

**READ THE PASSAGE**

As you read about the Snowdonia hawkweed, think of other rare plants and animals you know of, and think about how people treat rare things.

**Rare and Beautiful Blooms**

One of the rarest flowering plants in the world, the Snowdonia hawkweed, grows wild only in Snowdonia National Park in northern Wales. The region is rocky and mountainous, and the air is cool and damp. The Snowdonia hawkweed prefers this habitat. In fact, it grows nowhere else in the world. It is even picky about where it grows in the park.

Snowdonia hawkweed is about 11 inches tall. Its bright yellow blossoms have thin petals with ragged edges. The Snowdonia hawkweed may not be the most beautiful plant in the world, but it is a favorite snack of sheep.

In 1953, the Snowdonia hawkweed disappeared. People feared that the plant was gone forever. They believed that sheep grazing on the land had eaten the last few plants. So, the people who ran the park removed the sheep from the area, hoping that the hawkweed might return. Forty-nine years later, a group of plant scientists found the yellow flowers blooming in one spot in the park. The hawkweed had returned!

Scientists collected seeds from the plant in case it disappeared again. But since 2002, the rare plant has continued to bloom in the park.

**STRATEGY PRACTICE**

Describe something rare or special that you have seen and where you saw it.

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**SKILL PRACTICE**

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Which phrase best describes the climate of Snowdonia National Park?  
 A cold and snowy  
 B hot and dry  
 C cool and damp  
 D warm and windy
- Which group of people would probably care most if Snowdonia hawkweed disappeared?  
 A scientists who study plants  
 B farmers who graze their sheep in the mountains  
 C scientists who study rare birds and insects  
 D visitors who enjoy hiking in the mountains
- From the passage, you can conclude that Snowdonia hawkweed \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A is the most beautiful plant in the world  
 B grows like a weed in northern Wales  
 C was always rare  
 D will never be seen again in the wild
- Which adjective best describes how people felt when Snowdonia hawkweed was found in 2002?  
 A curious  
 B disappointed  
 C concerned  
 D thrilled

**READ THE PASSAGE**

As you read about the Rockettes, think about other activities that require a lot of skill and practice.

**The Famous Rockettes**

Imagine a long line of dancers performing a difficult high kick at exactly the same time. That was the vision of Russell Markert, who came up with the idea for the Rockettes back in 1925. The Rockettes, an all-female dance group, have come a long way with their high kicks. They have performed at the Radio City Music Hall in New York City since its opening in 1932.

The goal of the Rockettes is for all of the dancers to make the same movements at the exact same time, as if they were one person rather than 36. This task requires a lot of practice, skill, and cooperation. The Rockettes perform in more than 200 shows over a two-month period. The schedule requires a huge commitment from the dancers.

Over the years, more than 3,000 women have danced as Rockettes. They say that performing with the group is a dream come true, despite the long hours of practice and the demanding schedule. They love it when the audience stands and cheers.

**STRATEGY PRACTICE**

Write about a time when you saw an athlete or performer do something amazing. How did remembering that event help you understand the passage?

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**SKILL PRACTICE**

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. According to the passage, what are the Rockettes best known for?  
 Ⓐ their individual dance skills  
 Ⓑ their training with Russell Markert  
 Ⓒ their high kicks  
 Ⓓ their demanding schedule
2. Based on the passage, who was Russell Markert?  
 Ⓐ a member of the audience  
 Ⓑ the founder of the Rockettes  
 Ⓒ the first male dancer in the Rockettes  
 Ⓓ the owner of Radio City Music Hall
3. Which theme does the passage communicate?  
 Ⓐ Dance is a good form of exercise.  
 Ⓑ Female and male dancers are different.  
 Ⓒ Many dancers can perform as if they were one.  
 Ⓓ Dance has changed over time.
4. Based on the passage, what conclusion can you draw about the Rockettes?  
 Ⓐ It is easy to become a Rockette.  
 Ⓑ Men have recently joined the group.  
 Ⓒ They are popular with audiences today.  
 Ⓓ They were more popular in the past.

## READ THE PASSAGE

Think about how Kelly and Alicia feel about their summer plans.

**Gardens and Grades**

On most Sunday afternoons, Kelly and Alicia met in the treehouse of the big elm tree that grew between their backyards. Alicia brought a blanket to sit on, and Kelly brought snacks. On this warm June day, the girls looked down onto the lawns and driveways in their neighborhood. Usually they had trouble not talking at the same time. Today, neither said much.

"Thanks for the snack," Alicia said after a while. She was thinking about the next day. Her father had agreed to increase her allowance if she took care of the garden all summer. She wanted to earn enough money to pay for guitar lessons. But the garden was very big.

"You're welcome," answered Kelly. She was thinking about summer school, which she would begin the next day. Kelly wanted to improve her math skills so she would have an easier time in sixth grade.

