

Read the passage - 'Mozart: The Boy Musician' - and answer the question below:

Mozart: The Boy Musician

Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

Mozart: The Boy Musician

by Kate Dickinson Sweetser

The following excerpt is from a biography of the composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Mozart, one of the world's greatest composers, was born in 1756. He died when he was only 35 years old. During his life, he composed about 1,000 musical works.

- 1 Almost before he could talk plainly, the little fellow showed himself to be a musical prodigy. When he was scarcely three years old he would steal into the room where his father was giving a lesson on the harpsichord¹ to Nannerl, the sister five years older than himself. While she was being taught, Wolfgang would listen and watch with breathless attention.
- 2 One day when the lesson was over, he begged his father to teach him too. But Leopold Mozart only laughed as he answered, glancing down into the child's serious face looking so intently into his, "Wait, my little man, thou art but a baby yet," and the disappointed little musician crept away.
- 3 As soon as Nannerl and his father had left the room, the tiny fellow crept back again. He went to the harpsichord and standing on tiptoe, touched the keys with his chubby fingers stretched wide apart until he reached and played a perfect chord!² Leopold Mozart was in another part of the house, but his sensitive ear caught the sound. He rushed back to find his baby on tiptoe before the harpsichord, giving the first hint of his marvelous ability.
- 4 At once the proud and excited father began to give him lessons. From that day, whenever Nannerl had her lesson, Wolfgang perched on his father's knee, and listened with rapt absorption. Often when the lesson was over, he would repeat what she had played in exact imitation of her manner of playing.
- 5 Leopold Mozart, who was himself a talented musician, saw with pride almost beyond expression, that both of his children inherited his musical ability. Soon he felt that Wolfgang was a genius. When the boy was only four, his father tried to teach him some minuets.³ To his perfect astonishment, Wolfgang played after him in a most extraordinary manner, not merely striking the notes correctly, but marking the rhythm with accurate expression. To learn and play each minuet, the little fellow required only half an hour.
- 6 When [Wolfgang] was five years old, one day his father entered the sitting-room of their home. He found Wolfgang bending over a table, writing so busily that he did not hear his father enter. Wolfgang's chubby little hand held the pen awkwardly, but held it with firm determination. It traveled back and forth across a large sheet of paper on which he was scribbling a strange collection of hieroglyphics. Here and there a huge blot

testified to his haste and inexperience in the use of ink.

7 What was he trying to do? His father's curiosity finally overcame him and he asked, "What are you doing, Wolfgang?"

8 The curly head was raised with an impatient gesture. "I am composing a concerto⁴ for the harpsichord. I have nearly finished the first part."

9 "Let me see it."

10 "No, please, I have not yet finished."

11 But even as he spoke, the eager father had taken up the paper and carried it over to where a friend stood. They looked it over together, exchanging amused glances at the characters on it.

12 Presently Leopold Mozart, after looking carefully at it, said, "Why it really seems to be composed by rule! But it is so difficult that no one could ever play it."

13 "Oh, yes, they could, but it must be studied first," exclaimed little Wolfgang eagerly, and running to the harpsichord, he added, "See, this is the way it begins." And he was able to play enough of it to show what his idea in writing it had been. His father and the friend who had before exchanged glances of amusement, now looked at each other with wonder not untouched with awe.

¹harpsichord: *a stringed musical instrument that looks like a small piano*

²chord: *two or more musical notes that sound together in harmony*

³minuet: *music that goes with a stately dance that was popular in the 1600s and 1700s*

⁴concerto: *a long, musical composition that features one instrument accompanied by an entire orchestra*

Excerpt from "Mozart: The Boy Musician" by Kate Dickinson Sweetser, from *Ten Boys From History*. In the public domain.

1. The story of Mozart writing a concerto MOST develops which idea?
 - A. Mozart's father is a skilled teacher.
 - B. Mozart becomes famous.
 - C. Mozart's father is amazed.
 - D. Mozart plays many instruments.

