

READING FOR MAIN IDEA

Hurricanes generally occur in the North Atlantic from May through November, with the peak of the hurricane season in September; only rarely will they occur from December through April in that part of the ocean. The main reason for the occurrence of hurricanes during this period is that the temperature on the water's surface is at its warmest and the humidity of the air is at its highest.

Of the tropical storms that occur each year in the North Atlantic, only about five, on the average, are powerful enough to be called hurricanes. To be classified as a hurricane, a tropical storm must have winds reaching speeds of at least 117 kilometers per hour, but the winds are often much stronger than that; the winds of intense hurricanes can easily surpass 240 kilometers per hour.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5. The passage mainly discusses | 6. The best title for this passage would be |
| (A) how many hurricanes occur each year | (A) The North Atlantic Ocean |
| (B) the strength of hurricanes | (B) Storms of the Northern Atlantic |
| (C) the weather in the North Atlantic | (C) Hurricanes: The Damage and Destruction |
| (D) hurricanes in one part of the world | (D) What Happens from May through November |

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882) was perhaps the best-known American poet of the nineteenth century. His clear writing style and emphasis on the prevalent values of the period made him popular with the general public if not always with the critics. He was particularly recognized for his longer narrative poems *Evangeline*, *The Song of Hiawatha*, and *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, in which he told stories from American history in terms of the values of the time.

Evangeline was set during the French and Indian War (1754–1763), when the British forced French settlers from Nova Scotia; two lovers, Gabriel and Evangeline, were separated by the British, and Evangeline devoted her lifetime to the search for Gabriel. With its emphasis on sentimental, undying love, *Evangeline* was immensely popular with the public.

In *The Song of Hiawatha*, Longfellow depicted the noble life of the American Indian through the story of the brave Hiawatha and his beloved wife Minehaha. The tear-inspiring poem follows Hiawatha through the tragedies and triumphs of life, ending with the death of Minehaha and Hiawatha's departure into the sunset in his canoe.

The Courtship of Miles Standish takes place during the early period of the settlement of New England, a period which was viewed as a time of honor and romance. In this poem centered around a love triangle, Miles Standish asks his friend John Alden to propose to Priscilla Mullins for him; John Alden ends up marrying Priscilla Mullins himself, and it takes time for his friendship with Miles Standish to recover. As with Longfellow's other narrative poems, the emphasis on high ideals and romance made the poem extremely popular.

7. Which of the following best describes the main idea of the passage?

- (A) American history is often depicted in poetry.
- (B) Longfellow described American history even though people really did not enjoy it.
- (C) The popularity of Longfellow's poems results from his stress on the values of the people.
- (D) Longfellow wrote long narrative poems that were not always popular with the critics.

8. The best title of the passage is

- (A) Longfellow's Popular Appeal
- (B) Historical Narrative Poems
- (C) The Lyric, Dramatic, and Narrative Poems of Longfellow
- (D) Longfellow and the Critics

9. The subject of the fourth paragraph is

- (A) nobility and honor in the poems of Longfellow
- (B) the love triangle involving Miles Standish
- (C) the popular appeal of *The Courtship of Miles Standish*
- (D) the period of the early settlement of New England