Grade Five English

Reading Comprehension One

The History of the Ethiopian New Year

The Ethiopian New Year, is a national holiday. It is celebrated on September 11 (or on September 12 in the leap year.

The leap year comes after every four years that is when Pagume - the 13th month of Ethiopia - is counted six. In this case, it is celebrated on September 12th. The New Year is commonly called Enkutatash in Amharic but has different names in other languages. The word "Enqutatash" is heavy with symbolism. It means 'the gift of jewelries'. It also represents the end of the rainy season. The time is when the Ethiopian mountains and fields are covered with bright yellow flowers called 'Adey Ababa'.

The Ethiopian New Year's celebration is associated with the myth when the Queen of Sheba returned home from her visit to King Solomon in Jerusalem in 980 BC (before the Birth of Christ). The Queen was welcomed back to her country with plenty of jewelleries made of diamond, also known as 'enqu' in Amharic. The holiday has got its name from the word 'enqu', and 'Enqutatash!' means 'you deserve plenty of 'enqu'.

Section I : Choose the correct answer for the following questions based on the reading above

1. Which one is the name of the Ethiopian New Year?
   a. Pagume b. enqu c. Enqutatash d. Adey Abeba

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2. The Ethiopian New Year is usually celebrated on the _____.

   a. 12th of October b. 11th of September

   c. 14th of September d. 1st of January

3. According to the passage, when did Ethiopia begin to celebrate the New Year?

   a. before the birth of Christ

   b. after the birth of Christ

   c. When Queen of Sheba visited King Solomon

   d. not known

4. What is the name of the Ethiopian New Year?

   a) Fasika b) Enkutatash c) Meskel d) Genna

5. What does "Enkutatash" mean?

   a) Happy New Year

   b) End of summer

   c) Gift of jewelleries

   d) Rainy season

6. Which flower blooms during this time?

   a) Jasmine

   b) Adey Ababa

   c) Tulip

   d) Rose

7. When is the New Year celebrated during a leap year?

   a) September 11 b) August 30

   c) September 12 d) October 10

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8. Who visited King Solomon in 980 BC?

a) Queen Taitu b) Queen of Sheba

c) Queen Elizabeth d) Queen Hatshepsut

Section II : Answer the following questions True / False

1. The Ethiopian calendar has 13 months.
2. Enkutatash means "end of the year."
3. The Queen of Sheba brought gifts to King Solomon.
4. A leap year occurs every four years.
5. The flower “Adey Ababa” blooms during the Ethiopian New Year.
6. The Ethiopian New Year is celebrated only by Christians.
7. The word Enqutatash symbolizes the coming of a new season of sunshine.
8. Adey Abeba blooms only in September.
9. Queen of Sheba was welcomed with plenty of yellow flowers.
10. The Ethiopian New Year has no connection with religion.

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