READING COMPREHENSION 7C
Compiled by : Mr. Wiwied

Vancouver Island's Pacific Rim Whale Festival

In British Columbia, people have festivals that celebrate the things that make their hometown special. Every year, about 20,000 grey whales swim past the west coast of Vancouver Island. The whales travel from Mexico to the Arctic and back again. The whole trip is about 16,000 kilometres. Every March, the people who live around the Pacific Rim National Park have a festival to celebrate the whales' journey. The festival is the Pacific Rim Whale Festival. The whales travel very close to the shore as they swim north. This allows people to gather together to watch the whales from land and from boats.

Nanaimo's Bathtub Race

On the east coast of Vancouver Island, you can see people moving through the water in a strange type of boat. During the Nanaimo Bathtub Race, people have a big race in boats made from bathtubs! The city of Nanaimo is home to the oldest and most famous bathtub boat race in the world. The race started as a silly event in 1967. Today, Nanaimo's World Championship Bathtub Race is a serious sport that brings racers and visitors from around the world.

Vancouver's Dragon Boat Festival

Vancouver is home to another famous festival on the water. This is the Dragon Boat Festival. Dragon boat racing started in China more than 2,000 years ago. It was brought to Vancouver during the World's Fair called Expo 86. The Dragon Boat Festival came back to Vancouver in 1989 to celebrate the many cultures living together in the city. The festival begins with a ceremony. The ceremony wakes up the dragon and gives the people and boats the dragon's strength. Each boat has a dragon's head on the front and a tail on the back. The boat holds a team of about 20 people. The people in the boats paddle to the beat of a drummer. The drummer sits at the front of the dragon boat.

1. How many grey whales swim near Vancouver Island every year?

A. 15,000
B. 30,000
C. 20,000
D. No one knows.

2. Where do the grey whales start their annual trip?

A. Vancouver Island.
B. The Arctic.
C. They start somewhere in the open ocean.
D. Mexico.

3. According to the reading, why is it easy for people to see the whales?

A. The people use binoculars.
B. The whales swim close to land.
C. The people are also swimming in the water.
D. They fly over the whales in helicopters.

4. Where does the Nanaimo Bathtub Race happen?

A. Far off the north coast of Vancouver Island.
B. On the South Shore of Vancouver Island.
C. On the west side of Vancouver Island.
D. On the east side of Vancouver Island.

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5. What is special about every boat in the race?

A. Each boat can carry three people.

B. Every boat is made from a bathtub.

C. Every boat gets a safety inspection.

D. All the boats have sails.

6. How did the Nanaimo Bathtub race change over the last 50 years?

A. The race became less popular.

B. There were not bathtub boats in the beginning.

C. The race started as a funny event, but it became a serious race.

D. In the beginning, all the boats were sailboats.

7. Where did dragon boat racing begin?

A. China.

B. British Columbia.

C. The east coast of Canada.

D. Japan.

8. How does the dragon boat festival begin?

A. It starts with races with only the fastest boats.

B. It begins with a ceremony so that the rowers can be strong.

C. The festival begins with music.

D. The festival begins with a movie about Expo 86.

9. How do the people in the boat know to paddle together.

A. They all paddle to the beat of the drummer at the front of their boat.

B. They watch the person in front of them.

C. They stay together because of experience.

D. All the paddlers count the number of paddle strokes per minute.

Raven and the First People

Raven was bored. He was walking along the beach in Haida Gwaii, looking for some new way to amuse himself. As he walked along the beach, the blue ocean in front of him and the green forest behind him didn't seem interesting. Raven wanted to play, but there was no one to play with.

Then he heard a strange sound, unlike any sound he knew. He looked up and down the beach. Where was it coming from? As he walked he noticed a large white clamshell lying in the sand. Inside the clamshell were tiny creatures, unlike any he had seen before.

Raven bent down to get a closer look. The creatures seemed afraid of him, so he began to coax them in a gentle voice, "Come out. Come out. Don't be afraid. I won't hurt you."

A few of the creatures came out of the clamshell. They were very different from Raven. They had no feathers, no wings, and no beaks. Like him, they walked on two legs, but they had arms, faces with mouths, and black hair. They spoke to each other in a language that Raven didn't understand. These tiny creatures were the first humans.

Raven enjoyed watching these humans play and explore the world. After a while, when he was beginning to feel bored again, he noticed that these humans were only men. There were no women. Raven had an idea. He wondered if he could find some women. He searched for a

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long time. Then he saw some *chitons. He opened one of the chitons and found some lovely, tiny women. He brought the women to the men.

Raven enjoyed watching the behaviour of the men and women. He saw them begin to pair off and have children. The human families moved to other parts of the island. Since that day, many generations of humans have grown and flourished, and Raven has never been bored.

* Chiton: a large sea shell

10. Where was Raven walking?

A. through the forest

B. along the beach

C. in the water

11. Why did Raven want to play?

A. He was bored.

B. He was excited.

C. He was hungry.

12. What was Raven's problem?

A. His frends were all working.

B. Raven had nothing to play with.

C. His friends were too busy to play.

13. What did Raven hear?

A. A baby crying.

B. A bird singing.

C. A strange sound.

14. Where was the sound coming from?

A. The birds.

B. The sea.

C. A clamshell.

15. What did Raven see in the clamshell?

A. baby clams.

B. tiny creatures.

C. Sand

16. How did Raven get the creatures to come out of the clamshell?

A. He coaxed them in a gentle voice.

B. He sang to them.

C. He grabbed them and pulled them out.

17. What idea did Raven have?

A. He wanted to find some women for the male creatures.

B. He wanted the men and women to get married.

C. He wanted to get married.

18. Where did Raven find the female creatures?

A. in the sand.

B. in the seaweed.

C. in a chiton.

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19. Why isn't Raven bored now?

