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QUESTION 1

Read the text and answer the question.

Moving to the Back of Beyond

When my parents said the three of us were moving out to California, to a place just north of Los Angeles, my mind immediately went to thoughts of Disneyland and Hollywood, glitz and glamour. I imagined a Rodeo Drive shopping spree to

pick out a bikini for the endless days I would be spending on the beach. However, I'd forgotten about my parents' penchant for the unconventional; they're definitely "the road less traveled" kind of people. Mom had a gopher snake for a pet

when she was younger, and Dad was never happier than when he was climbing near-vertical cliffs that only mountain goats could love. These are not city folk.

They had chosen to buy a 900-square-foot cabin under a 250-year-old oak tree in the high chaparral forest out in the back of beyond – so far away from Los Angeles that you couldn't even see the glow of the lights at night. When I first saw

where we were going to live, I vacillated between feeling terrified and excited. This would be an adventure, for sure. But this was no camping trip where you could go home to civilization after a few days of roughing it; this was home, and

roughing it was the new normal.

On move-in day, we drove fifteen miles out from Antelope Valley – where the nearest grocery store was located – on a two-lane road past llamas, cattle, and horses. Up and up we went, until finally we turned down a dirt road and headed into

a canyon full of towering Coulter pines, blue-green sagebrush, and ancient canyon live oaks. I didn't know the names of these plants then, of course; I learned them later. That first day all I saw then was a million shades of green.

We parked under an oak tree that shaded our cabin and a front yard of rock, sand, and sagebrush twice as large as the cabin itself. On the stone staircase that led to the front door, black lizards interrupted their push-ups to twist their heads

and eye us as we passed. Scrub jays squawked and hummingbirds zoomed past the eaves, scolding us with their territorial calls.

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damp pad to keep us cool all summer, or so my father said. But it was early autumn that day, and the temperature was perfect in the shade of the oak tree. Our oak tree, I thought; I was settling in.

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convenience store anytime you need something out here. You have to make a careful list and check it twice so that you don't forget anything, because anywhere is a long way from here.



On my first walk around the property, I saw two horned toads, a red-tailed hawk, and some deer tracks. I wondered what else I might find deeper and higher in the canyon. Dad told me the real estate agent had mentioned that coyotes, bobcats, mountain lions, rattlesnakes, and even bears roamed these hills. To my surprise, I found I couldn't wait to see them. All of them. I felt my feet taking root in the earth, claiming this place as home.

With no street lamps timed to turn on at sunset, when night came it was darker than anything I had ever experienced. Mom and I went out to look at the stars while Dad tried to unplug the ancient toilet. In the city, or even in the suburbs where

I had lived before, you could see only the brightest stars in the sky. But out here, it was like being in a planetarium, except there were no labels typed onto our sky. The sheer number and spread of stars was awe-inspiring.

That first night, we slept on air mattresses on the living room floor because the movers had not yet arrived. There were no curtains on the windows, so when the moon rose, it shone in as if moonbeams were an integral part of the cabin.

Eventually, I moved into the bedroom and Mom and Dad got a foldout bed for the living room. Over the next few months, I began to count the passage of time in full moons rather than by the pages of a calendar, and for the first time I really

noticed the days growing shorter in winter and longer in summer.

It's hard to believe, but we've been here for six years now. I've been going to school in the valley, but I feel most at home up here with my wild fellow canyon dwellers. Soon, I will have to leave home for college, and I'm a little afraid of the

culture shock I'm sure I will feel when I move back to civilization. Soon I'll be walking on pavement and well-mowed grass again, rooming with strangers, and eating meals in a cafeteria crowded with more people than live within twenty miles

of this house. But I know I will come back. The back of beyond is home now.

1. chaparral: a dense thicket of shrubs and small trees

Read the sentence from the text.

When I first saw where we were going to live, I vacillated between feeling terrified and excited.

What does the author communicate to the reader with the use of "vacillated?" (Choose three.)

- A. The narrator's emotions were in conflict.
- B. The narrator had trouble deciding how to feel.
- C. The narrator was scared and thrilled at the same time.
- D. The narrator kept changing her mind about the situation.
- E. The narrator stopped being scared and began to feel happy.

Correct Answer: ABD

QUESTION 2



Read the text and answer the question.

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when she was younger, and Dad was never happier than when he was climbing near-vertical cliffs that only mountain goats could love. These are not city folk.

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a canyon full of towering Coulter pines, blue-green sagebrush, and ancient canyon live oaks. I didn't know the names of these plants then, of course; I learned them later. That first day all I saw then was a million shades of green.

