

A Tale of Two Countries

Directions: Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow. Refer to the text to check your answers when appropriate.

Some call it the "Hermit Kingdom." It is a place where the outside world has been walled off. American pop music is illegal here and you can get executed for watching soap operas. This is not a make-believe world in a science fiction novel. It's a 46,000 square mile nation hanging off the east coast of China. It is one of the poorest nations in the world and it is armed with nuclear weapons. It is North Korea.

Immediately to the south lies a nation with one of the world's richest economies. About one-third of all phones and TVs are made here. The people of this nation are among the world's most educated. Unemployment is low, job security is high, and workers in this nation enjoy the highest salaries in Asia. It is South Korea. The people of this nation share origins with their northern neighbor, but they have since grown far apart.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (known to Westerners as North Korea) was founded in 1945 after World War II. Their neighbor at the end of the Korean Peninsula, South Korea or the Republic of Korea, was established at the same time. These two nations have an unusual history. For one thing, they have technically been at war since 1950.

Though they were born at the same time, these two countries had different parents. The United States supported South Korea in its infancy. China and the Soviet Union supported North Korea. The U.S. and the Soviet Union may have ended World War II as allies, but they had different ways of organizing their societies.

The U.S. is a capitalist country. That means that some people are rich and some people are poor. Resources are distributed unevenly. Business are owned by private entities. The Soviet Union claimed to have a communist system. That means that everybody supposedly gets the same. Resources are distributed more evenly. Business are owned in "common" by the government. These two superpower nations raised North and South Korea in their own images.

The two Koreas went to war in 1950. The North attacked and took over much of South Korea. But the United States jumped in and pushed the North Koreans back to the Chinese border. Then China got involved and

pushed the Americans and South Koreans back. The nations agreed to a ceasefire. Millions of people were dead and the living returned to their original boundaries. The war never officially ended, though combat has ceased for the most part.

After the war, South Korea was one of the poorest nations in the world. In 1960 the average citizen made \$79 a year. The country did not have a lot of natural resources to sell, but they did have many hardworking people. During the 1960s, the country began manufacturing labor-intensive products. Selling these products to people in other nations made South Korea rich. They now have one of the largest and most thriving economies in the world. As of 2012, the average South Korean citizen makes around \$32,020 a year.

The economy of North Korea is dramatically different. Since its birth in the 1940s, North Korea has been one of the most secluded countries in the world. They promote an idea of self-reliance that they call Juche. Under this idea, they do little to no trading with other nations. Up until the 1980s, they received large cash infusions from China and the Soviet Union. But the Soviet Union fell apart in the 80s and became separate capitalist countries, of which Russia is largest. Without the Soviet contributions, North Korea entered a long period of famine that lasted through the 90s. Food was hard to come by and some estimate that millions of people starved to death. Still, the country persisted when much of the world thought that it would fall apart. Not only did they survive, they managed to build a nuclear arsenal during this time.

North Korea and South Korea share a border. Since they are locked in state of perpetual war, it's not a regular border with a simple checkpoint. The border they share is known as a "demilitarized zone." A demilitarized zone is supposed to be free from military installations. Yet, the Korean Demilitarized Zone is the most heavily militarized border in the world. Both nations have their biggest guns lined-up on the divide and pointed at the other side. It is literally the opposite of what the phrase "demilitarized zone" implies.

Some day Korea may be unified again. It seems unlikely now, but stranger things have happened. Yet, even if they did unify, how could these very different societies acclimate to one another? They have grown in different directions. One country is among the wealthiest, the other amongst the poorest. The average North Korean male is estimated to be five-inches shorter than a South Korean (some suspect because of malnutrition). With such big differences, will they ever be able to see eye to eye?



1. Which term best describes South Korea based on information from the text?

- a. capitalist
- b. communist
- c. socialist
- d. totalitarian

2. Based on the author's tone and viewpoint, which person would most likely disagree with the conclusions drawn in this text?

- a. An American businessman
- b. A South Korean businessman
- c. A North Korean politician
- d. A South Korean politician



3. Which statement would the author most likely agree with?

- a. The Korean War was a major win for the United States of America.
- b. North Korea is poor because they don't trade with many other nations.
- c. South Korean people are naturally more gifted than their northern brethren.
- d. The South Korean economy grew at an average pace after 1960.

4. Which statement best expresses the main idea of the seventh paragraph?

- a. South Korea was a very poor nation in 1960.

b. South Korea makes a lot of money by trading natural resources.

- c. South Korea had a remarkable economic turnaround.
- d. South Korea produces many electronic products.

5. Which statement best describes the results of the Korean War?

- a. The South Koreans gained a lot of ground after winning the war.
- b. The North Koreans benefitted tremendously from the war.
- c. The Korean War led to the formation of South Korea.
- d. Both sides lost many people and got little to show for it.