The two girls sat glumly in their treehouse, thinking about the work ahead of them. "I wish we could trade places," they both said suddenly. They looked at each other and began to laugh.

## STRATEGY PRACTICE

Describe a time when you worked hard for something you wanted.

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## SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. What is the main theme of the story?  
 A Growing up is difficult.  
 B Time spent relaxing is valuable.  
 C It is more important to spend time with family than friends.  
 D Worthwhile results come from working instead of playing.
2. What is probably the reason that the girls are quiet?  
 A They have nothing to say to each other.  
 B They are thinking about how their plans are going to change.  
 C They are busy eating their snacks.  
 D Each is waiting for the other to talk.
3. Which sentence best describes Kelly?  
 A She often waits until the last minute.  
 B She is serious about her schoolwork.  
 C She does not share her feelings.  
 D She is always jealous of other people.
4. How are Kelly and Alicia alike?  
 A Both are planning to become gardeners.  
 B Both need help with math homework.  
 C Both are planning a vacation with their allowance money.  
 D Both think the other will have a better summer.

**READ THE PASSAGE**

As you read about Juliana Chen, think about other successful people you have met or read about.

**World Champion Magician**

As a young girl growing up in China, Juliana Chen never imagined the success she would have as a performer. At just 10 years old, she was chosen to attend the Hunan Academy for the Performing Arts. The Hunan Academy is one of China's best schools for dancers, acrobats, and other kinds of performers.

Juliana first trained in ballet. Then she studied juggling and acrobatics and joined a famous acrobatic troupe. But the work was physically difficult, and Juliana injured her leg several times. While she was recovering from one of her injuries, Juliana watched a magic show on television. That's when Juliana knew she would become a magician.

Juliana impressed people with her special skill. Because of her acrobatic training, she was skilled with her body and her hands. She could make cards appear out of thin air, it seemed. In 1986, Juliana won the All-China Best Magician competition.

After her success in China, Juliana immigrated to Canada. There, she became an even bigger star. Soon, she traveled around the world, learning new tricks and performing in front of royalty. In 1997, she became the first woman and the first magician from China to win a world title for a solo act at the World Congress of Magicians, a major competition for magicians. Juliana continues to teach, perform, win awards, and learn new magic tricks.

**STRATEGY PRACTICE**

What qualities help some people, including Juliana Chen, become successful?

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**SKILL PRACTICE**

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- Why did Juliana Chen become a magician?
  - She did not like ballet.
  - She was not successful as an acrobat.
  - She was injured as an acrobat.
  - She wanted to move to Canada.
- What is one theme of the passage?
  - Magic is a fine art.
  - Doing something you enjoy can bring many rewards.
  - It is better to try something new than to keep doing the same old thing.
  - Teaching others is the most satisfying work.
- In what way are ballet, juggling, and acrobatics alike?
  - They all involve competition.
  - They are all performing arts.
  - They are all easy to learn.
  - They have nothing in common.
- What inference can you make about Juliana Chen?
  - She dislikes being around others.
  - She is shy and private.
  - She is fun-loving and not very serious.
  - She works hard to achieve her goals.

## READ THE PASSAGE

Think about how Jacob and his mom probably feel.

**The Greatest Trick**

Jacob burst into the kitchen holding a deck of cards. "The great Jacob performs his most amazing trick yet!" he shouted.

His little sister cooed and giggled from her highchair, but Jacob's mom was less amused. "Could you show me in a minute?" she pleaded. "I'm trying to feed Emma."

"It'll be quick," Jacob responded. "Pick a card, any card!" he called out, spreading the cards into a fan shape. His mother sighed and pointed at a card. Jacob plucked the card from the fanned deck and stuck it onto his forehead. "I cannot see your card with my eyes," he said, tapping his forehead with his finger, "but my mind's eye will reveal it to me. It's the ace of clubs!"

Emma laughed and opened her eyes wide. "Cubs!" she said, clapping her hands.

Jacob's mom looked at the baby and laughed. Jacob peeled the card off his forehead and shook Emma's tiny hand. "My new assistant," he said.

## STRATEGY PRACTICE

Describe a personal experience that the passage reminded you of.

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## SKILL PRACTICE

Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

- How does Jacob's mom change in the story?
  - At first she is tired, but then she is alert.
  - At first she is amused, but then she is annoyed.
  - At first she is laughing, but then she is quiet.
  - At first she is annoyed, but then she is entertained.
- What is the setting of the story?
  - a card store
  - Jacob's bedroom
  - the kitchen
  - the living room
- Which of these best describes Jacob?
  - eager to entertain his family
  - eager to care for Emma
  - eager to help his mother
  - eager to teach Emma a new trick
- What is the theme of the story?
  - Having fun together is important for families.
  - Work is more important than play.
  - Being with others is more enjoyable than being alone.
  - Babies need a lot of care and attention.