

by Nancy K. Robinson

In this passage two children try to distance themselves from their embarrassing mother.

"Is this the bus to Davenport Street?" Tina's mother called up to the bus driver, but he didn't seem to hear her.

Tina's mother stepped up onto the bus. She was carrying two shopping bags under one arm and Tina's little sister Angela under the other arm. Angela twisted around until she was almost hanging upside down.

"New shoes," said Angela to the man in back of her, pointing proudly to her new white shoes. "Much too expensive," she added.

Tina and her brother Nathaniel looked at each other. Then they stepped back in line and let two ladies get in front of them. They each had their own bus fare and wanted to get as far away from their mother and little sister as possible.

They heard their mother ask in an even louder voice:

"Driver, I asked if this was the bus to Davenport Street."

"Read the sign, lady," they heard the bus driver shout.

"The sign outside is stuck," their mother said crossly.

There was no answer from the bus driver.

"Hurry up, lady," called a man at the end of the line.

Their mother wasn't in any hurry. She was giving the bus driver a lecture.

" . . . and the least you could do is tell

me whether or not I'm on the right bus. It would only be common courtesy. . . ."

"Oh, no." Nathaniel grabbed Tina's arm. "Here she goes again." He pulled Tina back and let a boy carrying a large transistor radio get in front of them.

"Look lady," hollered the bus driver. "Are you getting on or off? I don't have all day."

Everyone in line was very quiet.

Tina stared hard at a crack in the sidewalk. She felt like pulling her mother off the bus and shaking her.

"Move it, lady," the man at the back of the line called again.

"It's the right bus," a lady called out. "It's a number 8. This one goes to Davenport Street."

"Thank you." Tina's mother turned around and nodded to the lady, "But I don't see why the bus driver couldn't have told me that. If I had a choice, I wouldn't even take this bus."

Nathaniel groaned. "Why can't she just get on the bus and be quiet like everyone else?"

Slowly the line of people began to move ahead.

"Nathaniel, Christina, are you there?" Now their mother was inside the bus, pounding on the window and waving at them. Tina and Nathaniel pretended not to notice.

As they were paying their fare, they saw a man get up and give their mother his

seat. Tina and Nathaniel tried to squeeze to the rear of the bus, but it was too crowded to move. They were stuck right across the aisle from their mother, who had Angela on her lap.

“New shoes,” said Angela to everyone who passed by.

Nathaniel grabbed onto a pole and began to read an advertisement posted above the window.

YOU TOO CAN BE A NATURAL
BLONDE OR REDHEAD ■

✓ Enter your reading time below. Then look up your reading speed on the Words-per-Minute table on page 130.

Reading Time _____

Reading Speed _____

Enter your reading speed on the Reading Speed graph on Page 131.

Comprehension

Put an **X** in the box next to the correct answer for each question or statement. Do not look back at the selection.

- Tina’s mother and family were trying to get to
 - a. the shopping mall.
 - b. the back of the bus.
 - c. Davenport Street.
- What had Tina’s mother bought for Tina’s little sister, Angela?
 - a. new shoes
 - b. new mittens
 - c. new glasses
- Tina’s mother asked the bus driver in a very loud voice,
 - a. “Is this the bus to Davenport Street?”
 - b. “Is this the bus to the shopping mall?”
 - c. “How much is the fare?”
- Before getting on the bus, Tina’s mother
 - a. had an argument with a lady.
 - b. gave the bus driver a lecture.
 - c. scolded Tina and Nathaniel.
- Tina felt like
 - a. walking home.
 - b. pulling her mother off the bus and shaking her.
 - c. helping her mother get on the bus.
- Nathaniel wished that his mother would
 - a. be quiet like everyone else.
 - b. let him sit with her.
 - c. let him sit with Tina.
- As their mother waved to them from the window, Tina and Nathaniel
 - a. started to get on the bus.
 - b. started to walk home.
 - c. pretended not to see her.

