

# "Grammar Has Bad Luck"



## ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES AND PROMPTS IN THE MAGAZINE

### NUMBER 13

One in 10 Americans believes that the number 13 is unlucky. The fear is so widespread that most high-rise buildings in the U.S. do not have a 13th floor! **There/Their** are lots of theories about where this fear comes from. Our favorite goes back to when our ancient ancestors learned to count. By counting each finger plus each foot as one unit, they could count up to 12. Anything beyond 12 was a terrifying unknown. (Why didn't they count **there/their** toes? Yeah, we are wondering that, too.)

### BROKEN MIRROR

It's said that breaking a mirror brings bad luck. Why? People used to think they could see **there/their** souls when they looked in a mirror. So if you broke a mirror, your soul would shatter into pieces. (That's gotta hurt.) Of course, **there/their** is another, more practical explanation for this superstition: Hundreds of years ago, glass mirrors were very expensive. If you were a servant who broke a mirror, that was bad luck indeed. Like, you-will-work-for-free-until-you-pay-for-it bad luck.

### BLACK CAT

If a black cat crosses the street in front of you, it's a bad omen. So said a lot of Europeans in the Middle Ages who had this crazy idea that evil spirits traveled around inside black cats. (Perhaps it was **there/their** glowing yellow eyes?) In other cultures, though, cats were revered—whether black, white, orange, or striped. Ancient Egyptians even buried some of **there/their** cats like royalty. Um, kitty mummies? Now that's creepy!

## ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY SHEETS

### THERE VS. THEIR

1. there
2. their
3. their
4. there
5. their
6. there
7. there
8. their
9. there
10. Answers will vary.
11. Answers will vary.

## “Call of Duty”



### ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES AND PROMPTS IN THE MAGAZINE

#### WRITING PROMPT, PAGE 9

Answers will vary. Here is a sample response:

Dear Representative Carolyn B. Maloney,

After reading the article “Call of Duty” by Michael Paternini in *Scope*, I felt the need to write to you. I learned about Marine Corporal Jose Armenta and his explosive-sniffing canine partner, Zenit. After Jose lost his legs in an IED explosion in Afghanistan, Zenit was reassigned and Jose was sent home solo. As a result, Jose was not only sick with the loss of his missing limbs, he was also grieving the loss of his closest companion. I am writing to urge you to allow veteran handlers to the chance to adopt the dogs they worked with. It’s only fair for the soldiers and for the animals.

Allowing veterans to adopt their military dogs is certainly in the best interest of the dogs, who form strong bonds with their handlers. And it is only fair, considering what these dogs have done for this country. Paternini describes Sangin, the city where Jose and Zenit were stationed when Jose lost his legs, as one of the most dangerous places in the world. It was Zenit’s job to search for IEDs and clear the way for American soldiers to pass through deadly, bomb-laden areas. We need recognize the danger that we put dogs like Zenit through and give canine veterans the respect they deserve.

The option for handlers to adopt their dogs is in the best interest of the soldiers as well. When Jose was in recovery and trying to get used to his new life without legs, he felt incomplete without Zenit. In Jose’s words, “Nothing felt right without him.” And Jose isn’t the only soldier with such feelings; many veterans wish to adopt their dogs after the animals are discharged. There is,

however, no formal program for them to do so and the adoption process, Paternini reports, is often frustrating.

The bond between handlers and their dogs is powerful. Describing the moment that he and Zenit were eventually reunited, Jose said, “I couldn’t stop smiling . . . It felt like the beginning to this new life.” Jose has benefited greatly from maintaining the connection to his canine war buddy, and I am positive that other veterans would also thrive after being reunited with their dogs.

Military veterans need to be given an option to adopt their animal partners. It’s the right thing to do for the animals and for the brave men and women who risk their lives for our country. The least we can do is allow these heroes to maintain the powerful relationships that are created while in the line of duty.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,  
Gwendolyn Farmer

#### “CALL OF DUTY” CLOSE-READING QUESTIONS

1. The author describes the day as “bone-dry” and “fryingly hot,” and writes that Jose could “taste the salt of his sweat as it trickled to his lips.” He also mentions the “deathly 120-degree heat” and that “the sun blazed down.” These details help the reader understand how physically uncomfortable Jose was.
2. The purpose of the sidebar is to explain who the Taliban are and provide information about the people who planted the IEDs that Jose and Zenit were looking for. It also explains why U.S. soldiers are in Afghanistan.
3. The first section is set in the desert of Afghanistan, where it is extremely hot and bright. It is also dangerous—the author describes it as “teeming with

section continues >>



## “Call of Duty” cont’d

enemy fighters” and “littered with IEDs.” This hot, stark, dangerous setting contributes to the uncomfortable, tense mood of the section. In the last section of the article, it is twilight in San Diego as Jose sits by his pool with Zenit; the author also notes that Jose takes Zenit to the beach after work. This quiet, dark, water-filled world contrasts greatly with the inhospitable desert of the first section and evokes a calm, peaceful mood.

4. Jose’s answer—a joke about his injuries—reveals both his resilience and his sense of humor. In this paragraph Jose is out in the world—a big change from the way things were when he first came back from Afghanistan and spent his days at home, sitting in a wheelchair with the drapes drawn. Jose’s upbeat attitude may be evidence of Zenit’s positive effect on him.

### “CALL OF DUTY” CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS

1. Soldiers use military dogs for the same reason they use other equipment: to do their jobs more effectively. Handlers take care of the dogs—keeping them clean, fed, and in good working condition—in a way that is similar to how they would clean and care for a weapon or a jet. With Zenit, however, Jose felt a personal connection. The author states that “man and dog bonded right away.” That bond was unlike anything Jose would have formed with a piece of equipment.
2. Jose and Zenit went through a lot together. They worked together on a dangerous job, and not only was Zenit with Jose when the bomb exploded, he also stayed at Jose’s side afterward. Jose trusted Zenit, his “quiet partner.” Without him, Jose felt incomplete. “Nothing felt right without him,” he says.
3. Students who answer “yes” may cite the healing powers of animals, particularly for soldiers who are going through difficult recoveries. Students may also argue that veteran handlers deserve the chance to adopt the dogs after sacrificing so much for their country. Students who answer “no” may say that it requires a lot of time and money to train these dogs, and that it is not reasonable to expect the military to give them up while they are still able to perform the service for which they were trained.

### “BEYOND THE STORY: INTO THE WORLD OF MILITARY WORKING DOGS” VIDEO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. According to the video, the three main duties of military

working dogs today are patrol (alerting their handlers to enemy intruders), detection (sniffing out bombs or drugs), and tracking (following a person’s smell through the air).

2. The narrator explains that all military working dog recruits go through a 3- to 4-month training course, where they learn obedience, run through difficult obstacle courses, practice biting bad guys, and learn how to smell at least eight different kinds of explosives.
3. The mood during the training section of the video is one of intensity. The fast-paced, dramatic music conveys how hard the dogs work during training; the narration describes the different challenging skills they need to master; and the video footage and photos show them moving quickly and competently through tough obstacle courses and drills.
4. The “unbreakable bonds” between military working dogs and their handlers likely form because the dogs and the soldiers spend so much time together (according to the video, almost 24 hours a day) and because they go through difficult, dangerous experiences together. Also, as the narrator says, in many ways, military working dogs are just like any other dogs—and so the bond between a working dog and a handler is very much like the bond between a pet and its owner.