6. Which best defines the word famine as it is used in the eighth paragraph?

- a. A period of time when food is scarce
- b. A period of time when it is hard to get laborers
- c. A period of time when the government is going through a transition
- d. A period of time when a country does not have a leader

7. What is ironic about the Korean Demilitarized Zone?

- a. It is not the average border with a simple check point.
- b. It is free from military installations and weaponry

- c. It is the most militarized border in the world.
- d. The North and South Koreans are technically still at war.

8. Which best describes how the text is structured in the fifth paragraph?

- a. Chronological order
- b. Compare and contrast
- c. Sequence
- d. Problem and solution

9. Which best explains why so many North Koreans starved during the 1990s?

- a. The North Koreans had just recently lost the Korean War.
- b. The North Koreans were abandoned by their allies in the U.S.
- c. North Korea became a capitalist country.
- d. The Soviet Union stopped supporting North Korea.

10. Which statement would the author most likely disagree with?

- a. It is impressive that the North Koreans built nuclear weaponry during a famine.
- b. The North Korean economy has made an amazing transformation since the 1960s.
- c. North and South Koreans have grown to be different, but they come from the same place.
- d. Unification of the two Koreas is unlikely at this time.

1. What made the Korean War particularly tragic? Support your argument with a quote from the text.

Explain what your quote shows and thoughtfully conclude your argument.

2. What is one thing that readers can learn from this text? Cite several pieces of text to support your point. Be sure to explain what the text is showing.

3. In what ways have the two Koreas grown apart? Discuss two ways in which they have grown apart and support each of your points with text. Be sure to explain your quotes. Make your argument clear.



Find the answers in next MONDAY issue

Jacob the Great

Jacob hated finishing things almost as much as he loved starting them. As a result, he had gotten into a million hobbies and activities, but he never stuck with any of them long enough to get any good.

He begged his mother for months for a guitar so that he could play Black Eyed Peas songs to Angie, a girl he liked, but after he finally got one for Christmas, he found out that guitars don't play themselves. He took a few lessons, but strumming the strings hurt his fingers and he didn't like holding the pick, so now the five-hundred dollar guitar lives under his bed.

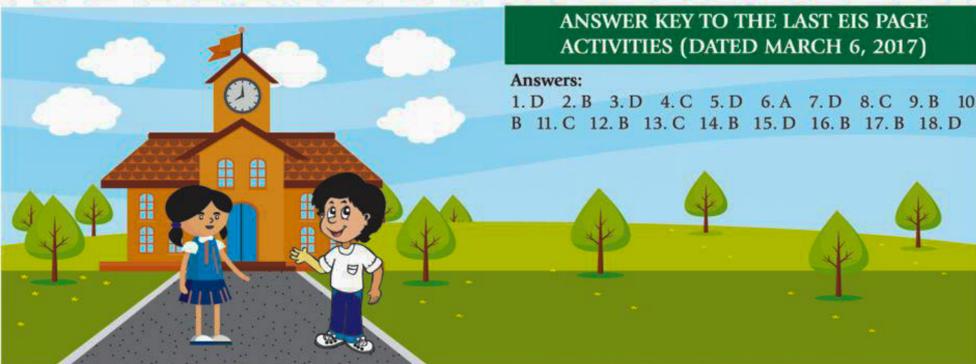
After reading an ad in the back of one of his comic books, Jacob decided that he wanted a Wonder-Sweeper 5000 metal detector, so that he could find buried pirate treasure. So he mowed lawns all summer and didn't spend his money on ice-cream like his younger brother, Alex. He saved it all in a shoe box in his closet. Then he shoveled driveways all winter, and he didn't spend his money on candy and chips like his classmates. By the time spring came he had saved \$200, and he purchased the Wonder-Sweeper 5000 metal detector. He beeped it around the park for a while, but he soon found out that no pirates had ever set sail in his neighborhood, and if they had they didn't leave any treasure. Even though he found a key ring, forty-seven cents, and all the bottle caps he could throw, he buried the metal detector in his closet.

Given Jacob's history with hobbies, it was no surprise that Jacob's father was reluctant to buy him a magician's kit for his birthday. "Geez, Jacob... You sure you wouldn't rather I got you more guitar lessons?" He suggested. Jacob was insistent. "Dad, you've got to get me the magician's kit. This time I'll stick with it for real. I promise! Come on, Dad," Jacob begged. Jacob's father sighed and then replied, "Oh, I don't know, Jacob. Things are awfully tight right now." But Jacob's father was reminded of his own youth long ago, when he quit football and started karate practice before hardly getting his equipment dirty. So when Jacob's birthday came around, Jacob was both surprised and pleased to find the magician's kit that he had desired so badly with a big bright bow on it.