8. Where did Tina and Nathaniel sit on the bus?
- a. at the back
 - b. across the aisle from their mother
 - c. next to the boy carrying a large radio

 _____ Number of correct answers
Enter this number on the
Comprehension graph on page 132.

Critical Thinking

Put an **X** in the box next to the best answer for each question or statement. You may look back at the selection if you'd like.

1. The author wrote this story to
- a. inform you about buses.
 - b. entertain you with an amusing story.
 - c. persuade you that some bus drivers are rude.
2. The best title for this passage from the book *Mom, You're Fired!* is
- a. "A Shopping Trip to the City."
 - b. "Embarrassed by Mother."
 - c. "A Strange Bus Ride."
3. Why do you think Tina stared hard at the crack in the sidewalk?
- a. She was upset by her mother's actions.
 - b. She had dropped her bus fare.
 - c. She was afraid she might laugh.

4. The best word to describe Tina and Nathaniel's feelings is
- a. amused.
 - b. angry.
 - c. embarrassed.
5. Which event happened first?
- a. Nathaniel grabbed a pole and began to read an advertisement.
 - b. A man gave Mother his seat.
 - c. Mother gave the bus driver a lecture.
6. Why did Mother have to ask the driver if the bus went to Davenport Street?
- a. No one else knew.
 - b. The sign on the bus was stuck.
 - c. She wasn't wearing her glasses.
7. Which is the best summary?
- a. After shopping, a mother and her children ride home on a bus.
 - b. A little girl shows her new shoes to everybody.
 - c. A brother and sister are embarrassed when their mother causes a scene on a bus.
8. Which child probably feels differently about Mother than the other two?
- a. Angela
 - b. Nathaniel
 - c. Tina

 _____ Number of correct answers
Enter this number on the Critical
Thinking graph on page 133.

Vocabulary

Each numbered sentence contains an underlined word from the selection.

Following are three definitions. Put an **X** in the box next to the best meaning of the word as it is used in the sentence.

1. Angela twisted around until she was almost hanging upside down.
 - a. turned
 - b. flew
 - c. jumped
2. "New shoes," said Angela to the man in back of her, pointing proudly to her new white shoes.
 - a. straight toward
 - b. very pleased
 - c. shyly
3. They each had their own bus fare and wanted to get as far away from their mother and little sister as possible.
 - a. money
 - b. seat
 - c. route
4. "The sign outside is stuck," said their mother crossly.
 - a. angrily
 - b. excitedly
 - c. fearfully
5. She was giving the bus driver a lecture.
 - a. snack
 - b. talk
 - c. token
6. "Look, lady," hollered the bus driver.
 - a. reached out
 - b. announced
 - c. shouted
7. Nathaniel groaned. "Why can't she just get on the bus and be quiet like everyone else?"
 - a. moaned
 - b. greeted
 - c. laughed
8. Nathaniel grabbed onto a pole and began to read an advertisement posted above a window.
 - a. a public notice
 - b. a free newspaper
 - c. a book jacket

 _____ Number of correct answers
Enter this number on the Vocabulary graph on page 134.

Personal Response

How do you feel about Tina and Nathaniel trying to ignore their mother?

Play it safe: What kids should know about the coronavirus outbreak

By Jason Bittel, Washington Post on 03.25.20

Word Count **977**

Level **MAX**



Image 1. Children draw a rainbow and the slogan of hope being shared in Italy, "Andrà tutto bene" (Everything will be alright), during quarantine measures amid the novel coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic on March 13, 2020, in Milan, Italy. Photo: Pietro D'Aprano/Getty Images

With schools closing across the nation in response to coronavirus concerns, many students may be jumping for joy. Others are worried, scared or confused. But as the American essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Knowledge is the antidote to fear."

With that in mind, let's answer a few common questions about coronavirus. Let's start with its name.

Everybody keeps talking about "coronavirus" and "covid-19." Which is it?