### READ, THINK, EXPLAIN: NONFICTION ELEMENTS

#### \*Higher Level

Answers will vary but should be similar to the following:

1. The photograph shows a young man in a desert-colored uniform. He has a contented look on his face and his arm is around a German shepherd. The placement of the subheading so close to his face draws attention to the words “a dangerous mission.” The headline, “Call of Duty,” refers to both the soldier and the dog.
2. The photographs show Jose and Zenit together in Afghanistan and also other soldiers working with military dogs. The last image is a recent photograph of Jose wearing his prosthetics. He is smiling widely with Zenit beside him.
3. The map shows where Sangin is as well as surrounding countries. The inset shows where Afghanistan is in relation to the rest of the world.
4. I think this article will be about a soldier who is a handler for a military dog, and when the soldier

section continues >>



## “Call of Duty” cont’d

becomes badly injured, the dog remains with him.

5. The day is described as “bone-dry” and “fryingly hot” and Sangin is “one of the most dangerous places in the world.” Jose’s job is “deadly serious.” These details suggest that Jose is a disciplined, courageous person who endures hardships.
6. The mood of the first section is tense and suspenseful. This mood is created by descriptions of the peril of Jose’s job (“one of the most dangerous places in Afghanistan,” “painstaking work,” “teeming with enemy fighters,” “Jose and Zenit were the first targets”) and the physical aspects of the setting (“bone dry,” “fryingly hot,” “deathly 120-degree heat and 75 pounds of gear”). This is a stark contrast to the mood of the last section of the article, which is relaxed and hopeful. The searing desert with a blazing sun is replaced by “twilight,” “seated by his pool,” “they take Zenit to the beach.” The relaxed and hopeful mood is also created by examples of how joyful and content Zenit and Jose are (“he chases down each toss with zeal,” “he’ll flash that huge smile of his,” “joyously racing to return it to his master”).
7. **A.** spoiling the appearance of  
**B.** The word *disfiguring* emphasizes the physical damage wreaked by IEDs. If the author had used the word *serious*, it would not convey how a person’s appearance is forever altered by these injuries. Use of the word *disfiguring* helps convey how selfless Jose and others are who do this job.
8. The author describes a series of problems Jose faced and steps that were taken to solve them.
9. The tone is sympathetic. Phrases include “what followed wasn’t easy,” “underwent 12 operations,” “nightmares,” “thrashing, calling for Zenit,” and “dark days.” These words show the author’s compassion for how hard it must have been for Jose after his accident, “trying to come to terms with his new life.”
10. “And Zenit, recognizing his former handler instantly, covered Jose in slobbery kisses.” (p. 9)
11. Jose and Zenit were risking their lives every time they went out on a mission.
12. “Call of Duty” is about a young Marine named Jose who was stationed in Afghanistan. Along with his military dog Zenit, Jose’s job was to search for explosives (IEDs) that the Taliban had hidden. This region is one of the most dangerous in the world. Many soldiers had been

killed or injured by IEDs. One fateful day, Jose triggered an IED; both his legs had to be amputated. Jose was sent home to America and Zenit was assigned to another handler. During Jose’s difficult recovery, he missed Zenit terribly and took steps to find and adopt him. After a long process, Zenit and Jose were finally reunited.

### READ, THINK, EXPLAIN: NONFICTION ELEMENTS

#### \*Lower Level

Answers will vary but should be similar to the following:

1. The photograph shows a young man in a desert-colored uniform. He has a contented look on his face and his arm is around a German shepherd. The placement of the subheading so close to his face draws attention to the words “a dangerous mission.” The headline, “Call of Duty,” refers to both the soldier and the dog.
2. The photograph on page 6 shows Jose and Zenit going for a ride on a motorcycle in Afghanistan. The photo on page 7 is of soldiers in full military gear. They are carrying guns and one of the men has a military dog riding on his shoulder.
3. The photographs on page 8 show a soldier and dog wearing gas masks during World War I and a photograph of Zenit relaxing on a dusty chair. The photograph on page 9 shows Jose wearing his prosthetics. He is smiling widely with Zenit beside him.
4. The map shows where Sangin is as well as surrounding countries. The inset shows where Afghanistan is in relation to the rest of the world.
5. I think this article will be about a soldier who is a handler for a military dog. The soldier becomes badly injured and the dog remains by his side.
6. The day is described as “bone-dry” and “fryingly hot” and Sangin is “one of the most dangerous places in the world.” Jose’s job is “deadly serious.” These details suggest that Jose is a disciplined, courageous person who endures hardships.
7. The mood of the last section of the article is relaxed and hopeful. The author creates this mood through descriptions of the environment (“twilight,” “seated by his pool,” “they take Zenit to the beach”) as well as examples of how happy Zenit and Jose are (“he chases down each toss with zeal,” “he’ll flash that huge smile of his,” “joyously racing to return it to his master”).
8. **A.** spoiling the appearance of

section continues >>



## “Call of Duty” cont’d

- B.** The word *disfiguring* emphasizes the physical damage wreaked by IEDs. If the author had used the word *serious*, it would not convey how a person’s appearance is forever altered by these injuries. Use of the word *disfiguring* helps convey how selfless Jose and others are who do this job.
- 9. A.** Solution: He was given “shorties,” introductory prostheses without knee joints.  
**B.** Problem: Jose desperately missed Zenit and nothing felt right without him.
- 10.** Phrases include “what followed wasn’t easy,” “underwent 12 operations,” “nightmares,” “thrashing, calling for Zenit,” and “dark days.” These words show the author’s compassion for how hard it must have been for Jose after his accident, “trying to come to terms with his new life.”
- 11.** Students should cross out Evidence #1: “Instead, he did what all military dog handlers do: ‘You train your dog, do your job, leave the rest to fate,’ he says.” (p. 6)
- 12.** Students should draw lines through the following:
3. German shepherds make the best working dogs.
  4. The Taliban don’t allow people to listen to music or watch television.
  5. Jose was eager to find an IED because he and Zenit had not found any yet.
  10. It is really good that Jose and Zenit are together.

### “CALL OF DUTY” QUIZ

#### \*Higher Level (HL)

1. C (central ideas)
2. B (interpreting text)
3. D (text structure)
4. A (text evidence)
5. C (author’s craft)
6. C (text features)
7. “Tradition and Ritual” explains Jose’s difficult upbringing and provides an explanation for why the military was so important to him. Knowing that Jose came from “a violent world of real and wannabe gangsters, of random shootings and drug dealing” makes it more impressive when the author reveals that Jose was a class standout in the Marines. This increases the reader’s admiration for Jose. The section goes on to describe the bond between Jose and Zenit, and the military’s stance on working dogs.

- 8.** I think that when wildlife photographer Roger Caras said, “Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole,” he meant that of course there are many important things in life besides having a dog, but sharing one’s life with a dog brings a sense of completeness that nothing else can. Perhaps he was referring to the unconditional love that dogs show for their owners, the joy of playing with a dog, and the calm that results from petting a dog. Caras’s statement applies to Jose and Zenit because while Jose had much in his life—good things, like his wife, as well as difficult things, like dealing with his injury—he did not feel complete without Zenit’s company. He said, in fact, that nothing felt right without Zenit (p. 8). When Jose was finally able to adopt Zenit, Jose says, “It felt like the beginning to this new life” (p. 9). Jose describes Zenit as his “quiet partner” and seems to have gained a sense of wholeness through his reunion with Zenit.

