. What does **civilizations** mean in the passage?

- a. how people live
- b. living in the city
- c. farming and city
- d. traveling between places

3. What does **precipitation** mean in the passage?

- a. weather
- b. rain
- c. treacherous
- d. slippery

2. What does **treacherous** mean in the passage?

- a. rainy
- b. dark
- c. dangerous
- d. skid

4. What does **envision** mean based on the passage?

- a. look at
- b. travel
- c. imagine
- d. decide

5. Write your own answer to this question. What does **expedition** mean in the passage? How do you know that?

TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

Answers: You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.

Item	1	2	3	4
Answer	a	c	b	c

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

Expedition means trip. I figured it out by reading the other words and thinking what it could mean.