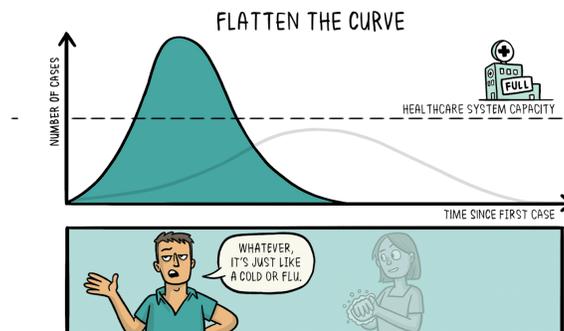
Technically, either of these terms could be correct, depending on how they are used. The actual virus that appeared in China at the end of 2019 and has since hopped across the world is called "SARS-CoV-2." This is short for "Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome" and "coronavirus." Once the virus gets into a person, it can cause an illness known as "Coronavirus Disease 2019," or covid-19. Also, you might hear it referred to as a "novel coronavirus." This means that scientists already

knew about other coronaviruses, such as the one that caused an outbreak of SARS in Asia in 2003, but that this one is new.

How does covid-19 affect people?

The most common symptoms of covid-19 include fever, cough and/or shortness of breath. A person might develop one or more of these symptoms in as few as two days after being exposed to the virus. But they may also not feel sick for up to two weeks after contact.

Scientists say most people who get the virus will be able to fight it as they might a bad case of the flu. However, some people will have a harder time than others. Elderly people seem to be especially vulnerable. So are those with other conditions such as heart disease, lung disease or diabetes. Some people who have the virus won't even realize it but in the worst cases, covid-19 can result in death. Fortunately, death is extremely unlikely to happen in infected children and teenagers.



Can pets get covid-19?

So far, one dog in Hong Kong has tested positive for the coronavirus. However, it isn't showing any symptoms. So it's unclear whether the virus can have a negative effect on pets. According to the World Health Organization, there is no evidence yet that dog owners can catch the virus from their pets. Of course, if you keep your animals inside and avoid walking them in public places, they will be even more unlikely to come into contact with the virus.

Why are schools, stores and restaurants closing?

Because SARS-CoV-2 is new, our immune systems haven't had a chance to learn how to fight it off. This allows the virus to move around quickly, infecting many new people for each group it comes into contact with. This makes schools, stores, restaurants and other public gatherings the perfect places for the virus to spread.

The biggest concern now is that if enough people get sick at the same time, hospitals might not be able to keep up with the demand for treatment. This concern comes from what happened in Italy. This is a problem for those who need treatment because of covid-19. This is also a problem for anyone else who might need medical services for everything from a twisted ankle or a cut requiring stitches to more serious conditions.

Can this coronavirus be stopped?

There are many scientists around the world working to develop a vaccine. This could be used to halt the spread of this coronavirus for good. However, it will take time to develop that vaccine. There are measures communities and families can adopt in the meantime to help slow the virus' spread.

Why do we have to wash our hands so often?

First, washing your hands after going to the restroom or before handling food is a great practice in general. It can help you avoid catching all sorts of nasty illnesses. But hand-washing has become even more important as this coronavirus spreads. This is the easiest way to ensure you're washing your hands well enough: Use warm or cold water and soap and keep scrubbing every inch of your fingers, thumbs, palms and wrists. Scrub for the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday to You" twice. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has more tips at [cdc.gov/handwashing](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing). (Also, remember to cover your cough with a tissue or at least your inner elbow.)

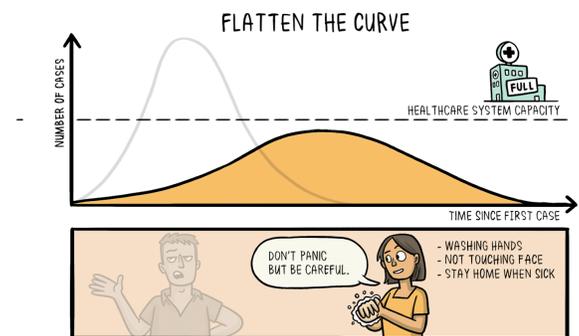
What is "social distancing"?

Your parents might not want you to play basketball with your neighbors. Or they might not want you to go to a party that was scheduled for next weekend. This is because of something called "social distancing." And while it seems like a bummer, experts say it's another way everyone can work together to limit the impact of this coronavirus.