### “CALL OF DUTY” QUIZ

#### \*Lower Level (LL)

1. A (central idea)
2. C (text evidence)
3. C (text features)
4. B (interpreting text)
5. A (interpreting text/text structure)
6. B (vocabulary in context)
7. Knowing about Jose’s difficult upbringing helps the reader understand why the military was so important to him. Knowing that Jose was from “a violent world of real and wannabe gangsters, of random shootings and drug dealing” makes it more impressive when the author states Jose was a class standout in the Marines. This increases the reader’s admiration for Jose.
8. I think that when wildlife photographer Roger Caras said, “Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole,” he meant that of course there are many important things in life besides having a dog, but sharing one’s life with a dog brings a sense of completeness that nothing else can. Perhaps he was referring to the unconditional love that dogs show for their owners, the joy of playing with a dog, and the calm that results from petting a dog. Caras’s statement applies to Jose and Zenit because while Jose had much in his life—good things, like his wife, as well as



## “Call of Duty” cont’d

difficult things, like dealing with his injury—he did not feel complete without Zenit’s company. He said, in fact, that nothing felt right without Zenit (p. 8). When Jose was finally able to adopt Zenit, Jose says, “It felt like the beginning to this new life” (p. 9). Jose describes Zenit as his “quiet partner” and seems to have gained a sense of wholeness through his reunion with Zenit.

### “CALL OF DUTY” VOCABULARY PRACTICE

1. A
2. A
3. S
4. A
5. S
6. A
7. inferior
8. sable
9. improvised
10. empty
11. Answers will vary.
12. Answers will vary.

### CORE SKILLS WORKOUT: FIND THE TEXT EVIDENCE

1. B, D, E
2. B; I chose B because it provides evidence that there are a large number of dogs working in the military, which supports the statement that dogs play an important role in the military. Choice A is about Jose taking care of Zenit, and choice C indicates that Zenit plays an important role in Jose’s life, but it doesn’t concern the role of dogs in the military.
3. Answers may include: “Still, Jose has come a long way,” “He can now walk on his prosthetic legs,” or “He’s learned to sail and ski.”
4. There is a powerful bond between Jose and Zenit.
5. Answers will vary.

### CORE SKILLS WORKOUT: TEXT FEATURES

Answers will vary but may include:

1. The large headline “Call of Duty” alludes to the popular video game and suggests that the article will be a story of war. The subheadline offers a preview of what we need to know about the story: The mission was dangerous, the injury was serious, and the dog in the picture was devoted to the mission and the man. The

descending size and placement of the subheading text grabs our attention and draws the reader into the story, line by line.

2. Answers will vary but may include: “Zenit proved to be a perfect partner,” “Man and dog bonded right away, like they were made for each other,” “We were a team,” “He bridges three worlds.”
3. This information would have likely been included near the beginning of the story, where the Taliban is introduced, or in the section “A Graveyard,” where the Taliban is mentioned again. Including this information within the article would have slowed down the pace of the story, however, which is why this information was probably separated into a sidebar. While this background information is helpful, it’s not essential to understanding the relationship between Jose and Zenit.
4. This photo and caption give readers helpful background information on the roles dogs have played in war through history. The older black-and-white photo is a visual cue that dogs have long been involved in war, and the caption provides examples of the roles they’ve had over time.
5. Possible answers include: “We Were a Team,” “Getting Zenit Back,” “A New Life.”



## "Do Sports Fans Go Too Far?"



### ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES AND PROMPTS IN THE MAGAZINE

Answers will vary, but an excellent response to the prompt on page 12 should include some of the following points:

#### Points for YES

1. Sometimes fans riot when their teams lose.
2. Strong feelings can linger long after a game is over and interfere with life.
3. Americans' priorities are out of order when it comes to sports. Our time, money, and energy could be spent on something more productive.

#### Points for NO

1. Being a big fan can make you happier and healthier. Sports fans tend to lead less lonely and more social lives.
2. Being a fan gives you a sense of belonging and allows you to connect and bond with all different types of people that you may otherwise not have met.
3. Supporting your team through wins and losses helps foster loyalty.
4. Watching sports gives us the opportunity to practice finding the good in failure.

### ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY SHEETS

#### "DO SPORTS FANS GO TOO FAR?" VOCABULARY

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. B                  | 6. Answers will vary. |
| 2. A                  | 7. Answers will vary. |
| 3. B                  | 8. Answers will vary. |
| 4. D                  | 9. Answers will vary. |
| 5. Answers will vary. |                       |

#### CORE SKILLS WORKOUT: TEXT STRUCTURES

1. The purpose of the article is to describe the benefits and drawbacks of taking sports seriously. Throughout the article, the author compares and contrasts how fans behave as well as the positive and negative aspects of being a fan.
2. The opening paragraph of the essay uses description. The author describes angry mobs "hurling rocks and smashing storefronts," police firing rubber bullets and tear gas, terrified parents clutching their children. The purpose of the description is to show how out of control the fans had become.
3. The author uses a list to give examples of out-of-control fans throughout history. He references 6th-century Constantinople and 14th-century England.
4. Cause and effect is used in these two paragraphs to explain the causes of extreme fandom. ("So what is it that makes fans so, well, *nuts*?" asks the author.) First the author explains that when people lived in tribes, they would battle each other for food, land, and power. Tribespeople would root for their warriors because the stakes were so high. The author explains that this mentality still exists in today's society and that the effect is that we have extreme fans who feel that winning games is of critical importance.

## *The Giver*



### ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES AND PROMPTS IN THE MAGAZINE

#### WRITING PROMPT, PAGE 18

Answers will vary. Here is a sample response:

Scientists have just developed a drug that seems to promise something wonderful: to erase bad memories. As we all know, some memories can be debilitating. They can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder, which causes severe anxiety, flashbacks, nightmares, and other terrible problems. Who could blame someone from wanting to wipe from their mind the sort of horrible memory that is a constant torture, disrupting daily life?

I urge you, though, to be careful. I come from a place where, like you, we discovered a way to separate people from their memories. Like you, we thought it would be wonderful to help people by allowing them to forget painful experiences. Pretty soon, though, it wasn't just certain people whose memories were being erased, and it wasn't just debilitating memories that were being erased. It happened very naturally—if it was good to erase a traumatic memory, well, wasn't it also good to erase a difficult memory? And if it was good to erase a difficult memory, might it not also be good to erase a wonderful memory, in order to save people from unrealistic expectations, or from making emotional but illogical choices? Things eventually reached a level where all memories of the past were erased from the minds of all but one person—and that person was me. When I turned 16, I became "the Receiver," and began to receive all memories of pain and pleasure, all memories of things in the past that no longer existed.

I soon came to see that without memories of the past, we were all living meaningless lives. Yes, our lives were "easy" in some ways, but they were empty. And we

did unspeakable things with no sense that they were wicked. Why? Because by losing our memories of pain and suffering, we also lost our sense of right and wrong.

It may sound cruel for me to suggest that the memory-erasing drugs your scientists have developed be destroyed, but that is what I believe. While I have great compassion for those who these drugs are intended to help, I cannot see the drugs as anything but the first steps on a very dangerous path.

### ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY SHEETS

#### THINKING ABOUT THEME

"The Boy Who Cried Wolf": A liar will not be believed, even when he speaks the truth.

"The Bundle of Sticks": There is strength in numbers.

"The Boasting Traveler": Don't let your words be larger than your deeds.

#### THE GIVER CLOSE-READING QUESTIONS

1. The capitalization indicates that these words mean something different to members of the Community than they do to readers. In the play, the capitalized words refer to specific people, places, and things that are official, standardized, regulated, etc.
2. Personal choice, love, color, the arts, extreme weather, and memory have been eliminated because they can provoke strong emotion and obstruct peace, convenience, and ease, which are the foundations of society in the Community.
3. When you question something, you are thinking for yourself, refusing to blindly accept what you are told. You may be expressing disapproval or disagreement.

section continues >>





## *The Giver* cont'd

Questioning things is seen as a threat to peace and harmony.

