

Reading Comprehension

Read the story. Then answer the questions on the following page.

The Adventure Begins

- 1 Serena looked up from her phone when she heard the loud pop. The RV she was sitting in started shaking and rattling, and her dad began to pull the enormous vehicle off onto the shoulder of the road. *Great!* thought Serena. *A flat tire. Probably the most exciting thing that's going to happen on this whole trip.*
- 2 "No biggie!" Dad assured them from the driver's seat. "I've got the spare in the back. You two stay in here while I get the tire changed. We'll get moving along on our adventure in no time!"
- 3 "Adventure!" Serena scoffed out loud to herself. Some adventure this was! A month-long road trip through South Dakota in a battered old rental RV. When Dad had said they were going to explore one of the fifty states for a whole month, she had **envisioned** rafting down the Colorado River in Arizona's Grand Canyon, or combing the beaches of Florida like her friend Ally was doing right now. She'd been so disappointed when they'd pulled out South Dakota from the fifty pieces of paper in the hat. South Dakota! Its main claim to fame: some old presidents' heads carved into a giant rock. She rolled her eyes and returned to her scrolling.
- 4 "What's so interesting on your phone?" her brother, Tony, asked curiously.
- 5 She held out the phone for him to see. "Ally shared pictures from her vacation. She's on a *real* adventure in Florida. Look at the ocean!" She swiped to another screen. "And these are pictures from Drew's vacation...he's on a safari in Africa! Can you imagine? Look! Elephants!" Swipe. "Hippos!" Swipe. "Even lions!"
- 6 "That's amazing!" Tony agreed. "You'll have to share pics of our trip."
- 7 Serena rolled her eyes. "You mean of Dad changing a flat tire in the middle of nowhere? Who would want to see that?"
- 8 "But that's the great thing about this whole trip!" Tony said enthusiastically. "We have no idea what's going to happen, no idea what surprises might be around the corner! We're on a *true* adventure, kinda like people who came through here for the first time hundreds, even *thousands*, of years ago."
- 9 Serena wasn't convinced. Tony continued, "You know, I read that there's a place called the Badlands out here..."
- 10 "Well, that doesn't sound good!" Serena replied.
- 11 "It's only because of the rough terrain. The Lakota people call it *mako sica*, which means 'bad lands.' I found pictures of it online. Look how amazing!" Tony showed a picture to Serena on his phone. She had to admit, the image was impressive: tall, striped spires and pinnacles of red rocks jutting above vast areas of green prairie. She'd never seen anything like that before.
- 12 "Did you know paleontologists have found fossils of mammoths here? They've also found fossils of huge mammals related to rhinos and camels, and even some that looked like saber-toothed tigers..."
- 13 Serena let her phone fall to her lap as she listened to Tony go on and on. Maybe it wasn't a perfect white sand beach or an African safari, but it did sound pretty fascinating. She looked out the window, wondering when they'd get to see the Badlands. But then she gasped and grabbed Tony's arm, pointing out the window.
- 14 Passing by, just on the other side of the road, was a herd of bison! The two of them watched the magnificent creatures amble slowly through the grasses. She'd never seen anything like them this close before! Serena could see Dad, standing very still by the front tire he'd just changed, watching the stream of animals pass by.
- 15 "Well," Serena said quietly, "I didn't expect that!" She grabbed her phone and snapped a picture through the window.
- 16 "Exactly!" Tony agreed. "And all because we got a flat tire. Post that!"
- 17 Serena laughed and snapped a picture of Tony, too. Maybe they were going to have a real adventure after all.



Reading Comprehension

Answer the questions about "The Adventure Begins."

1. How did the family in the story come to be in South Dakota?

- A. They won a drawing in a vacation sweepstakes.
- B. They pulled the state's name out of a hat.
- C. They are visiting friends who moved there.
- D. They are lost because the RV's GPS failed.

2. Describe Serena's attitude toward the trip in the first half of the story. Cite specific text evidence to support your answer.

3. How does Serena's perception of her friends' vacations affect her view of her own?

4. What is the meaning of **envisioned** as it is used in paragraph 3?

5. List three things from the first half of the story that Serena would consider "real adventures."

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

6. Select **three** of the following words that best describe Tony's personality based on his actions in the story.

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| A. envious | E. encouraging |
| B. creative | F. impatient |
| C. optimistic | G. responsible |
| D. eager | H. nosy |

7a. What is different about Serena's attitude at the end of the story?

7b. What two things in the story help bring about Serena's change of attitude?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

8. In paragraphs 11 and 12, the author incorporates nonfiction elements into this fictional story. What effect might this have on the reader?

9. Which **two** statements best capture the themes of the story?

- A. Adventure can be found in unexpected places.
- B. Everything in life eventually passes away.
- C. Seeing through others' eyes can affect your own perspective.
- D. Nothing is as important as the people you love.

10. Summarize the development of one of the themes you selected above.