The idea behind social distancing is simple. The fewer people we have close contact with each day, the fewer opportunities the virus has to spread. (The CDC says "close" is six feet or less.) And that means not only will you and your family have better chances of avoiding covid-19, but so will your grandparents, your Scout group and the person you sit next to in a bus. Any of these people might be at a higher risk to have a more serious reaction from the virus.

How long will this last?

Unfortunately, no one can answer that question yet. The CDC recommends that large events be canceled or postponed for at least the next eight weeks. Your parents, teachers and KidsPost will be coming up with creative ways to pass the time.



Quiz

- 1 Which sentence from the article shows hospitals' MAIN problem?
- (A) Some people who have the virus won't even realize it but in the worst cases, covid-19 can result in death.
 - (B) This makes schools, stores, restaurants and other public gatherings the perfect places for the virus to spread.
 - (C) The biggest concern now is that if enough people get sick at the same time, hospitals might not be able to keep up with the demand for treatment.
 - (D) And that means not only will you and your family have better chances of avoiding covid-19, but so will your grandparents, your Scout group and the person you sit next to in a bus.

- 2 Read the conclusion below.

Social distancing might be the key to stopping the coronavirus.

Which sentence from the article provides the BEST support to the statement above?

- (A) Your parents might not want you to play basketball with your neighbors.
 - (B) And while it seems like a bummer, experts say it is another way everyone can work together to limit the impact of this coronavirus.
 - (C) The fewer people we have close contact with each day, the fewer opportunities the virus has to spread.
 - (D) Any of these people might be at a higher risk to have a more serious reaction from the virus.
- 3 How does the author build understanding of the coronavirus pandemic?
- (A) by discussing the difference between "coronavirus" and "covid-19"
 - (B) by listing the symptoms of covid-19 and noting how long it might take to develop them
 - (C) by providing a timeline of the coronavirus pandemic
 - (D) by listing and answering common questions about the coronavirus

- 4 Read the following selection introducing the effect of the coronavirus on pets.

According to the World Health Organization, there is no evidence yet that dog owners can catch the virus from their pets. Of course, if you keep your animals inside and avoid walking them in public places, they will be even more unlikely to come into contact with the virus.

What does the author MOST LIKELY want the reader to think about the effect of the coronavirus on pets based on this selection?

- (A) Though it is not likely that pets can spread the virus, pet owners should still take precautions.
- (B) Pet owners should practice social distancing with their pets, as animals are the main carriers of the virus.
- (C) Even though there is no evidence showing dog owners can catch the virus from their pets, it is very likely.
- (D) When social distancing, people should avoid both people and animals.