4. The Giver is saying that for the sake of harmony, people are living flat, empty lives. He is speaking up for the value of profound experience, struggle, and individuality. He means that what makes us human is our ability to appreciate beauty, feel emotion, empathize—and that if we don't do these things, we may be existing, but we are not really living. Students will likely agree, pointing to the absence of love, color, music, family, etc., and to the horrifying practice of killing those who are judged to be imperfect or ineffective.

### **THE GIVER CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS**

1. In the Community, the concept of death no longer exists; people have been taught to believe in "Release" and "Elsewhere." Only Jonas and the Giver, who have memories of death, recognize death for what it is.
2. Some ideas: We must beware of giving in to our desire for comfort, safety, etc. We must be critical thinkers, questioning what we are told and challenging things that seem wrong. We must remember and learn from the past, and protect that which brings meaning to our lives.

### **THE GIVER AND "COULD THE GIVER HAPPEN IN REAL LIFE?" CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS**

1. The play suggests that the answer is yes. Members of the Community have no memory of death—they know nothing about the pain of losing someone or about the fear of dying. As a result, they have no sense that it is wrong to Release—that is, to kill. Once Jonas gains the memory of death, he is horrified by the practice of Release.
2. Memories that evoke strong emotion—good or bad—have been taken away. It is not spelled out who decided to do this, but the Giver talks to Jonas about changes "we" made, suggesting that society made the decision.

### **THE GIVER LITERARY ELEMENTS**

#### **Character**

1. **A.** major; Jonas is a 16-year-old boy who has just been given the special role of the Receiver: the person who holds all memories of the past. This role sets him apart from everyone else, and also makes him realize the flaws in his society. He is a dynamic character because over

the course of the play his understanding of and feelings about his society change, and he makes the decision to disobey the law and change society.

- B.** major; The Giver is an older man who held the position of Receiver before it was passed onto Jonas; the Giver is responsible for training Jonas. He is compassionate, thoughtful, and brave; he questions the rules of his society. He is a dynamic character because at the beginning of the story, he plays by the rules; through his interactions with Jonas he becomes rebellious and defies authority by helping Jonas escape.
- C.** Fiona, minor; A friend of Jonas, she is nurturing and good with children. She is a static character because she does not undergo any significant internal change. (Students may choose to describe a different character.)
2. Answers may be similar to the following:
  - A.** In Scene 1, Jonas says "I don't think I fit in anywhere." This shows that even before he becomes the Receiver, he is somehow different or special. In Scene 10, Jonas says, "People need the memories so they can understand. Because if you can't feel, what's the point of life?" This line reveals that the memories he's received have deeply affected him, and that he yearns for a deeper, more meaningful experience. It also shows his concern for others.
  - B.** In Scenes 12 and 13, Jonas takes Gabriel and risks his life trying to break through the Boundary of Memory. If he succeeds, he will set free all the memories that have been taken from people, irrevocably changing life in the Community. This action shows Jonas's bravery; he faces severe punishment—likely death—if he is caught. It also demonstrates Jonas's passion and his desire for a meaningful life, and his love and compassion for Gabriel.
3. Jonas is the protagonist. The plot revolves around him and his evolution from a typical teenager to the person with the power to change society. It is his struggle, first to learn about the world and then to change it, that the reader follows.
4. The Community is the antagonist. I know because the Community is an oppressive society where people have been stripped of their humanity. (Students could also name the Chief Elder as the antagonist, because she represents the Community and enforces its rules. She is the one who tries to stop Jonas from crossing the Boundary of Memory.)

**section continues >>**



## *The Giver* cont'd

### Setting

5. The story takes place sometime in the future, in a place known as “the Community.” The Community is enclosed by a boundary that no one is allowed to cross. It is not clear where, geographically, the Community is located. It is a fictional setting.
6. When Jonas and the Giver talk about the past, they are describing a society like our own—which is quite different from the one in the play. For example, Jonas learns that in the past, there were “violins, bumblebees, purple, thunderstorms” (14)—all things we have now but that no longer exist in the world of the play. Jonas also learns about dancing, singing, and love as well as memory, death, and freedom as things that once existed but no longer do. From these details you can infer that the play is set in the future. The geographic location of the setting is somewhere where it could snow, because the Giver explains that they have climate control now to prevent snow—or any extreme weather—from occurring.

### Plot and Structure

7. **A.** Seeing Beyond and Hearing Beyond describe what Jonas sees and hears in the memories he receives from the Giver, and also the things he is able to see and hear in the present that others cannot, such as the color of leaves or Fiona’s hair.
- B.** Seeing Beyond and Hearing Beyond describe only what is outside of, or “beyond,” the perception or experience of people (other than Jonas and the Giver) in the Community. The narrators, on the other hand, simply describe action as it happens.

### Genre

8. *The Giver* has several common characteristics of dystopian literature. Like much dystopian literature, *The Giver* is set in a futuristic, imagined society. Another common characteristic of dystopian literature is that freedom has been taken away; in *The Giver*, people are not allowed to make any important decisions about their own lives. For example, people’s jobs, spouses, children, and even meals are chosen for them. In dystopian literature, it is common for the past to be kept secret from the general public; in *The Giver*, one person (the Receiver) is chosen to hold all memories of the past. Jonas, the protagonist of *The Giver*, struggles against the society that he comes to see as confining and rebels against authority as he attempts to set free the

memories he has been given; a struggle against society and a rebellious protagonist are common characteristics of dystopian literature too. The constant surveillance, violence, and control of emotion that are common to the genre are all present in *The Giver* as well: cameras and speakers are mounted everywhere; babies and others are systematically “Released,” which is to say, killed; and everything possible is done to prevent people from experiencing strong emotion, so that, as the Chief Elder puts it, people are kept “safe and content.”

### THE GIVER VOCABULARY PRACTICE

1. debilitating
2. noble
3. harmony
4. dry
5. exit
6. traumatic
7. awash
8. emanated
9. penetrate
10. debilitating
11. corrupt
12. traumatic
13. transmitting
14. manicure
15. chaos

### THE GIVER QUIZ

#### \*Higher Level (HL)

1. B (key ideas)
2. A (text evidence)
3. C (inference)
4. D (vocabulary in context)
5. D (inference)
6. B (author’s point of view)
7. In *The Giver*, members of the public are under constant surveillance. This is clear from the way, in Scene 8, the Chief Elder issues a warning to Fiona as she and Jonas dance in a park (which is against the rules). The Chief Elder speaks to Fiona through a speaker; you can infer that she was watching Fiona and Jonas through a camera mounted nearby. Also, in Scene 12, as Jonas begins his escape from the Community, the Chief Elder says “There’s nowhere to hide, Jonas. We have cameras

section continues >>



## *The Giver* cont'd

everywhere." You can infer that the Elders keep people under such close surveillance in order to control them. Surely the knowledge that they are being watched affects people's behavior, and it is reasonable to assume that the Elders regularly warn, threaten, or punish those who do not conform to the rules of the Community.