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and eye us as we passed. Scrub jays squawked and hummingbirds zoomed past the eaves, scolding us with their territorial calls.

No cars roared past. No radios blared from a neighbor's house. There were no neighbors – no human neighbors, anyway.

Our new home consisted of one bedroom, one bathroom, and one big room for everything else. A fireplace in the corner of the big room would be our sole source of heat in the winter. A swamp box (cooler) would blow a breeze over a big

damp pad to keep us cool all summer, or so my father said. But it was early autumn that day, and the temperature was perfect in the shade of the oak tree. Our oak tree, I thought; I was settling in.

Mom wiped a layer of grime off the kitchen counter and muttered about getting a bottle of bleach on our next trip into town. That was the beginning of an important lesson about living in the back of beyond: you don't just zip over to the local

convenience store anytime you need something out here. You have to make a careful list and check it twice so that you don't forget anything, because anywhere is a long way from here.

On my first walk around the property, I saw two horned toads, a red-tailed hawk, and some deer tracks. I wondered what else I might find deeper and higher in the canyon. Dad told me the real estate agent had mentioned that coyotes,

bobcats, mountain lions, rattlesnakes, and even bears roamed these hills. To my surprise, I found I couldn't wait to see



them. All of them. I felt my feet taking root in the earth, claiming this place as home.

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That first night, we slept on air mattresses on the living room floor because the movers had not yet arrived. There were no curtains on the windows, so when the moon rose, it shone in as if moonbeams were an integral part of the cabin.

Eventually, I moved into the bedroom and Mom and Dad got a foldout bed for the living room. Over the next few months, I began to count the passage of time in full moons rather than by the pages of a calendar, and for the first time I really

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1. chaparral: a dense thicket of shrubs and small trees

The following question is divided into two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part B

Which statement from the text best supports your answer in part A?

Note: Part A

Q: Which statement best expresses the theme of the text?

A:

Home may be found in an expected place.

A.

"When I first saw where we were going to live, I vacillated between feeling terrified and excited."

B.

"On my first walk around the property, I saw two horned toads, a red-tailed hawk, and some deer tracks."

C.

"With no street lights timed to turn on at sunset, when night came it was darker than anything I had ever experienced."

D.



"I've been going to school in the valley, but I feel most at home up here with my wild fellow canyon dwellers."

Correct Answer: D

QUESTION 3

Read the text and answer the question.

Moving to the Back of Beyond

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The following question is divided into two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

What is most likely the author's intent by mentioning the "Rodeo Drive shopping spree" in the following paragraph?

When my parents said the three of us were moving out to California, to a place just north of Los Angeles, my mind immediately went to thoughts of Disneyland and Hollywood, glitz and glamour. I imagined a Rodeo Drive shopping spree to pick out a bikini for the endless days I would be spending on the beach. However, I'd forgotten about my parents' penchant for the unconventional; they're definitely "the road less traveled" kind of people. Mom has a gopher snake for a pet when she was younger, and Dad was never happier than when he was climbing near-vertical cliffs that only mountain goats could love. These are not city folk.

A. to show that the narrator comes from a family that is used to spending money

B. to reveal the narrator as someone who is shallow and cares only for nice things



C. to contrast the narrator's grand dreams with the sparse life her parent have in mind

D. to emphasize the narrator's nervousness about moving to a place so far removed from civilization

Correct Answer: C

QUESTION 4

Read the text and answer the question.

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1. chaparral: a dense thicket of shrubs and small trees

The following question is divided into two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

Which statement best expresses the theme of the text?

- A. Home may be found in an expected place.
- B. Nature is the best educator of young children.
- C. Turning your back on civilization is the only way to live.
- D. You must leave your past behind in order to find yourself.

Correct Answer: A



QUESTION 5

Read the information attached

Source 1: Climbing to the Heavens: a nonfiction autobiographical text about a woman who climbed Mt. Everest after the death of her husband and children in a car accident

Source 2: "My Experiences with Everest": a blog by an unknown "adventurer" who claims to have traveled the world spending less than \$1 a day

Source 3: Backpacking Through Nepal: a nonfiction text about planning a hike through Nepal, where Mt. Everest is located

Source 4: Summits of the World: a documentary film about the top ten most summited mountains in the world

Source 5: A topographic map of Mt. Everest and the surrounding Himalayan mountains

Source 6: Geology Made Simple: a textbook explaining how mountains are formed

A student is writing an informational research report about climbing Mt. Everest. Look at the information attached and choose the two most credible sources that would most likely give the student more relevant information to include in her report

- A. sources 2 and 4
- B. sources 4 and 6
- C. sources 1 and 5
- D. sources 3 and 5

Correct Answer: C