Why the U.S. census tries to count everyone

By Washington Post, adapted by Newsela staff on 03.31.20

Word Count **497**

Level **580L**

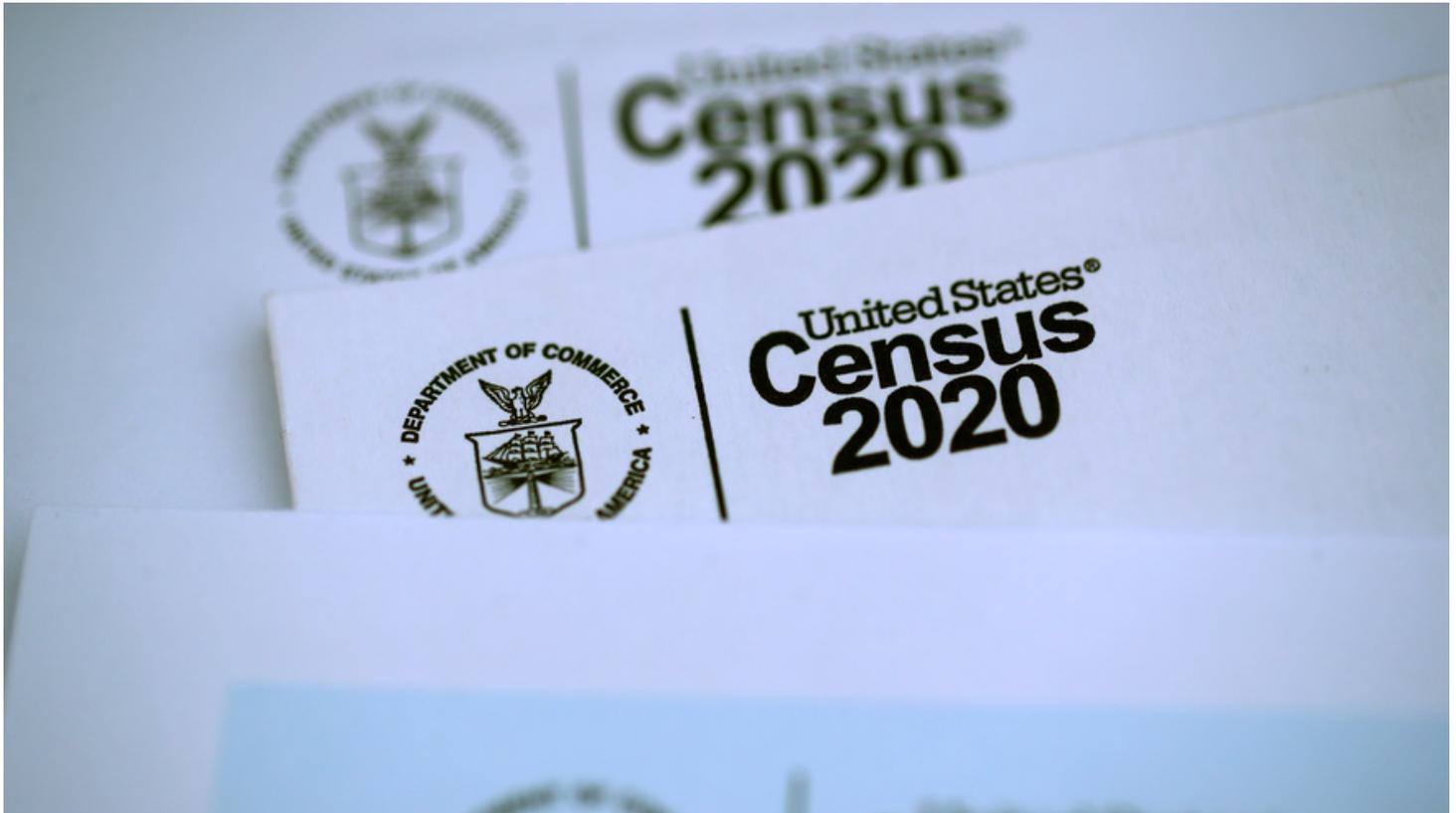


Image 1. The U.S. Census logo on paper gotten in the mail with an invitation to fill out census information online on March 19, 2020, in San Anselmo, California. Photo Illustration: Justin Sullivan/Getty Images

It is time to be counted in the United States.

Around March 23, a letter should have arrived at your home. The letter asks people to complete a form called the 2020 Census. It is pronounced SEN-suss. The census is a count that is done every 10 years. It counts everyone living in the United States. The form asks questions about who lives in a home. It also asks their age, race and more.

Everyone Living In America Must Be Counted

This count is a huge job. It is important that everyone be counted. That is because the government uses the information to see how many lawmakers each state should have. If a state loses population, it might lose a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. If its population is growing, it might add a seat.

The House and the Senate are the country's two law-making bodies. Each state only gets two senators. It doesn't matter how big or small it is. However, the state is given seats in the House of

Representatives based on how many people live in each state.

Census numbers also help decide how to divide up money from the government. This money is shared each year. It helps states and towns build roads, schools and hospitals. Many government programs also depend on the census. The programs use the census to see where money is needed.

The programs do things like help poor people buy food. One program is called Head Start. It is a program for children from birth to 5 years old. Head Start helps to get kids ready to start school.

Census Is Taken Every 10 Years

The census in 2020 is the 24th national count. It must be held every 10 years, the law says. The first census was in 1790. It was taken soon after George Washington became president. About 650 men went out on foot or horseback to count everyone living in their areas.