8. As Jennifer Dignan explains in "Could *The Giver* Happen in Real Life?" scientists are currently developing drugs that erase memories. In some ways, this echoes *The Giver*, a story about a society that hinges on suppressing memories of the past. However, the real-life drugs differ from what is going on in *The Giver* in many ways. Scientists are developing the real-life drugs not to control people but to help those tormented by the memory of a traumatic experience—people such as, writes Dignan, soldiers who have witnessed the horrors of war or victims of violent crime, whose lives are disrupted by their memories. Doctors would prescribe the drugs; they would not be available to the general public. In *The Giver*, absolutely everyone (except for one designated person, the Receiver) has their memories taken away—and not just their traumatic memories. All memories of what life was like in the past are kept from people; in particular, all memories of strong emotion, both bad and good, are withheld. This has been done to keep people, as the Chief Elder describes it, "safe and content." Life has been made bland for the purpose of making it easier. Could the memory-erasing drugs of real life be used in a similar way? As Dignan asks, where would we, in real life, draw the line between a memory that is bad enough to erase and one that isn't, and who would get to draw that line? These are important questions to consider, even if it seems, at first glance, the real-life erasing of memories is quite different from the erasing of memories in the fictional world of *The Giver*.

### THE GIVER QUIZ

#### \*Lower Level (LL)

1. B (key ideas)
2. A (text evidence)
3. A (inference)
4. D (vocabulary in context)
5. C (inference)
6. D (reading for information)
7. At the end of the play, Lily begins to hum and Fiona

begins to dance. You can infer that this happens because Jonas has successfully made it past the Boundary of Memory and released the memories he was holding, returning them to the people. Jonas learns about both singing and dancing—two activities that have disappeared from life—in Scene 7, through the memories he receives from the Giver.

8. Bad memories can be both harmful and helpful. As Jennifer Dignan points out in "Could *The Giver* Happen in Real Life?", if a memory is bad enough, it can interfere with your life. Dignan notes that horrible memories can cause post-traumatic stress disorder that can cause severe anxiety, nightmares, and other problems. Even memories that fall short of debilitating can be unpleasant; memories of sad, embarrassing, or otherwise upsetting experiences can cause those emotions to bubble up again. However, bad memories can also be helpful. We learn from our experiences; as Dignan puts it, "Our experiences—the bad as well as the good—make us who we are. Each one helps us grow."

In *The Giver*, all bad memories (along with all wonderful memories) have been erased. The people are free from unpleasant memories, yes, but they are also living shallow, empty lives. They are, in the Giver's words, "distant whispers of what once made [them] human." Also, without memories of pain, suffering, and loss, they have no understanding of death, and as a result it is considered normal and acceptable to "Release" (kill) babies and others who are judged as inferior. It is only when Jonas, the protagonist, learns about suffering through a memory of a mother elephant mourning the death of her baby that Jonas gains compassion and an understanding that killing people is wrong.

### CORE SKILLS WORKOUT: MAKING INFERENCES

Answers will vary but may be similar to:

1. (provided)
2. It reveals that Father cares about Gabriel and wants Gabriel to survive. Father whispers because he is breaking the rules. He knows he is not supposed to use a newchild's name until the baby is placed with a Family Unit.
3. Questioning Sameness threatens the very foundation of the Community. It is dangerous to the society to have someone who may not agree with the way things

section continues >>



## *The Giver* cont'd

are, and who may introduce other members of the Community to a different way of life. I know because the Giver tells Jonas that differences were eliminated because they cause jealousy, anger, and hate. Books are forbidden because they “introduce alternate ways of thinking.” The Chief Elder says that Jonas is corrupting his friends.

### CORE SKILLS WORKOUT: SUMMARIZING

*The Giver* is about a society where everything is the same and all personal choices have been taken away. In the Community, the Elders decide which Life Positions, or jobs, each of the young adults will have. Jonas is named Receiver of Memory, which means he will receive all the memories of what life used to be like, and use that information to give advice. During his training, Jonas discovers that life used to include colors, emotions, music, and free will. Jonas begins to feel that living without differences and choices is not fulfilling. And so Jonas decides to escape from the Community, which will release his memories to the people. The Chief Elder tries to stop him, but Jonas reaches the Boundary and restores freedom to the people.

### CORE SKILLS WORKOUT: EXPLORING MOOD

- Answers will vary.
- A.** The pathway that Jonas and Fiona are riding down is “perfectly manicured.” There is a dense wall of Mist that surrounds the Community. Jonas’s family eats “premade food on metal trays.” The world of the Community is too neat, too clean, too sanitized. These details create a mood that is uneasy and detached.  
**B.** Some of the language is unnatural—such as “newchildren” and “dwelling”—and the use of capital letters suggests that this society is highly regulated: Life Positions, Community, Mist, Family Unit, Released to Elsewhere. Other than Jonas, the characters seem to be very matter-of-fact about everything in their environment. Fiona’s disinterest in what life may be like outside the Community and her declaration that “questioning things is rude” also contributes to this feeling of uneasiness—something is clearly very wrong in this world.
- When Jonas enters the Giver’s dwelling he “stares in awe at towering shelves of books.” We know from Fiona that

questioning things is rude, yet Jonas spends the rest of this scene asking questions. He is learning things that no other person in the Community knows about. When the Giver transmits the first memory of snow to Jonas, it helps create this surprised and amazed mood. “Jonas’s eyes snap open.” His world has been opened up.

- The mood of Scene 5 is unusually tender. Father, Lily, and Jonas have taken an interest in the infant. Father has even broken the rules and called him by a name—Gabriel—in hopes this will help him grow. The physical actions of the scene also create this tenderness. Father is holding the baby, he whispers in his ear, and Jonas reaches out so the baby can grab his finger. When Mother sternly says, “His name is ‘Uncertain’” the mood shifts to tense and restricted. We are reminded that this society is highly regulated, that Father and Jonas are breaking the rules. We also learn that Mother does not approve of what Father and Jonas are doing, because her tone of voice is “stern.”
- Jonas receiving the memory of music and love creates a mood of vulnerability. He has never experienced true emotion before and says, “My chest hurts, but . . . it’s good.” The Giver also gives Jonas the memory of grief and heartache, extending the mood of vulnerability. Jonas comes to a major realization in this scene when he says, “If there is neither good nor bad, what is there?” This new access to emotions helps him see how lacking his society is.
- In Scene 8, there is a feeling of wonder and exhilaration as Jonas admires the light in the trees and the color of Fiona’s hair. He impulsively grabs her and dances with her, wanting to share the new feelings he has discovered. This exhilarated, joyful mood is abruptly ended when Fiona receives a warning for breaking the rules. Suddenly the mood becomes threatening. Her shocked reaction, “You got me in trouble, Jonas!” contributes to this new harsh mood and reminds us that citizens are always being watched and monitored and they are not free to behave as they please.
- Jonas learns that Release to Elsewhere means being killed by injection. Jonas’s shock and outrage create a suspenseful and urgent mood that continues for the rest of the play as Jonas races to change society. At the end of Scene 10 Jonas says, “People need the memories so they can understand. Because if you can’t feel, what’s

**section continues >>**



## ***The Giver*** cont'd

the point of life?" It seems that Jonas is deciding to take action. In Scene 11, the mood becomes more dramatic as Jonas discovers that Gabe will be released the following morning. From this point on, there is a life-or-death feeling in the play.

8. The author creates suspense by generating a sense of urgency through action. Lines like "He grabs Gabriel and attaches a baby carrier to his bicycle" and "The Giver grabs Jonas's wrists" help us understand that everything is happening quickly now. This urgency continues as Jonas "hops on his bike," "pedals faster, dodging searchlights," "speeds toward the wall of Mist and punches through it, disappearing from sight." The suspense is further increased as the Chief Elder "storms" to the Giver's dwelling, telling us how high the stakes are. Scene 13 is almost entirely told in suspenseful action. "Jonas, now on foot, clutches Gabriel as he struggles up a mountain. The hum of planes gets closer." Words like "Whoosh," "speed," and "rocket" build momentum to the climax as Jonas and Gabe cross the Boundary of Memory.