A. He has children of his own.

B. He can amuse himself by watching the behaviour of men and women.

C. He can create humans.

The Monkey and the Crocodile

Once there was a monkey who lived in a naval tree beside a river. This naval tree produced more fruit than any other tree in the jungle, and its fruit was fresher and sweeter than the fruit on all the other trees.

Every day when the monkey ate this fruit, he was very happy. Not only could he eat his fill, but he could throw some fruit into the river when his friend the crocodile came by. The crocodile and the monkey spent many hours sitting on the shore of the river and talking, and in time they became best friends.

The crocodile always took some fruit home to his dear wife. She loved the naval fruit so much that she became addicted to its taste and freshness. One day she thought, "If the monkey eats this fruit every day, then his flesh must also taste sweet, especially his liver. Oh, I want to taste the monkey's liver." She thought about it and thought about it until she couldn't stand it any longer.

Finally she said to her husband, "I want to taste the monkey's liver. Please bring him home, so I can satisfy my hunger."

The crocodile was shocked! "You want to eat the monkey's liver? But . . . he's my friend! I love him. And he's so generous to us. My dear, it's impossible."

The lady crocodile became angry. She demanded that he bring the monkey to her. She demanded that he let her taste the monkey's liver. Otherwise she would leave.

The crocodile was torn apart. He loved his wife, and didn't want to lose her. He loved his friend, and didn't want to lose him. Why did he have to make this difficult choice?

In the end, he decided to lose his monkey friend. With a heavy heart, he swam slowly back across the river and sat under the naval tree.

"Oh Monkey," he called, "It's a lovely night, and I feel like going for a ride on the river. Why don't you come along? I could show you the beauty of the river."

"I don't think so," said the monkey. "I don't think that's a good idea. And anyway, I can't swim, and I'm afraid of the water."

"I am the king of the river. You don't need to be afraid when you ride on my back. Besides, we've been friends for a long time. What a shame it would be if you can't trust me by now."

The monkey thought for a minute. Perhaps the crocodile was right. Who can you trust, if not your friends? "OK," he said, "I'll come with you." He jumped onto the crocodile's back, and they sailed into the river.

It was a wonderful ride, and the monkey was really happy, but the crocodile was quiet, and deep in thought.

"What's the matter?" asked the monkey.

The crocodile almost burst into tears. "I'm sorry, my friend. I lied to you. I am not doing this to entertain you. Rather, I am taking you to my wife. She wants to eat your liver."

"Eat my liver!!" The monkey was astonished. "Why does she want to eat my liver?"

"She knows that you eat the fruit of the naval tree every day. She thinks that your liver must be very sweet and tender, so she wants to eat it."

"I see," said the monkey. He saw that his life was in danger. He thought for a minute. "My friend, don't feel bad on my account," he said. "I would be honored to give my liver to your

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wife. But you should have told me about this before we left the naval tree."
"Why?" asked the crocodile.

"Well, I always wash my liver in the river and then hang it on a branch of the tree."

"Oh?"

"If you take me back to the tree, I'll get it for you. Then you can take it to your wife."

The crocodile swam quickly back to the naval tree. When he got to the shore, the monkey jumped off his back and climbed up the tree.

"Hah! Crocodile! Don't you know that I can't give you my liver? This has been a good lesson to me about trust."

20. Where did the monkey live?

A. In the jungle.

B. In a naval tree.

C. Across the river.

21. What was special about the naval tree?

A. It was very beautiful.

B. It had a lot of fruit.

C. It had the freshest and sweetest fruit.

22. Was the monkey generous? Why?

A. Yes, because he could eat as much as he wanted.

B. No, he just liked to eat a lot.

C. Yes, because he gave fruit to the crocodile.

23. What does "eat his fill" mean?"

A. He could eat until he was no longer hungry.

B. He could eat so much he felt sick.

C. He could eat all the food quickly.

24. How did the monkey and the crocodile become friends?

A. They went swimming together.

B. They spent a lot of time sitting together and talking.

C. They said hello to each other every day.

25. What did the crocodile always do with the fruit?

A. He washed it before he ate it.

B. He took some home to his wife.

C. He ate it all.

26. What does "become addicted" to something mean?

A. It means you can take it or leave it.

B. You really like it a lot.

C. You must have more and more.

27. What did the crocodile's wife want to do?

A. She wanted to become addicted.

B. She wanted to eat more and more fruit.

C. She wanted to eat the monkey's liver.

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28. When you "can't stand" something any longer, it means that...

A. you hate it and you are going crazy because of it.

B. you really like it.

C. you don't want to do it, but you have to.

29. What was the crocodile's problem?

A. He loved his wife, but he didn't love the monkey.

B. He loved his friend, but he didn't love his wife.

C. He had to choose between his wife and his friend.

30. What did the crocodile decide to do?

A. To take the monkey across the river.

B. To tell the monkey about his problem.

C. To kill the monkey.

31. The crocodile had a "heavy heart." This means that...

A. He was very sad.

B. He wasn't healthy.

C. The monkey was heavy.

32. Why didn't the monkey want to ride on the crocodile's back?

A. He didn't trust the crocodile.

B. He didn't know how to swim.

C. It was dark and he couldn't see much.

33. How did the crocodile get the monkey to climb onto his back?

A. He said he was king of the river.

B. He said the monkey didn't need to be afraid.

C. He talked about friendship and trust.

34. Which answer tells you that the crocodile felt bad about lying to the monkey?

A. He told the monkey the truth.

B. He burst into tears.

C. He was very quiet.

35. How did the monkey get the crocodile to go back to the naval tree?

A. He said that his life was in danger.

B. He said he would give his liver to the crocodile's wife.

C. He said his liver was hanging on the tree.

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