It is not easy counting the whole country. The U.S. population grows by one person every 23 seconds. The growth is from babies being born. It is also from people coming from other countries.

Leaders have tried to make the count easy. For the first time, responses can be made online. They can also be done by phone and mail. There are guides in 60 languages. Braille is offered for people who are blind.

Each head of a home must fill out a census form. They face a fine if they do not.

Still, some might not want to respond. Keep this in mind. The people who take the census are like a dog looking for a bone. They do not give up. If you ignore their letter, more will come. They really want everyone to be counted.

Quiz

- 1 How does the census affect the House of Representatives?
- (A) It puts representatives in charge of programs.
 - (B) It makes representatives go out to count people.
 - (C) It gives every state two representatives.
 - (D) It shows if states will lose or gain representatives.

- 2 WHY is it hard to count the whole country?
- (A) because only 650 people go out on foot or horseback to count
 - (B) because the population grows by one person every 23 seconds
 - (C) because responses can be made online and by phone or mail
 - (D) because homes will face a fine if they forget their census form

- 3 Read the sentences below from the section "Everyone Living In America Must Be Counted."

*Census numbers also help decide how to divide up money from the government.
It helps states and towns build roads, schools and hospitals.*

How are the sentences connected?

- (A) They make a comparison.
 - (B) They show a fact and an opinion.
 - (C) They are a cause and an effect.
 - (D) They are a problem and a solution.
- 4 Read the sentences below from the section "Census Is Taken Every 10 Years."

1. *The first census was in 1790.*
2. *It was taken soon after George Washington became president.*

Sentence 1 names an event and sentence 2 explains when it happened compared with another event.

What is something the author does to show this connection?

- (A) The author uses the word "census" in the first sentence.
- (B) The author describes the goal of the first census in the first sentence.
- (C) The author uses the phrase "soon after" in the second sentence.
- (D) The author describes President George Washington in the second sentence.

Predicting the Future

by ReadWorks



Houston, Texas

Garry Golden sits in a small cafe in Brooklyn, New York. In front of him, sheets of paper with diagrams litter the table. He rapidly sketches trains, cars and highways as he explains his ideas. Garry Golden has one passion: transportation. The science of how to move people from place to place fascinates him. He spends his days studying the relationships between cars, subways, and trains. But he's most excited about imagining the way these relationships will change in the next 20 years.

Golden is a futurist. Futurists are scientists who analyze the way the world is today and use that information to make predictions about what the world will be like in the future. In this way, they are the opposite of historians, who try to better understand the present through studying the past. Futurists hope that by making scientific predictions about the future, we can make better decisions today.

Some futurists study the environment. Some study human society. Golden focuses on the study of transportation. He earned his graduate degree in Future Studies from the University of Houston. Living in Houston for those two years changed the way he viewed transportation in the United States.

Many public transportation advocates dislike Houston. They argue the city is too sprawling (it can take more than three hours to drive from one side of the city to the other during rush hour) and that there aren't enough buses and subways. However, Houston was a source of inspiration for Golden.

"Houston is a really interesting place, and their transportation is a fascinating story-it's worth watching. When you think about it, what is the U.S. like? It's more like Houston. So you need to understand how Houston approaches things to understand the country as a whole. New York City is

the exception," said Golden in an interview with *The New York Times*.

Golden points out that people in New York City own fewer cars and walk much more than anywhere else in the United States. "It's a unique environment," says Golden. "Very different from the rest of the country."

However, Golden believes American cities will become more similar to New York City in several ways over the next 20 years. He sees a trend toward fewer cars in the future. He explains, "Cities have a cost of car ownership that is a challenge. All these vehicles cost the city: in services, in having to repair roads and all of the other things." Cars also take up a lot of space. Houston, for example, has 30 parking spaces for every resident. That's 64.8 million parking spaces in only one city.