Jacob opened up the box and unwrapped the many parts in the kit. As he did so, he imagined seeing his pet cat in half and putting it back together to the amazement of his friends and family. He took the many fake coins, trick cards, and rope pieces of varying length on the kitchen table and imagined pulling rabbits out of his hat and turning them into pigeons with a mysterious puff of smoke. As Jacob continued pulling plastic thumbs, foam balls, and giant playing cards out of the magic kit, a commercial on the TV caught his attention. "Hey kids! Have you ever wanted to go to space? Experience what it's like to be an astronaut? Do you want to explore the universe? Well, now you can." As the commercial continued playing, Jacob walked away from the magic kit on the kitchen table and stared at the TV screen longingly. "For only \$195 you can go to space camp and live life like an astronaut for a whole weekend. Enroll now for a once in a life time experience." Jacob's cry rang throughout the house as he yelled, "MOM!" He now knew what his true purpose in life was.

ANSWER KEY TO THE LAST EIS PAGE ACTIVITIES (DATED MARCH 6, 2017)

Answers:
1. D 2. B 3. D 4. C 5. D 6. A 7. D 8. C 9. B 10. B 11. C 12. B 13. C 14. B 15. D 16. B 17. B 18. D



Comprehension and Inferential Questions

Directions: After reading the story, choose the best answer for each question. Circle one answer.

1. According to the text, why does Jacob stop playing the guitar?

- a. It hurt his fingers.
- b. He'd rather play drums.
- c. It was too easy.
- d. He failed math.

2. To whom did Jacob want to play Black Eyed Peas songs?

- a. Alex
- b. Angie
- c. Mom
- d. Dad

3. According to the passage, why does Jacob decide that he wants a metal detector?

- a. He sees a man at the park with one.
- b. His father had one as a child.
- c. He saw a TV commercial for one.
- d. He read an ad for one in a comic book.

4. How does Jacob get the items that he wants in the story?

- a. He asks his mom.
- b. He asks his dad.
- c. He shovels driveways and mows lawns.
- d. He does all of these things to get what he wants.

5. When did Jacob buy the metal detector?

- a. In the fall
- b. In the summer
- c. In the spring
- d. In the winter

6. True or False: The metal detector was a good investment for Jacob.

- a. True
- b. False

7. Why doesn't Jacob's father want to get him the magician's kit for his birthday?

- a. Jacob failed math class.
- b. Jacob quits too many expensive activities.
- c. Jacob has been mean to his younger brother.
- d. Jacob went to the park without permission.

8. Why does Jacob's father buy Jacob the magician's kit?

- a. Jacob mowed the lawn.
- b. Jacob reminded his father of himself.
- c. Jacob bought ice cream for his brother.
- d. Jacob found his father's key ring.

9. Which word is closest in meaning to the italicized word in the following sentence from paragraph four: "It was no surprise that Jacob's father was reluctant to buy him a magician's kit for his birthday?"

- a. Happy
- b. Willing
- c. Proud
- d. Hesitant

10. What distracts Jacob from the magician's kit?

- a. A TV commercial
- b. His father
- c. The kitchen table
- d. A comic book

11. Based on the end of the story, Jacob is most likely to go on and do which of the following?

- a. Become a great magician
- b. Learn to play guitar well
- c. Detect an incredible hidden treasure
- d. Raise money to go to space camp

12. Which happened first in the text?

- a. Jacob asked his dad for the magician's kit.
- b. Jacob got a guitar for Christmas.
- c. Jacob mowed lawns.
- d. Jacob shoveled driveways.

13. Which happened last in the text?

- a. Jacob saved up \$200.
- b. Jacob found forty-seven cents in the park.
- c. Jacob took guitar lessons.
- d. Jacob was influenced by a comic book.



Literary Elements Questions

Directions: After reading the story, choose the best answer for each question.

14. Which character trait best describes Jacob in regards to his hobbies?

- a. Dedicated
- b. Impulsive
- c. Committed
- d. Devoted

15. What was the author's purpose in writing this text?

- a. Inform
- b. Persuade
- c. Entertain
- d. Confuse

16. In what genre is this story?

- a. Fiction
- b. Nonfiction
- c. Folklore
- d. Poetry

17. In what subgenre is this story?

- a. Biography
- b. Historical Fiction
- c. Realistic Fiction
- d. Fable

18. In which pattern is the text organized?

- a. Problem and Solution
- b. Chronological
- c. Sequence
- d. Cause and Effect

19. From what point of view is the story narrated?

- a. First-Person
- b. Third-Person Objective
- c. Second-Person
- d. Third-Person Omniscient

20. Which poetic technique is used in the following line: "He beeped it around the park for a while"?

- a. Onomatopoeia
- b. Simile
- c. Personification
- d. Hyperbole