## "Is It Time For Cursive to Die?"



### ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES AND PROMPTS IN THE MAGAZINE

#### WRITING PROMPT, PAGE 21

Answers will vary. Here is a sample response:

Though letter writing and cursive writing are not as common as they once were, they do have value in today's society. There are physical, mental, and emotional benefits of both of these "lost arts."

As author Lauren Tarshis points out, writing in cursive "is more efficient than printing because you don't have to lift your pen off the page as often." Also, by writing in cursive, you are able to express yourself creatively, in your own distinct handwriting. Another benefit is that writing in cursive develops the muscles in your hands. Plus, cursive has been shown to improve thinking skills. If you write out your thoughts before typing them, your ideas are likely to be deeper. (Texting and tweeting certainly do not encourage profound thought.)

In terms of emotions, there is no substitute for receiving a letter handwritten by a loved one. Nina Sankovitch writes about reading letters from her sister who passed away. She writes, "But it is the written words she left me . . . that allow me to hold in my hand the substance of who she was." Sankovitch describes letters as "a link, a connection" to someone who is not with you. The deeply personal aspect of a handwritten letter allows you to feel like you are with the person who sent it. There is great comfort in that physical connection.

(Students who say "no" may argue that learning cursive is not nearly as important as developing math and reading skills. As Lauren Tarshis points out in her essay, in our modern technological society there is more value in learning to write computer code than cursive.

Tarshis also points to Snapchat, texting, e-mailing, and tweeting as evidence that we are able to communicate with each other with more frequency and ease than we used to. Nina Sankovitch believes that the best way to feel connected to her sister is to hold her handwritten letters in her hand; students could dispute this by saying that memories live in one's heart and mind, and you don't need a physical object to connect you to a person who is not with you.)

### ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY SHEETS

#### "IS IT TIME FOR CURSIVE TO DIE?" CLOSE-READING QUESTIONS

1. The purpose of the paragraph is to show how cursive writing is part of history. This is why the author provides examples of where cursive has appeared over the centuries. By mentioning what has been penned in cursive—such as the Declaration of Independence, "one of our country's most famous documents"—the author helps develop the idea that cursive writing connects us to our past.
2. If you have integrity, you have strong morals. The sentence about "sloppy writers" being suspected of having "low moral character" helps the reader understand the meaning of integrity, because sloppy writers with low moral character are presented in contrast to those with good handwriting and integrity.
3. The section includes a series of questions, which the author does not answer. The author likely chose to end the article with these questions because she wants to encourage the reader to think rather than tell the reader what to think.

section continues >>





## “Is It Time For Cursive to Die?” cont’d

### “WHY I KEEP MY LETTERS”

#### CLOSE-READING QUESTIONS

1. The word *but* is used to signal a compare/contrast relationship between the information in the first and second paragraphs. The first paragraph lists the various mementos the author has of her sister Anne-Marie. The second paragraph explains that Anne-Marie’s handwritten letters are the most meaningful mementos of all.
2. Through both the content of the letter and the style of the writer’s handwriting, a letter reveals the writer’s thoughts and feelings and expresses his or her personality.
3. To *salve* is to soothe, as if with a balm. The writer means that short text messages don’t offer enough of her son’s personality, thoughts, or feelings to make her feel connected with him.

### “IS IT TIME FOR CURSIVE TO DIE” AND “WHY I KEEP MY LETTERS” CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS

1. Digital communication is quick and efficient and allows us to communicate with many people at once. A handwritten letter is deeper and more personal.
2. Answers will vary. Students might say future generations will know a lot about where we went, what we saw, and what we ate based on our Instagram and Facebook postings. But most digital communication is too short and hastily written to reveal profound reflection. Future generations may not have the same insight into the substance of who we are as we have into the substance of past generations.
3. Answers will vary. Students should draw on the texts as well as their own ideas.

### PAIRED TEXTS QUIZ

#### \*Higher Level (HL)

1. B (supporting details)
2. B (central ideas)
3. D (text evidence)
4. C (vocabulary)
5. D (author’s craft)
6. C (comparing authors’ points of view)
7. Sankovitch means that the letters from her sister are so powerful and evoke such vivid memories that she feels as though her sister is still communicating with her, even though the letters were written long ago. A letter

can “speak” not only through what it literally says but also by conveying the personality and point of view of the letter writer.

8. Answers will vary but may be similar to: As handwriting disappears, it is likely that we will lose our connection to the past. Author Lauren Tarshis writes in her essay that advancements in technology, such as Snapchat, texting, and email, have made it easier and faster to communicate (p. 20), but as these technologies replace cursive writing, it’s very likely that most of us will no longer be able to access all of the texts from human history. After all, people have been writing in cursive for centuries (p. 19); thus, many important historical documents and texts were written in cursive, such as the Declaration of Independence (p. 19). Additionally, because older generations used to learn cursive and wrote by hand instead of typing on computers or phones like we do now, many personal documents containing the life histories of our ancestors will also be lost to us (p. 20). Tarshis also points out that we have replaced handwritten letters with text messaging and Skype (p. 20). As Nina Sankovitch points out in “Why I Keep My Letters,” a text message is simply not as meaningful as a handwritten letter—the “10-character messages” she gets from her son away at college are no “balm” for the ache of missing him. These forms of communication do not contain the depth that her sister’s handwritten letters do, which Sankovitch still treasures. Sankovitch writes that “letters are the history of our lives” (p. 21). So without handwriting, the art of letter writing will be lost to us—and so will our own histories.

### PAIRED TEXTS QUIZ

#### \*Lower Level (LL)

1. B (summarizing)
2. B (central ideas)
3. D (text evidence)
4. B (inference)
5. D (author’s craft)
6. C (comparing authors’ points of view)
7. Sankovitch means that the letters from her sister are so powerful and evoke such vivid memories that she feels as though her sister is still communicating with her, even though the letters were written long ago.
8. Answers will vary but may be similar to: As handwriting

section continues >>



## “Is It Time For Cursive to Die?” cont’d

disappears, it is likely that we will lose our connection to the past. Author Lauren Tarshis writes in her essay that advancements in technology, such as Snapchat, texting, and email, have made it easier and faster to communicate (p. 20), but as these technologies replace cursive writing, it’s very likely that most of us will no longer be able to access all of the texts from human history. After all, people have been writing in cursive for centuries (p.19); thus, many important historical documents and texts were written in cursive, such as the Declaration of Independence (p. 19). Additionally, because older generations used to learn cursive and wrote by hand instead of typing on computers or phones like we do now, many personal documents containing the life histories of our ancestors will also be lost to us (p. 20).

### “IS IT TIME FOR CURSIVE TO DIE” AND “WHY I KEEP MY LETTERS” VOCABULARY PRACTICE

1. A
2. S
3. A
4. S
5. A
6. S
7. brush
8. efficient
9. pain
10. mandatory

### CORE SKILLS WORKOUT: WHAT’S THE TONE?

1. Answers may include: “allow my children to know, all over again, their aunt who loved them so very much,” “preserving them as a presence in our lives,” “still speak to me,” “means even more to me now,” “physical reality”
2. Answers may include: “history of our lives,” “a link, a connection,” “the writer is with me, to hold and cherish,” “a wonderful gift, keeping the bond between them alive,” “balm for the ache of missing Peter,” “brings him home again”
3. The author feels that letters are extremely meaningful and should be cherished. They are a physical way of connecting with a person who is not with you, especially if the letters are handwritten.
4. This passage reveals a fairly negative attitude toward modern communication. The author seems to believe

that it is often inadequate—that the things we write are extremely short and often devoid of deep feeling. She is grateful for any communication from her son off at college, but a text or tweet does not fill her heart and ease the pain of missing him in the same way that a handwritten letter would.