Golden points out that having so many parking spaces is inefficient. Much of the time the parking spaces sit empty. At high-use times—for example, Saturday afternoon when everyone is running errands—every parking space at a shopping center is full. But at 3 a.m. on a Monday, no one is at the shopping center. What is the solution? "I think cities are going to start to legislate cars in very new ways," says Golden. He explains that cities will make new laws to limit the number of cars people can have within city limits. Instead, people will use taxis, subways and buses. New technology, like smartphones, can make these forms of public transportation even better.

Buses have the same problem of inefficiency as parking spaces, explains Golden. Sometimes they are full, and sometimes they are empty. But imagine if everyone had a smartphone and used them to signal when they wanted to ride the bus. Buses could change their route, depending on who wanted to ride.

How soon would these changes come? Golden admits that it will take several years. Cities can be slow to change. Also, new systems of transportation can be expensive. "But it's coming," he says. "The trend of the empowered city will be here soon."

The other trend that excites Golden is electric cars. "We need to reduce the amount of fuel we consume," says Golden. "Everyone agrees on this. The question is how to do it." Golden especially believes in the future of electric cars that have sensors to understand the world around them. "If we have cars that can communicate with one another, they can adjust speeds to eliminate traffic jams," he says. Rush hour in Houston would suddenly be much less painful.

One challenge related to the production of electric cars is that it is hard to cheaply produce batteries that are strong enough for these cars. This is partially because cars are so heavy. But Golden argues you could also make cars out of strong plastic composites. The cars would then be much lighter and much cheaper to make. "This could revolutionize the highways," he says. When could electric smart cars become the norm? Golden argues as soon as 2030.

As a futurist, Golden shares his predictions with other scholars at conferences across the country. He also provides advice to companies that want to know what the future will be like so that they can make better strategies. Golden remains optimistic about the future. "There are so many exciting developments," he says. "In thirty years we will live a very different world."

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is Gary Golden's one passion?

- A. Houston, Texas
- B. the environment
- C. human society
- D. transportation

2. One problem with electric cars is that they require very strong batteries. Part of the reason the batteries have to be so strong is that cars are so heavy. What solution does Golden propose for this problem?

- A. build cars out of strong plastic composites so that they are lighter
- B. find an easier and faster way to produce strong batteries for cars
- C. build cars out of lighter weight metals so they don't need as many batteries
- D. create a way for cars to communicate with each other and adjust their speeds

3. Cars require a lot of space in cities. What evidence from the passage best supports this conclusion?

- A. Cities have to build parking spaces and repair roads for cars.
- B. Cities may limit the number of cars people can have within the city.
- C. In Houston, there are 30 parking spaces for every resident.
- D. Parking lots at shopping centers are not full all of the time.

4. Based on Garry Golden's predictions, how can transportation systems of the future best be described?

- A. expensive and complicated
- B. high-tech and efficient
- C. high-tech yet impractical
- D. inexpensive yet outdated

5. What is this passage mostly about?

- A. how one futurist thinks transportation will change in the coming years
- B. reasons why cars cost the city money and are an inefficient use of resources
- C. how to improve electric cars so that they are more widely used and available
- D. a comparison of public transportation systems across the United States

6. Read the following sentences: "Houston, for example, has 30 parking spaces for every resident. That's 64.8 million parking spaces in only one city. Golden points out that having so many parking spaces is **inefficient**. Much of the time the parking spaces sit empty. At high-use times-for example, Saturday afternoon when everyone is running errands-every parking space at a shopping center is full. But at 3 a.m. on a Monday, no one is at the shopping center."

As used in this sentence, what does the word "**inefficient**" most nearly mean?

- A. productive without wasting time and materials
- B. successful and effective
- C. imaginative and creative
- D. wasteful of space and materials

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Historians study the past in order to better understand the present. _____, futurists analyze the present in order to make scientific predictions about the future.

- A. In particular
- B. Such as
- C. In contrast
- D. Ultimately

8. What does Garry Golden spend most of his days studying?

9. Buses are currently inefficient. According to Golden, how could this type of transportation be improved?

10. Explain how communications technology (such as smartphones and sensors) could help improve transportation in the future. Support your answer using information from the passage.