2. How was Leopold Mozart affected when his young son played a perfect chord on the harpsichord?
- A. He was inspired to teach his son how to compose musical pieces for the harpsichord.
 - B. He realized that his son was able to learn minuets in a very short time.
 - C. He was forced to consider the possibility that his son might be a musical genius.
 - D. He decided to allow his son to sneak into the room where he was giving lessons.
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Read the passage - 'Mozart: The Boy Musician' - and answer the question below:

3. Read this sentence from the first paragraph.

When he was scarcely three years old he would steal into the room where his father was giving a lesson on the harpsichord.

What does the word steal mean as it is used in the sentence?

- A. to sneak quietly to avoid notice
 - B. to win a contest through trickery
 - C. to take without permission
 - D. to become the focus of attention
-

Read the passage - 'Mozart: The Boy Musician' - and answer the question below:

4. Which statement summarizes TWO central ideas of the text?
- A. Mozart, whose exceptional talent emerged very early, first learned music from his father and sister.
 - B. As a child, Mozart imitated his sister's style of playing music until he was able to develop his own style.
 - C. Mozart, whose sister was named Nannerl and whose father was named Leopold, was able to play a difficult piece he had composed.
 - D. At age 4, Mozart learned how to play minuets, and at age 5, he composed his first work for harpsichord.

5. Read this statement about Mozart.

Even as a child, Mozart was capable of intense concentration on music.

Which sentence from the passage MOST supports this statement?

- A. One day when the lesson was over, he begged his father to teach him too.
- B. He rushed back to find his baby on tiptoe before the harpsichord, giving the first hint of his marvelous ability.
- C. He found Wolfgang bending over a table, writing so busily that he did not hear his father enter.
- D. And he was able to play enough of it to show what his idea in writing it had been.

Read the passage - 'Mozart: The Boy Musician' - and answer the question below:

6. Read this sentence from paragraph 4.

From that day, whenever Nannerl had her lesson, Wolfgang perched on his father's knee, and listened with rapt absorption.

Which inference is MOST supported by this sentence?

- A. Young Wolfgang was very interested in learning music.
- B. Nannerl's ability to read music was not as strong as Wolfgang's.
- C. Wolfgang learned music best by observing others instead of practicing.
- D. Wolfgang was jealous of his older sister's skill on the harpsichord.

Read the passage - 'Mozart: The Boy Musician' - and answer the question below:

7. Read this sentence from paragraph 11.

But even as he spoke, the eager father had taken up the paper and carried it over to where a friend stood.

Which word is the BEST choice to replace taken up in the sentence?

- A. folded
- B. torn
- C. grabbed
- D. marked

Read the passage - 'Mozart: The Boy Musician' - and answer the question below:

8. Read this statement about the life of Mozart.

It took Leopold Mozart a while to realize the full extent of his son's abilities.

Which sentence from the passage MOST supports this conclusion?

- A. While she was being taught, Wolfgang would listen and watch with breathless attention.
- B. As soon as Nannerl and his father had left the room, the tiny fellow crept back again.
- C. Here and there a huge blot testified to his haste and inexperience in the use of ink.
- D. But it is so difficult that no one could ever play it.

Read the passage - 'The Inspiring Life of Frederick Douglass' - and answer the question below:

The Inspiring Life of Frederick Douglass

Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

The Inspiring Life of Frederick Douglass

- 1 The word "inspiration" comes from the Latin word *inspirare*, which means "to inspire, inflame." Great speakers can inspire people during turbulent times. Frederick Douglass was an inspiration to many in the times before, during, and after the American Civil War. Frederick Douglass (1818-1895), a great African-American orator, was a former slave who spent his life speaking against the institution of slavery.
- 2 Born Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey into slavery in Maryland, Douglass did not know his real birth date. He later adopted February 14 as the date to celebrate. Separated from his mother at a young age, Douglass had the good fortune to be exposed to reading at an early age. He soon learned enough to begin teaching other slaves. However, he was sent to another plantation where his education was discouraged. Douglass wrote about this time in his autobiography, citing it as a period that nearly broke his spirit. But it didn't break him. In fact, he fought back and tried to escape slavery several times. On the third try, he succeeded.
- 3 In 1838, with the help of a free black woman, Anna Murray, Douglass escaped slavery and fled to a safe haven in New York. Later, he married Murray and adopted the last name of "Douglass." They settled in Bedford, Maryland, a town with a strong free black community. Douglass began taking in as much information as he could about the Abolitionist Movement, the organized group that stood against slavery. Douglass subscribed to the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* and started his own lecture tour to proclaim the anti-slavery message. Douglass began a speaking and writing career. His success was dangerous in a nation where some viewed his growing influence as a threat. On one lecture tour, Douglass had to flee to safety in an abolitionist's house in order to escape being beaten.
- 4 The threat of violence did not stop Douglass from speaking out. This time he spoke

