Author's Purpose Practice Worksheet #3

Practice 1: “Ripples of Energy”

Read the selection, and then answer the questions that follow.

A wave is any movement that carries energy. Some waves carry energy through water. Others carry energy through gases, like air, or solid materials. If you drop a rock into a pool of water, a wave, or ripple of energy, skims across the pool's surface. In the same way, an underwater earthquake can release energy into ocean water. Then it carries a giant wave, or tsunami, across the surface until it hits land.

If you hear a clap of thunder, sound waves (or vibrations) have carried the crashing BOOM to your ears. Sound waves speed through the air at about 1,100 feet (335 meters) per second.

Light also travels through the air in waves. They travel at more than 186,000 miles (300 million meters) per second. So the light waves from a flash of lightning reach your eyes before that clap of thunder reaches your ears!

Electrons travel in waves, too. They move back and forth in a solid wire, sending waves of electricity so you can turn on a light during the storm!

____ 1. What is the author's most important purpose for writing the selection?
   a. to persuade readers to throw rocks into the water
   b. to entertain readers with the legend of Wally Wave
   c. to teach readers how to use a surfboard to ride waves
   d. to inform readers about different kinds of waves

____ 2. Which question could best help someone figure out this author's purpose?
   a. Did the author give me information?
   b. Did I learn how to make an electric light?
   c. Did the selection make me feel sad or scared?
   d. Did the author want me to make waves?

____ 3. Which might also have been an author's purpose for this selection?
   a. to teach readers why people wave at one another
   b. to inform readers about gravity and magnetic pull
   c. to persuade readers to study more about tsunamis
   d. to entertain readers with a little humor

Practice 2: “People Who Need People”

Read the selection, and then answer the questions that follow.

Everyone needs help sometime. Humans depend on one another. That's why communities everywhere have special people to lend a helping hand to anyone who needs it.

For example, what would our citizens do without a community fire department? If a home catches on fire, as the Jackson place did last week, it might be destroyed and the inhabitants hurt . . . or worse. We're so fortunate to have trained firefighters to come to the rescue and put out the fire, safely. If the fire department hadn't come so quickly, the Jacksons might have lost everything.

And what about our local police who protect our families, our homes, and our belongings? The police have helped so many families this past year, especially rescuing people and pets and protecting our property after the flood.
Think about all the other service workers we have in this community. We have sanitation workers who collect trash and keep our community clean. We have road workers who put up and repair traffic signs and fix potholes in the streets to protect not just us, but the tires on our cars! And where would this community be without the teachers in our school and the doctors, nurses, and technicians in our community clinics?

We benefit so much from all these tireless workers who keep our community running. But these services are expensive. As citizens, we pay taxes, it's true, and some of the taxes go toward buying the services we need. But today, there's just not enough money. Times are hard and the economy has slowed. Plants are closing and people are losing their jobs and homes. But citizens still need services!

Many service workers are thinking of leaving and going to other communities where they'll be paid a better wage, one that allows them to support their families. They can't afford to live here anymore . . . and we can't afford to let them leave.

We need these people in the community. So join with us today as we petition for changes to our tax system that will allow our community to keep more of the tax dollars to invest in service workers who live right here in the community. Please sign our petition now, and be sure to vote for Proposition 6X1 on Election Day!

4. What is the author's most important purpose for writing the selection?
   a. to entertain readers with an exciting story about a flood
   b. to persuade readers to sign a petition about taxes
   c. to teach readers how to use the new voting machines
   d. to inform readers about what firefighters do

5. Which question could best help someone figure out this author's purpose?
   a. Did the author make me laugh?
   b. Did the author teach me what to do in case of fire?
   c. Did the author inform me about how to become a teacher?
   d. Did the author want me to do something?

