

“Fried”

Reading Comprehension – Short Stories

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



My cell phone rings again. It is **futile** to ignore it anymore.

Valerie is persistent. She will continue to bedevil me until I **acquiesce**.

“Hello,” I answer.

“State Fair, Bobbie?” she says in her singsong voice. “When are we heading out? Only two more days left!”

I **abhor** the State Fair. The boisterous crowds, the insanely long lines and the impossibility of finding a clean restroom all combine to make this an event that I dread.

For Valerie, my best friend since the angst of middle school, the State Fair is a sign that divine powers really do exist.

“Really, Bobbie, where else can you pet a cow, ride a horse, fall ten stories, see the world’s smallest person and eat fried macaroni and cheese?” Valerie asks gleefully.

“Hell?” I guess.

The fried food at the State Fair is a **gastronomical** nightmare on its own. I once tried a fried pickle at the fair and was sick to my stomach for hours. And a fried donut hamburger with bacon, cheese AND a greasy egg? How could that not be **deleterious** to your health?

I have not seen Valerie for a good month; our schedules are both so hectic. My hatred of the State Fair becomes inconsequential to my desire to **hang** with Val.

Alas, I ignore my anti-fair bias for the **umpteenth** year.

“Pick me up at noon,” I say and hang up the phone.

Questions:

1) Choose the best synonym for **futile**. 2) What does it mean to **acquiesce**?

- A. arduous
- B. enervating
- C. homicidal
- D. ineffective

- A. to give in
- B. to speak kindly
- C. to pay attention
- D. to answer the phone

3) "*I truly **abhor** the State Fair.*"

▼ Choose the most accurate rewrite of the above sentence.

- A. I really hate the State Fair.
- B. I am sickened by the State Fair.
- C. I have no time for the State Fair.
- D. I am uncertain about the State Fair.

4) How does Valerie seem to feel about the State Fair?

- A. ambivalent
- B. condescending
- C. jubilant
- D. nonchalant

5) What does the word **gastronomical** suggest?

- A. relating to health risks
- B. relating to worldliness
- C. relating to culinary issues
- D. relating to higher education

6) "*And a fried donut hamburger with bacon, cheese AND a greasy egg?*"

▼ What is wrong with the above sentence?

Check all that are correct.

- A. There is no verb.
- B. There is no subject.
- C. It is a sentence fragment.
- D. There are too many descriptions.

Questions (continued):

7) Why might the author have chosen to capitalize all the letters in the word "and" when writing about the donut hamburger?

- A. to make sure the reader understood it was a list
- B. to show that a greasy egg was the last ingredient
- C. to highlight that the sentence was written incorrectly
- D. to emphasize just how many ingredients were on the hamburger

8) Choose the best antonym for **deleterious**.

- A. amicable
- B. beneficial
- C. fortuitous
- D. pathetic

9) How is **hang** used in this passage?

- A. as a hyperbole, meaning as an exaggeration
- B. as a slang expression, meaning informal language
- C. as an analogy, meaning a comparison between two things
- D. as a denotation, meaning the literal meaning of a word

10) What does the author's use of the word **umpteenth** suggest?

- A. that the fair has been around for a long time
- B. that this is the last time Bobbie will agree to go to the fair
- C. that Bobbie goes to the State Fair with Val frequently
- D. that this is the first time Bobbie has agreed to go with Val

Would you like to attend the State Fair as described in the story? Explain.
