

## “City Girl”

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories

Directions: Read the story. Then answer the questions below.



I am a city girl at heart. I’ve never milked a cow – have no interest.

I was shocked when I attended my first “pig pickin’ ” after my husband and I moved to North Carolina from Boston. I had to **avert** my eyes from the huge pig, skin and head on, insides chopped and splayed open across an entire 12-foot long table.

“Y’all in duh country naw, girl,” the host told me happily, apparently thrilled to be the one to indoctrinate me into country living.

When, at 8 months pregnant, I volunteered to chaperone my son’s strawberry picking field trip, the other mothers looked at me strangely. I thought strawberries grew on tall bushes, not low to the ground. All that squatting sent me into early labor.

So, it is with this in mind that you must understand my attitude when I heard a “huge hurricane” was headed toward Rocky Mount. I thought back to my days growing up in Philadelphia, when snow storms were coming – “20 inches”-- never to **materialize**.

A long checklist ran in the local newspaper of things townspeople should get to prepare for the hurricane. My neighbor, Wayne, made a point of giving me a copy since he knew I was new to town. I took a  **cursory** glance and thought nothing more of it.

While my neighbors were running around taping their windows, getting fresh batteries and prepping their generators, I was, quite **literally**, sitting in my glass house playing with the kids on the floor.

The rains started at 2 o’clock in the afternoon. This was, to my amazement, exactly what the weatherman had predicted.

These were no ordinary rains, either. From my glass living room, I could no longer see the front lawn or the trees. The rain was as thick as a *woolen curtain*. My husband’s car began floating out of the driveway by nightfall. The water, so insidious, began creeping up our front steps, overturning our potted plants and benches.

“This is unbelievable!” I yelled. I reached for the phone to dial Wayne. He had been born and raised in these parts, and surely, he would know what to do.

“Wayne,” I said worriedly into the receiver. “The water is coming up our front steps. It’s almost to our door!”

"Ours too," he said, quite calmly, I thought, given the circumstances.

"What should I do?"

"Put out your sandbags. It will keep the water out as long as it doesn't get too high."

"Sandbags?"

"You didn't get any? They were on the list," he asked in disbelief.

No, I hadn't.

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### Questions:

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- 1) What other title might fit this passage best?
  - A. "Pining for Boston"
  - B. "Learning Hurricanes"
  - C. "Picking Strawberries"
  - D. "Snow Storms that Don't Come"
- 2) What seems to be the author's purpose in the first four paragraphs of this passage?
  - A. to let the reader know that the narrator went into early labor
  - B. to let the reader know that the narrator does not like pulled pork
  - C. to let the reader know that the narrator is unfamiliar with country life
  - D. to let the reader know that the narrator wants to move back to Boston
- 3) *"I had to **avert** my eyes from the huge pig, skin and head on, insides chopped and splayed open across an entire 12-foot long table."*
  - ▼ Choose the best way to rewrite the above sentence.
  - A. I had to open my eyes to the huge pig, skin and head on, insides chopped and splayed open across an entire 12-foot long table.
  - B. I had to direct my eyes towards the huge pig, skin and head on, insides chopped and splayed open across an entire 12-foot long table.
  - C. I had to turn my eyes away from the huge pig, skin and head on, insides chopped and splayed open across an entire 12-foot long table.
  - D. I had to cover my eyes from the huge pig, skin and head on, insides chopped and splayed open across an entire 12-foot long table.

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Questions (continued):

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- 4) What does **materialize** mean?
- A. to arrive
  - B. to increase in size
  - C. to become actual or real
  - D. to be concerned with consumer goods.
- 5) Select the best literary term for the following quote: “*Y’all in duh country naw, girl.*”
- A. yarn, suggesting an improbable tale
  - B. vice, characterized as an evil habit or wicked tendency
  - C. whimsical, characterized as expressing fanciful or odd notions
  - D. vernacular, meaning the native language of people in a particular geographical area
- 6) Which best describes the narrator's attitude in this passage?
- A. forgetful of rural life
  - B. unaware of country ways
  - C. anxious to get back to Boston
  - D. wishful for her children to grow up in the city
- 7) Which is the best antonym for **cursor**?
- A. angry and willful
  - B. fast and intelligent
  - C. slow and deliberate
  - D. slow and superficial
- 8) What does it mean to **literally** do something?
- A. to think about doing something
  - B. to do something exactly as said
  - C. to do something and regret it later
  - D. to do something with a bad attitude
- 9) What message does the author convey by having the narrator wait out the storm in a glass room?
- A. It signifies how vulnerable she is.
  - B. It signifies the narrator's nontraditional tastes.
  - C. It lets the reader know that she has not taped up her windows.
  - D. It lets the reader know she can see everything that's going on.
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Questions (continued):

10) Which best describes the use of *woolen curtain* in this passage?

- A. It is used as an analogy, meaning the comparison of two things.
- B. It is used as comic relief, meaning it offers humor in a tense situation.
- C. It is used as personification, meaning something described as if it were human.
- D. It is used as satire, meaning it ridicules the weakness of an institution.

11) If the passage were to continue, what might happen next?

▼ Check all that are correct.

- A.  Water might get into the house.
- B.  The narrator may flee to safety to Wayne's house.
- C.  The narrator might get in her car and drive to store for sandbags.
- D.  The narrator might ask to borrow some of Wayne's sandbags.

12) Which proverb is most likely learned by the narrator during the hurricane?

- A. Like will draw like.
- B. Misfortune tests the sincerity of friends.
- C. It is best to prepare for the day of necessity.
- D. It is wise to turn circumstances to good account.

13) How might the narrator have changed her fate?

- A. She could have taped her windows.
- B. She could have replaced her old batteries.
- C. She could have prepped her generator.
- D. She could have purchased the items from the hurricane list.

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Which do you like better, the country or the city? Why?

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