6. If the last paragraph had NOT been written, what do you think the author's purpose would have been?
   a. to explain to citizens who the Jacksons are
   b. to thank citizens for paying taxes
   c. to remind citizens about the many services they have available
   d. to inform readers about the dangers of potholes

7. Why do you think the author believes readers will sign the petition?
   a. because they like firefighters
   b. because they are members of the community
   c. because they have cars
   d. because they need stop signs

8. How does the first sentence give a clue about the author's purpose?
   a. It signals that the author may ask readers to do something to help others.
   b. It signals that the author is talking about math.
   c. It signals that the author is not American.
   d. It signals that the selection is fiction.
Practice 3: “Time After Time”

Read the selection, and then answer the questions that follow.

(1) "I'm so tired," Sabrina said.

"But it's only Monday!" Jake exclaimed. "You can't be tired after that long holiday weekend we had!"

(2) "It all depends," grumbled Sabrina. "You and your dad went skiing, didn't you? I'll bet you had a blast!"

(3) "We spent hours on the slopes," Jake said with a smile. "What did you do?"

"Do? Do? I had so much to do that I didn't have any time for fun!" Sabrina griped, kicking a stone to emphasize her unhappiness.

(4) "Sorry I asked!" Jake countered. "What took up all your time?"

(5) "First of all, my homework," said Sabrina with disgust.

"Homework? We didn't have any homework!" Jake announced.

(6) Sabrina lowered her eyes. "Well, maybe I put off some old homework . . . our science projects are due tomorrow, and I never got around to doing mine."

(7) "You're kidding!" Jake said. "You hadn't even started it?"

"No," sighed Sabrina. "So I had to go to the library and on the Internet to do research, then outline the report and write it!"

"Hi!" called Mike and Sarah. Sarah told about her trip to visit her aunt in Boston and Mike announced that his hockey team won and was going to the championships. "Hey, I didn't see you at the game, Sabrina," he added. "Did you go away for the weekend, too?"

(8) Sabrina gave a dramatic sigh, "No," she groaned, "I was too busy."

(9) "Doing what?" asked Sarah.

(10) "You'll be sorry you asked," whispered Jake as Sabrina began.

Sabrina moaned about her forgotten science project, helping her dad clean the yard, and helping to do the laundry. "Oh, I do that, too," replied Sarah. "I read while I wait for the stuff to come out of the machines."

(11) "But you can't go anywhere or do anything until it's done!" Sabrina sighed. "Then I had to baby-sit my little cousin, Max the Horror, for an hour!"

"So you spent time doing all that stuff," announced Jake, "but you had a whole three days! Maybe you're thinking too much time about the time you didn't have instead of looking for fun things you did do!"

"Well, I did watch TV and go to the mall," Sabrina mused. "And I went to see that new movie. I guess you're right, Jake. I was just frustrated and mad at myself because I hadn't done my science report earlier."

At school, Sabrina said, "Mr. Hart will probably assign the next science project to be handed in after spring vacation. If he does, I won't waste a millisecond getting started! Then I can really enjoy my next time off!"

(12) Jake smiled, "We'll see, Miss Put-it-off-till-tomorrow! We'll see!"

9. What is the author's purpose for writing the selection?
   a. to inform readers about science reports
   b. to persuade readers to do a science project
   c. to entertain readers with a fiction story
   d. to teach readers how to schedule their time
10. Which question could best help someone figure out this author’s purpose?
   a. Did the author give me new information about a school topic?
   b. Did the author teach me how to make something?
   c. Did the author ask me to do anything?
   d. Did the author tell me a story about kids my age?

11. If the following had been added at the end of the selection, what do you think the author’s purpose would have been for adding it?

   So remember, dear reader, don’t procrastinate. Never postpone until tomorrow what you can do today!

   a. to teach readers that procrastinate means "postpone"
   b. to persuade readers to budget their time
   c. to amuse readers with a silly saying
   d. to inform readers that tomorrow will be better
Answers
1. d
2. a
3. c
4. b
5. d
6. c
7. b
8. a
9. c
10. d
11. b