Jacob the Great

Jacob hated finishing things almost as much as he loved starting them. As a result, he had gotten into a million hobbies and activities, but he never stuck with any of them long enough to get any good.

He begged his mother for months for a guitar so that he could play a Black Eyed Peas songs to Angie, a girl he liked, but after he finally got one for Christmas, he found out that guitars don't play themselves. He took a few lessons, but strumming the strings hurt his fingers and he didn't like holding the pick, so now the five-hundred pound guitar lives under his bed.

After reading an ad in the back of one of his comic books, Jacob decided that he wanted a Wonder-Sweeper 5000 metal detector, so that he could find buried pirate treasure. So he mowed lawns all summer and didn't spend his money on ice-cream like his younger brother, Alex. He saved it all in a shoe box in his closet. Then he shoveled driveways all winter, and he didn't spend his money on candy and chips like his classmates. By the time spring came he had saved £200, and he purchased the Wonder-Sweeper 5000 metal detector. He beeped it around the park for a while, and he soon found out that no pirates had ever set sail in his neighborhood, and if they had they didn't leave any treasure. Even though he found a key ring, forty-seven pence, and all the bottle caps he could throw, he buried the metal detector in his closet.

Given Jacob's history with hobbies, it was no surprise that Jacob's father was reluctant to buy him a magician's kit for his birthday. "Geez, Jacob… You sure you wouldn't rather I got you more guitar lessons?" He suggested. Jacob was insistent. "Dad, you've got to get me the magician's kit. This time I'll stick with it for real. I promise! Come on, Dad," Jacob begged. Jacob's father sighed and then replied, "Oh, I don't know, Jacob. Things are awfully tight right now." But Jacob's father was reminded of his own youth long ago, when he quit football and started karate practice before hardly getting his equipment dirty. So when Jacob's birthday came around, Jacob was both surprised and pleased to find the magician's kit that he had desired so badly with a big bright bow on it.

Jacob opened up the box and unwrapped the many parts in the kit. As he did so, he imagined sawing his pet cat in half and putting it back together to the amazement of his friends and family. He took the many fake coins, trick cards, and rope pieces of varying length on the kitchen table and imagined pulling rabbits out of his hat and turning them into pigeons with a mysterious puff of smoke. As Jacob continued pulling plastic thumbs, foam balls, and giant playing cards out of the magic kit, a commercial on the TV caught his attention. "Hey kids! Have you ever wanted to go to space? Experience what it's like to be an astronaut? Do you want to explore the universe? Well, now you can." As the commercial continued playing, Jacob walked away from the magic kit on the kitchen table and stared at the TV screen longingly. "For only £195 you can go to space camp and live life like an astronaut for a whole weekend. Enroll now for a once in a lifetime experience." Jacob's cry rang throughout the house as he yelled, "MUM!" He now knew what his true purpose in life was.

Comprehension and Inferential Questions Directions:

After reading the story, choose the best answer for each question. Circle one answer.

1. According to the text, why does Jacob stop playing the guitar?

a. It hurt his fingers.
b. He'd rather play drums.
c. It was too easy.
d. He failed math.

2. To whom did Jacob want to play Black Eyed Peas songs?

a. Alex
b. Angie
c. Mum
d. Dad

3. According to the passage, why does Jacob decide that he wants a metal detector?

a. He sees a man at the park with one.
b. His father had one as a child.
c. He saw a TV commercial for one.
d. He read an ad for one in a comic book

4. How does Jacob get the items that he wants in the story?

a. He asks his mum.
b. He asks his dad.
c. He shovels driveways and mows lawns.
d. He does all of these things to get what he wants.

5. When did Jacob buy the metal detector?

a. In the autumn
b. In the summer
c. In the spring
d. In the winter

6. True or False: The metal detector was a good investment for Jacob.

a. True
b. False

7. Why doesn't Jacob's father want to get him the magician's kit for his birthday?

a. Jacob failed maths class.
b. Jacob quits too many expensive activities.
c. Jacob has been mean to his younger brother.
d. Jacob went to the park without permission.

8. Why does Jacob's father buy Jacob the magician's kit?

a. Jacob mowed the lawn.
b. Jacob reminded his father of himself.
c. Jacob bought ice cream for his brother.
d. Jacob found his father's key ring.

9. Which word is closest in meaning to the italicized word in the following sentence from paragraph four: "It was no surprise that Jacob's father was *reluctant* to buy him a magician's kit for his birthday"?

a. Happy
b. Willing
c. Proud
d. Hesitant

10. What distracts Jacob from the magician's kit?

a. A TV commercial
b. His father
c. The kitchen table
d. A comic book

11. Based on the end of the story, Jacob is most likely to go on and do which of the following?

a. Become a great magician
b. Learn to play guitar well
c. Detect an incredible hidden treasure
d. Raise money to go to space camp

12. Which happened first in the text?

a. Jacob asked his dad for the magician's kit.
b. Jacob got a guitar for Christmas.
c. Jacob mowed lawns.
d. Jacob shoveled driveways.

13. Which happened last in the text?

a. Jacob saved up £200.
b. Jacob found forty-seven cents in the park.
c. Jacob took guitar lessons.
d. Jacob was influenced by a comic book.

Literary Elements Questions Directions:

After reading the story, choose the best answer for each question.

14. Which character trait best describes Jacob in regards to his hobbies?

a. Dedicated
b. Impulsive
c. Committed
d. Devoted

15. What was the author's purpose in writing this text?

a. Inform
b. Persuade
c. Entertain
d. Confuse

16. In what genre is this story?

a. Fiction
b. Nonfiction
c. Folklore
d. Poetry

17. In what subgenre is this story?

a. Biography
b. Historical Fiction
c. Realistic Fiction
d. Fable

18. In which pattern is the text organized?

a. Problem and Solution
b. Chronological
c. Sequence
d. Cause and Effect

19. From what point of view is the story narrated?

a. First-Person
b. Third-Person Objective
c. Second-Person
d. Third-Person Omniscient

20. Which poetic technique is used in the following line: “He beeped it around the park for a while”?

a. Onomatopoeia
b. Simile
c. Personification
d. Hyperbole

21. Which technique is used in the following line: “He had gotten into a million hobbies and activities”

a. Onomatopoeia
b. Simile
c. Personification
d. Hyperbole

22. Which technique is used in the following line: “The five-hundred dollar guitar lives under his bed.”

a. Onomatopoeia
b. Simile
c. Personification
d. Hyperbole