Name:	Date:

SELECTION TEST

"American History"

Judith Ortiz Cofer

FIRST READ: **Comprehension**

Identify the choice that best answers the question.

_____**1.** In "American History," why do the little house and its residents have such a fascination for Elena even before Eugene moves to the neighborhood?

a. She believes that one day her family will move into a house just like it.
b. She feels that she has become part of the life she witnesses unfolding in the house.
c. She is a curious person who likes knowing about all the various people on her block.
d. She worries about the elderly people who live there and wants to help them.

_____**2.** In "American History," why is Elena so happy on the day of President Kennedy's death?

a. She receives an A on an exam.
b. Her family buys a house in Clifton.
c. Eugene tells her that he likes her a lot.
d. She is going to study at Eugene's house.

_____**3.** In "American History," what happens when Elena goes to Eugene's house?

a. Eugene's mother turns her away, telling her that she will not be allowed to study with Eugene.
b. Eugene welcomes her warmly, but his mother is less welcoming.
c. Eugene is so upset about President Kennedy's death that he cannot come to the door.
d. Eugene's mother is shocked that Elena would visit on the day of President Kennedy's death.

_____**4.** In "American History," Elena's mother and Eugene's mother have a similar concern about their children. From the details in the story, choose the statement that **best** describes the viewpoint they share.

a. Both mothers worry about their children's continual failing grades in their classes.
b. Both mothers wish their children to avoid mixing with members of another ethnic group.
c. Both mothers want their children to study hard, graduate on time, and go to college.
d. Both mothers are eager to protect their children from the influence of troublemakers.

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_____**5.** The 1960s, when "American History" is set, was a time of great social change and reform. Which of the following issues of the time is **most** relevant to Elena's experiences in the story?

a. discrimination against African Americans
b. American involvement in wars overseas
c. strong ethnic divisions in urban areas
d. the struggle for equal rights for women

FIRST READ: **Concept Vocabulary**

Identify the choice that best answers the question.

_____**6.** Which of the following events would a person **most likely** have *anticipated* when young?

a. a sudden assassination of the President
b. a comfortable retirement in a warm climate
c. a surprising rejection by a stranger
d. a birthday party held by a good friend

_____**7.** If a person can be said to be *enthralled* by a story, which of the following **must** be true? Base your answer on the meaning of *enthralled*.

a. The person is quite repelled by the story.
b. The person is mildly suspicious of the story.
c. The person is mildly interested in the story.
d. The person is quite fascinated by the story.

_____**8.** How might a daughter **best** show that she is *devoted* to her mother? Base your answer on the meaning of *devoted*.

a. by avoiding social events
b. by leaving home as an adult
c. by being attentive to her needs
d. by avoiding loud music or laughter

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CLOSE READ: **Analyze the Text**

Identify the choice that best answers the question.

9. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A first, and then Part B.

_____ **Part A** Which is the **most accurate** description of Elena's status at school in "American History"?

a. She is very popular.
b. She is the teacher's pet.
c. She is something of an outsider.
d. She is one of the school's top students.

_____ **Part B** Which sentence from "American History" **best** supports the answer to Part A?

a. I was miserable, since I had forgotten my gloves, and my knuckles were turning red and raw from the jump rope.
b. They entered the double ropes in pairs and exited without tripping or missing a beat.
c. "Skinny Bones" and the "Hick" was what they called [Eugene and me] at school when we were seen together.
d. That summer, before we had even spoken one word to each other, I kept [Eugene] company on my fire escape.

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10. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A first, and then Part B.

_____ **Part A** What can you infer about Elena's parents from the details she provides in "American History"?

a. They have inherited money from their parents and are quite wealthy.
b. They have found it impossible to adjust to life in the United States.
c. They spend very little time looking after Elena or taking care of her.
d. They work hard and make sacrifices in the hope of a better future.

_____ **Part B** Which sentence from "American History" **best** supports the answer to Part A?

a. Since I had turned fourteen my mother had been more vigilant than ever. She acted as if I was going to go crazy or explode or something if she didn't watch me and nag me all the time. . . .
b. My mother was unhappy in Paterson, but my father had a good job at the bluejeans factory in Passaic and soon, he kept assuring us, we would be moving to our own house there.
c. I had learned to listen to my parents' dreams, which were spoken in Spanish, as fairy tales, like the stories about life in the island paradise of Puerto Rico before I was born.
d. I would hear them talking softly in the kitchen for hours that night. . . . [T]hey would talk sadly about the young widow and her two children, as if they were family.

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11. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A first, and then Part B.

_____ **Part A** In "American History," when Elena finally speaks to Eugene, how is he different from what she expected?

a. She expects snobbery, but he turns out to be shy and open to friendship.
b. She expects rejection, but he welcomes her admiration in a vain way.
c. She expects friendliness, but he turns out to be needy and clinging.
d. She expects shyness, but he turns out to be talkative and outgoing.