5. nostalgic, comforting; The author creates this tone by referring to her beloved sister who died and telling the reader that old letters from her sister allow her to feel connected to this person who meant so much to her. The nostalgic and comforting tone is also established by the author’s statement that keeping letters is a universal practice: “Almost everyone I know has letters saved away somewhere.” It is comforting to think of a loved one while you are reading a letter from him or her. Phrases like “the writer is with me, to hold and cherish” and “they appear in front of me, smiling, laughing” contribute to the nostalgic and comforting tone as well. The author writes, “Letters provide not only a bridge to the people from our past but also a bridge to those in the present, but too far away for us to touch and see every day.” In this sentence the author refers to the feeling of yearning to connect to one’s past and to one’s loved ones, and offers a way to do this, which is comforting.

### CORE SKILLS WORKOUT: CENTRAL IDEAS AND DETAILS

1. Detail 1: “In fact, students were graded on their penmanship the way you are graded on math.”  
Detail 2: “Thomas Jefferson penned one of our country’s most famous documents, the Declaration of Independence, in glorious cursive.”  
Detail 3: “For generations, mastering this form of handwriting was a sign of growing up, like learning to ride a bike.”
2. Central idea: Modern technology has made teaching and learning cursive less important.



## “Is It Time For Cursive to Die?” cont’d

### CORE SKILLS WORKOUT: SYNTHESIZING

	CURSIVE AND OTHER HANDWRITING	LETTER WRITING
<b>Why it’s disappearing</b>	Technology and social media are replacing written forms of communication (p. 20).	Technology and social media are replacing letter writing.
<b>Reasons to preserve it</b>	<p>Handwriting connects us to the past through the letters of loved ones and ancestors and famous documents (pp. 19-20).</p> <p>It’s a form of personal expression (p. 20).</p> <p>It’s part of tradition (p. 20).</p> <p>Studies show that writing by hand improves thinking skills (p. 20).</p> <p>It builds muscles in the hand (p. 20).</p> <p>Handwriting leads to deeper ideas (p. 20).</p>	<p>Handwritten letters are a “bridge to the people from our past” as well as those we are separated from by distance (p. 21).</p> <p>Holding a loved one’s written words in your hands is more special than a typewritten letter because you can sense the person’s personality, the “substance of who they are” (p. 21).</p> <p>Keeping a person’s handwritten letters is a way of keeping him or her in our lives (p. 21).</p>
<b>Reasons not to preserve it</b>	<p>It’s not a 21st-century skill.</p> <p>There is only so much time in the day and teachers need to prioritize skills like reading and math over cursive (p. 20).</p> <p>No one uses it anymore. People text, e-mails, Skype, and Instagram instead.</p> <p>It would be better to learn to code (p. 20).</p> <p>Cursive was invented to make handwriting easier and less messy (p. 20). That’s not a problem anymore because we have better pens as well as computers.</p>	<p>We e-mail, Skype, and text instead of writing letters. We don’t need to write letters by hand.</p>

# “The Greatest Invention Ever?”



## ANSWERS TO ACTIVITIES AND PROMPTS IN THE MAGAZINE

### LEVEL 1 (AVAILABLE ONLINE)

Some answers will vary.

1. If there's one thing in your life you take for granted, it's probably toilet paper. Hardworking, humble, and highly underappreciated, toilet paper is a product everybody uses—and nobody ever thinks about. (Unless, of course, the person before you used the last of the **roll**.) But this overlooked essential has a surprising—and fascinating—history.
2. Toilet paper is a relatively recent invention. The first products designed specifically for bathroom use were plant-fiber sheets invented in New York in 1857. The wipes weren't very popular though, and the next step forward in bottom technology didn't happen until 1890, when brothers Clarence and E. Irvin Scott latched onto the idea of having one long sheet of paper attached to a roll. The brothers faced a major obstacle in marketing their merchandise, however: Nobody wanted to talk about it. In fact, the Scotts were so embarrassed by their own product that they didn't take credit for it until 1902. (**Today**, the Scott website proudly proclaims that its TP “gets the job done at a smart price.”)
3. At the time, toilet paper was considered a “medicinal” item. Most Americans used a number of other household objects for cleanup, including corncobs (**yikes**), **moss (ew)**, and **pages torn from catalogs and books (ow)**. Purchasing paper just for bathroom use seemed extravagant.
4. All that changed in the 1900s, when flush toilets and indoor **plumbing became** commonplace in American homes. Suddenly, people needed a product that wouldn't clog or destroy plumbing systems. Yet talking about

bathroom **business remained** a big no-no.

5. Enter a new era: Charmin. In 1928, the Hoberg Paper **Company realized** it had to get creative if it wanted to make its toilet paper happen. Its ad executives came up with Charmin, a brand represented by an elegant woman. No mention of the product's actual purpose appeared on the packaging. Charmin was an immediate success. (To this day, you can find the brand—now represented by a cuddly bear—on supermarket shelves.) By the 1970s, Americans were totally sold on toilet paper. The product was considered so essential that when in 1973 a television show host made a joke about a toilet paper shortage, millions of **people took** him seriously and rushed to the store—leading to an actual toilet paper shortage that lasted nearly a month!
6. These days, toilet paper is big **business**. Every year, Americans, spend more than \$6 billion **dollars** on toilet paper, going through about 50 **pounds** of it per **person**. Unfortunately, all that toilet paper is wreaking havoc on our **planet**: Millions of trees are cut down annually to make the plush stuff we are used to. Is it time for a change?
7. There are other options that would be better for the **environment**. In Japan, people use a toilet called the Washlet, a combination mini-shower and blow-dryer for the rear. No toilet paper is required. Bidets—basins with faucets for bottom washing—are common in many parts of the **world**. Both options are less damaging to the environment, but neither has really caught on in the U.S. So for now, think twice about how many squares you use when you're in the bathroom. Or look for toilet paper made from recycled paper. It may be a tad rougher on your bottom, but it will be a lot softer on the **planet**.

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## “The Greatest Invention Ever?” cont’d

### LEVEL 2 (IN THE MAGAZINE)

Some answers will vary.

1. If there’s one thing in your life you take for granted, it’s probably toilet paper. Hardworking, humble, and highly underappreciated, toilet paper is a product everybody uses—and nobody ever thinks about. (Unless, of course, the person before you used the last of the **roll**.) But this overlooked essential has a surprising—and fascinating—history.
2. Toilet paper is a relatively recent invention. The first products designed specifically for bathroom use were plant-fiber sheets invented in New York in 1857. The wipes weren’t very popular though, and the next step forward in bottom technology didn’t happen until 1890, when brothers Clarence and E. Irvin Scott latched onto the idea of having one long sheet of paper attached to a roll. The brothers faced a major obstacle in marketing their merchandise, however: Nobody wanted to talk about it. In fact, the Scotts were so embarrassed by their own product that they didn’t take credit for it until 1902. (**Today**, the Scott website proudly proclaims that its TP “gets the job done at a smart price.”)
3. At the time, toilet paper was considered a “medicinal” item. Most Americans used a number of other household objects for cleanup, including corncobs (**yikes**), **moss (ew)**, and **pages torn from catalogs and books (ow)**. Purchasing paper just for bathroom use seemed extravagant.
4. All that changed in the 1900s, when flush toilets and indoor **plumbing became** commonplace in American homes. Suddenly, people needed a product that wouldn’t clog or destroy plumbing systems. Yet talking about bathroom **business remained** a big no-no.
5. Enter a new era: Charmin. In 1928, the Hoberg Paper **Company realized** it had to get creative if it wanted to make its toilet paper happen. Its ad executives came up with Charmin, a brand represented by an elegant woman. No mention of the product’s actual purpose appeared on the packaging. Charmin was an immediate success. (To this day, you can find the brand—now represented by a cuddly bear—on supermarket shelves.) By the 1970s, Americans were totally sold on toilet paper. The product was considered so essential that when in 1973 a television show host made a joke about