through the written word. In 1845, he published the first of three versions of his autobiography, titled *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*. This became a best seller, creating a problem for Douglass in a country that hunted escaped slaves. He was forced to leave the country to avoid being caught. He traveled to Ireland and continued to speak out against slavery. Moved by Douglass's powerful speeches, some British supporters collected money and bought his freedom so that he could return to America. Upon his return, he produced many abolitionist newspapers and spoke against the institution of slavery. In an 1847 speech at the American Anti-Slavery Society, Douglass said that slavery kept three million of his "fellow creatures groaning beneath the iron rod of the worst despotism that could be devised even in Pandemonium." In the same speech, he said that he could not have patriotism for a country that viewed him as "a Slave and a chattel." Often using irony and keen insights during his speeches, Douglass moved crowds during the stormy time leading up to the Civil War.

- 5 During the Civil War, Douglass continued his fight against slavery through speeches and support for the Union army that fought for emancipation for slaves. He also helped sign up African-American soldiers in the first black regiments that began in Boston. Additionally, he met with President Lincoln in 1863 about the treatment of black soldiers. After the war, he continued to travel and speak on racial injustices, women's suffrage, and other political issues. He died in 1895, but his inspiring story and remarkable speeches live on in each breath we share as free citizens.
9. Which event was a direct result of Douglass' autobiography becoming popular in 1845?
- A. He had to leave the United States.
 - B. He began giving speeches and lectures.
 - C. He fled to a safe haven in New York.
 - D. He met with President Lincoln.

Read the passage - 'The Inspiring Life of Frederick Douglass' - and answer the question below:

10. Which sentence from the text gives the BEST evidence that Douglass sought support in his own life as well as support for his political work?
- A. They settled in Bedford, Maryland, a town with a strong free black community.
 - B. Douglass subscribed to the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* and started his own lecture tour to proclaim the anti-slavery message.
 - C. He traveled to Ireland and continued to speak out against slavery.
 - D. After the war, he continued to travel and speak on racial injustices, women's suffrage, and other political issues.

11. How does the description of Frederick Douglass's life as a slave help to explain the choices he made in his life?
- A. It explains his determination to fight for the rights of others to achieve freedom.
 - B. It creates a glimpse into his later struggles to continue to be free.
 - C. It describes his early education, which prepared him for his life as a writer.
 - D. It provides a contrast to his later life as a well-known speaker.

Read the passage - 'The Inspiring Life of Frederick Douglass' - and answer the question below:

12. Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

Great speakers can inspire people during turbulent times.

What is the definition of turbulent in this context?

- A. chaotic
- B. wild
- C. stormy
- D. exciting

Read the passage - 'The Inspiring Life of Frederick Douglass' - and answer the question below:

13. Read the statement from paragraph 3.

Douglass began a speaking and writing career.

Select the TWO sentences from the text that best support this statement.

Pick up to 6 answers.

- A. Upon his return, he produced many abolitionist newspapers and spoke against the institution of slavery.
- B. In 1845, he published the first of three versions of his autobiography, titled *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*.
- C. Douglass began taking in as much information as he could about the Abolitionist Movement, the organized group that stood against slavery.
- D. They settled in Bedford, Maryland, a town with a strong free black community.
- E. He was forced to leave the country to avoid being caught.

Read the passage - 'The Inspiring Life of Frederick Douglass' - and answer the question below:

14. Which statement provides the BEST summary of the passage?
- A. Through his writing and speeches, former slave Frederick Douglass spent his life after slavery opposing slavery.
 - B. Frederick Douglass was born a slave, but he managed to attain freedom during his lifetime.
 - C. Frederick Douglass, a great writer, published many versions of his autobiography.
 - D. Frederick Douglass grew up a slave, but he became free and started the Abolitionist Movement.