_____ **Part B** Which quotation from "American History" **best** supports the answer to Part A?

a. But when I came up to him . . . and blurted out: "You're Eugene. Right?" he smiled, pushed his glasses up on his nose, and nodded. I saw then that he was blushing deeply.
b. His mother was very unhappy, Eugene said, in his beautiful voice that rose and fell over words in a strange, lilting way.
c. I knew I was his only friend so far, and I liked that, though I felt sad for him sometimes.
d. Today was the day I was to visit Eugene in his house. He had asked me to come over after school to study for an American history test with him.

_____**12.** Toward the end of "American History," Eugene's mother tells Elena, "I am truly sorry if he told you you could come over. He cannot study with you. It's nothing personal. You understand?" What is it that Eugene's mother **most likely** wants Elena to "understand"?

a. Eugene's family will be moving soon, so studying together is unnecessary.
b. Eugene's mother does not want Eugene to socialize with someone of Elena's background.
c. Eugene's feelings will be hurt if it turns out that Elena is smarter than Eugene.
d. Eugene's mother does not want Eugene exposed to the bad influences in El Building.

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CLOSE READ: **Analyze Craft and Structure**

Identify the choice that best answers the question.

_____ **13.** Which of the following sentences from "American History" **best** communicates one of Elena's internal conflicts?

a. I was also taking a lot of abuse from the black girls for not turning the rope hard and fast enough for them.
b. I liked him right away because he sat at the kitchen table and read books for hours.
c. . . . I decided to approach him directly, though my stomach was doing somersaults.
d. I would soon sit there, across from Eugene, and I would tell him about my perch just above his house.

14. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A first, and then Part B.

_____ **Part A** Which statement **best** describes the external conflict between Elena and her mother in "American History"?

a. Elena wants to return to Puerto Rico; her mother wants the family to stay in New Jersey.
b. Elena wants to play games and jump rope; her mother wants her to help with the housework.
c. Elena wants to act according to her emotions; her mother wants her to be prudent and careful.
d. Elena wants to study and become a teacher; her mother wants her to marry and raise a family.

_____ **Part B** Which excerpt from "American History" **best** supports the answer to Part A?

a. "You are going out *today*?" The way she said "today" sounded as if a storm warning had been issued.
b. "You are forgetting who you are, *Niña*. I have seen you staring down at that boy's house. You are heading for humiliation and pain."
c. I started for the door. She sat in front of the TV holding a white handkerchief to her face.
d. Our apartment was empty when I got home. My mother was in someone else's kitchen, seeking the solace she needed.

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_____**15.** At the end of "American History," Elena says the following:

> That night, I lay in my bed trying to feel the right thing for our dead President. But the tears that came up from a deep source inside me were strictly for me.

Which sentence **best** describes the internal conflict Elena feels at that moment?

a. She feels annoyed that her parents are sympathetic to the President's widow but care nothing for her own unhappiness.
b. She feels angry that her plans to spend the afternoon with Eugene have been ruined by the President's assassination.
c. She wants to feel appropriate sorrow over the President's assassination but is consumed by her own unhappiness.
d. She feels disappointed that school was let out early on a day when she would have received an award.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT: **Word Study**

Identify the choice that best answers the question.

_____**16.** *Cognates* are words in different languages that are similar in origin and meaning. For example, *telephone* in English is *teléfono* in Spanish. Given your knowledge of the English word *evacuate*, choose the **most likely** definition of the Spanish cognate *evacuar*.

a. to live in one town while working in another
b. to leave home in response to a threat
c. to travel across a large body of water
d. to rent for a fixed amount of time

_____**17.** English and Spanish contain many *cognates*—words that are similar in origin and meaning. For example, *palace* in English is *palacio* in Spanish. Given your knowledge of the English word *clarity*, choose the **most likely** definition of the Spanish cognate *claridad*.

a. darkness
b. clearness
c. happiness
d. cleverness

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LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT: **Conventions**

Identify the choice that best answers the question.

_____**18.** Which of the following **best** describes the underlined prepositional phrase in the sentence below?

During the Cold War, President John F. Kennedy gave a famous speech about freedom and democracy in West Berlin, near the wall that divided the city.

a. It is an adjective phrase describing what kind of speech the President gave.
b. It is an adjective phrase explaining which U.S. president gave the speech.
c. It is an adverb phrase identifying the era when the speech was given.
d. It is an adverb phrase identifying where the speech was given.

_____**19.** Which of the following **best** describes the underlined prepositional phrase in this sentence?

The Caribbean island of Puerto Rico became a commonwealth of the United States in 1952.

a. It is an adverb phrase identifying when the island became a commonwealth.
b. It is an adjective phrase identifying which island became a commonwealth.
c. It is an adjective phrase describing what kind of island Puerto Rico is.
d. It is an adverb phrase identifying where the island of Puerto Rico is.

_____**20.** Read the following sentence.

Shawon ran to the bus stop, waving excitedly at his friend Luís, clutching the precious scholarship offer he'd just received in the mail tightly in his fist.

Which prepositional phrase in the sentence is an adverb phrase identifying where Shawon was running?

a. to the bus stop
b. at his friend Luís
c. in the mail
d. in his fist

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