Use Evidence in Informational Text

Grade 5 Reading Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Circle the answer.

READ THIS FIRST

The Kite That Started a Bridge

In the winter of 1847, engineers faced a hard problem at Niagara Falls. They wanted to build a suspension bridge across the deep gorge of the Niagara River, just below the falls. The bridge would link the United States and Canada. But first they needed to get a single line from one cliff to the other.

The gap was about 240 meters wide. The river below rushed so fast that no boat could safely cross it carrying a rope. The engineer in charge, Charles Ellet Jr., and his team discussed several ideas. Then someone suggested a simpler plan. Why not hold a kite-flying contest? The first person to fly a kite across the gorge and land its string on the far side would win a cash prize. Building towers and stretching cables could come later.

Many young people came to try. The strong winds usually blew from the Canadian side, so the fliers gathered there. One of them was Homan Walsh, a teenager who lived nearby. He had flown kites for years. Kite flying was a popular pastime in the area, and the contest drew a crowd. Walsh crossed to the Canadian side by ferry and launched his kite, which he named Union.

On his first evening of trying, the kite drifted across, but the string snagged on jagged ice in the river and snapped. Walsh was stuck in Canada. Ice in the river made the ferry unsafe for eight days. When he finally got back across, he found his kite and repaired it. Then he returned to try again.

This time, the wind carried the kite to the American side. People there caught it and tied the string down. Walsh won the prize. Workers then used his kite string to pull a stronger cord across the gorge. That cord pulled a heavier rope, and the rope pulled a thin iron cable. Step by step, they built up to cables strong enough to hold a bridge.

A temporary footbridge opened in 1848. From the footbridge, visitors could look down at the rushing river far below. Later, a much larger bridge carried trains as well as people and wagons. People still tell Walsh's story when they talk about how great projects can begin with something small.

1. Which sentence best supports the idea that a boat could not carry the first line?

   They wanted to build a suspension bridge across the deep gorge of the Niagara River, just below the falls.

   Many young people came to try.

   The bridge would link the United States and Canada.

   The river below rushed so fast that no boat could safely cross it carrying a rope.

2. Which detail explains why the kite fliers gathered in Canada?

The strong winds usually blew from the Canadian side.

The bridge would link the United States and Canada.

He had flown kites for years.

Ice in the river made the ferry unsafe.

3. What can the reader infer about Walsh from the fourth paragraph?

He did not give up after his first try failed.

He built a new kite after losing Union.

He was afraid to cross the river again.

He wanted to keep the prize money a secret from the others.

4. Which sentence shows that Walsh kept trying after a setback?

Walsh won the prize.

He had flown kites for years.

Then he returned to try again.

Walsh was stuck in Canada.

5. According to the text, what happened to the kite string on the first try?

It reached the far side but was not tied.

It tangled with another kite.

It was cut by the engineers.

It caught on ice and broke.

6. Which detail shows how workers turned a kite string into a bridge cable?

People there caught it and tied the string down.

Later, a much larger bridge carried trains as well as people and wagons.

Walsh won the prize.

That cord pulled a heavier rope, and the rope pulled a thin iron cable.

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Answer Key - Grade 5 Reading Worksheet

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