- a toilet paper shortage, millions of **people took** him seriously and rushed to the store—leading to an actual toilet paper shortage that lasted nearly a month!
6. These days, toilet paper is big business. Every year, **Americans spend** more than \$6 billion on toilet paper, going through about 50 pounds of it per person. Unfortunately, all that TP is wreaking havoc on our planet: Millions of trees are cut down annually to make the plush stuff we are used to. Is it time for a change?
7. There are other options that would be better for the environment. **A toilet called the Washlet, a combination mini-shower and blow-dryer for the rear, is popular in Japan.** No TP is required. **Bidets—basins with faucets for bottom washing—don’t require toilet paper either, and are common in many parts of the world.** Both options are less damaging to the environment, but neither has really caught on in the U.S. So for now, think twice about how many squares you use when you’re in the bathroom. Or look for TP made from recycled paper. It may be a tad rougher on your bottom, but it will be a lot softer on the planet.

### LEVEL 3 (AVAILABLE ONLINE)

Some answers will vary.

1. If there’s one thing in your life you take for granted, it’s probably toilet paper. Hardworking, humble, and highly underappreciated, toilet paper is a product everybody uses—and nobody ever thinks about. (Unless, of course, the person before you used the last of the **roll**.) But this overlooked essential has a surprising—and fascinating—history.
2. Toilet paper is a relatively recent invention. The first products designed specifically for bathroom use were plant-fiber sheets invented in New York in 1857. The wipes weren’t very popular though, and the next step forward in bottom technology didn’t happen until 1890, when brothers Clarence and E. Irvin Scott latched onto the idea of having one long sheet of paper attached to a roll. The brothers faced a major obstacle in marketing their merchandise, however: Nobody wanted to talk about it. In fact, the Scotts were so embarrassed by their own product that they didn’t take credit for it until 1902. (**Today**, the Scott website proudly proclaims that its TP “gets the job done at a smart price.”)
3. At the time, toilet paper was considered a “medicinal”

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## “The Greatest Invention Ever?” cont’d

item. Most Americans used a number of other household objects for cleanup, including corncobs (**yikes**), **moss (ew)**, and **pages torn from catalogs and books (ow)**. Purchasing paper just for bathroom use seemed extravagant.

4. All that changed in the 1900s, when flush toilets and indoor plumbing became (**rampant**) **commonplace** in American homes. People needed a product that could be flushed into plumbing systems without clogging or (**sabotaging**) **destroying** them. Yet talking about bathroom business remained a big no-no.
5. Enter a new era: Charmin. In 1928, the Hoburg Paper Company realized it had to get creative if it wanted to make toilet paper happen. Its ad executives came up with Charmin, a brand represented by a beautiful woman who made no mention of the product’s actual purpose. Charmin was an immediate success. (To this day, you can **find (perceive)** the brand—now represented by a cuddly bear—on supermarket shelves.) By the 1970s, Americans were totally sold on toilet paper. The product was considered so (**salient**) **essential** that when in 1973 a television host made a joke about a toilet paper shortage, millions of people took him seriously and rushed to the store—leading to an actual toilet paper shortage that lasted nearly a month!
6. These days, toilet paper is big business. Americans (**employ**) **spend** more than six billion bucks a year on it. And the average American uses 50 pounds of toilet paper per year; we use more than any other country in the world. Unfortunately, all that TP is wreaking havoc on our planet. Millions of trees are cut down every year to make the plush stuff we are used to.
7. There are other options that would be better for the environment. **A toilet called the Washlet, a combination mini-shower and blow-dryer for the rear, is popular in Japan.** No TP is required. **Bidets—basins with faucets for bottom washing—don’t require toilet paper either, and are common in many parts of the world.** Both options are less damaging to the environment, but neither has really caught on in the U.S. So for now, think twice about how many squares you use when you’re in the bathroom. Or look for TP made from recycled paper. It may be a tad rougher on your bottom, but it will be a lot softer on the planet.

### ANSWERS TO ACTIVITY SHEETS

#### PARENTHESSES PRACTICE

1. The movie set a box office record (almost \$300 million) on its opening weekend.
2. Eliza moved to a small town in Alaska (population 1,200).
3. My dad says that Michael Jordan was the all-time best basketball player. (But could Jordan pass like LeBron James?)
4. Dr. Seuss (his real name was Theodor Geisel) added the “Dr.” to his name because his father wanted him to become a medical doctor, not a writer.
5. One of the birds (Penny, not Twitter) escaped this morning from its cage.
6. Mrs. Martin couldn’t believe how much her daughter spent on one tank top (\$55).
7. Answers will vary.

#### UNNECESSARY COMMAS

1. A
2. A
3. A
4. B
5. A
6. Zachary put up his tent, climbed inside, and went to sleep.
7. My sister Sarah stayed home with the flu four days last week, so she has a lot of catching up to do at school.
8. The movie that you’re talking about sounds familiar, but I’m not sure whether I saw it.
9. The best event at camp last summer was the color war, followed by the boat building competition.
10. Everyone who was there witnessed something very strange, but they are all afraid to talk about it.

#### MASTER YOUR MODIFIERS

1. In algebra class, Sarah told me about her vacation.  
Misplaced modifier: in algebra class
2. Frankie’s wallet was empty because he spent all his money at the pizza place.  
Misplaced modifier: Having spent all his money at the pizza place
3. At the mall, we saw a movie about alien monkeys.

section continues >>





## “The Greatest Invention Ever?” cont’d

Misplaced modifier: at the mall

4. The tap dancers rehearsed wearing the top hats that they got yesterday  
Misplaced modifier: with the top hats on their heads
5. A fan of anything chocolate, Marissa reached eagerly for the cupcake.  
Misplaced modifier: a fan of anything chocolate
6. I read in the newspaper that a famous Dutch painting was stolen.  
Misplaced modifier: in the newspaper
7. Ray put his white shirt, which was stained with spaghetti sauce, in the laundry basket.  
Misplaced modifier: Stained with spaghetti sauce
8. Mr. Kaplan carried Rachel’s birthday cake, which was topped with 12 blazing candles, into the dining room.  
Misplaced modifier: Topped with 12 blazing candles

series and the olympics.

7. Kennie o’Hara was not thrilled to be attending his new School in chester, Pennsylvania.
8. Selena’s Mom is a doctor. she works at the big Hospital downtown.
9. several of my friends bought new adidas shoes at the Sporting Goods Store in the Mall.
10. I live on cherry street with my family and my dog, ranger.
11. parades require many hours of preparation.
12. Gabe is looking forward to his ski trip to park City, utah.

### WHICH WORD WORKS?

Answers in the right column will vary. Here are some ideas.

Word from above	More appropriate word
roam	travel
brisk	fast
adhere	buckle
rigidly	tightly
inaugurate	rise
intellectualizes	knows
likelihood	chance
extensive	long

### CORRECT CAPITALIZATION

1. my friend gary is an outstanding Athlete who plays for the Indianapolis colts.
2. watching the rose parade on TV is a new year’s day tradition in the Rossum family.
3. “i already have plans for halloween,” said sam.
4. “Grandma and grandpa are coming over for dinner tonight,” said dad.
5. sophie would love to explore every Mountain Range.
6. There are two special events I love to watch: the world