

Directions: Read the text, *In The Name of Honor*, and then answer the questions that follow.

In the Name of Honor

1 An eerie silence exists as the two foes face each other from across a long, grassy field. They make some last-minute adjustments before the signal is given to begin, and the crowd holds its breath in anticipation of the explosive action to come. Everyone has a favorite to cheer for, and they settle happily in their seats, for it will be a long day filled with unparalleled action. Suddenly, the signal is given, and the crowd leaps to its feet as the two sides rush toward one another.

2 Although this description could easily pass for something as innocent as a football game today, it also applies to a much more dangerous form of entertainment in the Middle Ages—the medieval tournament. The tournament, or "tourney," was a military exercise that served two purposes: it provided an opportunity for knights to practice and display their abilities on the battlefield, and it gave the people a great source of exciting entertainment.

History

3 The tournament, in some form, existed from before the Romans. Chariot races were held in Celtic Europe. The Romans also often held competitions in which two teams took turns chasing each other. One team would throw javelins while the other team defended itself; then they would switch roles. These competitions were similar to the medieval tournament, but the rules of the traditional tournament did not come into being until the eleventh century in Europe.



4 Tournaments became popular when knights began to meet informally to practice their skills on the battlefield. Knights were trained for war, and in times of peace, it was helpful to "play" at war so that they might hone their skills and prepare for battle. These mock battles became popular with crowds and turned into formal events in the early twelfth century. They remained a consistent part of medieval life well into the fourteenth century, and took place as late as the sixteenth century.

The Joust and the Melee

5 Tournaments consisted mainly of two different events, the *joust* and the *melee*. The joust was a form of individual combat on horseback. Two knights would ride at each other from across a divider, or partition. They would gain points by unseating their opponents or breaking their lances on their shields. If a knight were to strike another knight or his horse, he would be disqualified. The jousts were exciting, but they were mostly considered the preliminary action before the melee, which was the "main event."

6 The melee was a general fight in which knights were divided into two sides and charged at each other. They fought until one side was eventually declared a winner. This event was very popular, mainly because of the sheer size of it; thousands of knights from all over Europe would travel to take part in the melee of an important tournament. The crowd would gather to see all of their heroes in action.

The Day of the Tournament

7 As knights arrived for the tournament, they were divided into one of two settlements. The principle settlement represented the equivalent of what we would consider a "home team" today. Stands were erected for the crowd to cheer on their respective settlements and, the evening before the melee, parties were hosted by both settlements. Jousts were also performed to showcase the skills of individual knights. The next day, the tournament began with a parade of both settlements and some additional jousting before the melee began.

8 Traditionally, at the beginning of the melee the knights from both settlements would line up for the charge. At the signal, they would rush at each other. The object of the melee was to continue fighting as long as possible and defeat the other settlement. The event would often spread out for miles as the knights broke off from each other in individual hand-to-hand combat, and the melee could continue all day into the night, until both sides were forced to stop from exhaustion. Less commonly, the event would end earlier when one side would panic and run for its own settlement as a form of admitting defeat.

9 Regardless, the day of the melee was always a bloody and deadly one. Loss of life was inevitable, and knights came into the tournament prepared for the possibility that they would never return home. In fact, this was one of the main reasons the tournament eventually lost prominence in Europe. Rulers felt that it was an unnecessary waste of life, and that the knights' skills should be saved for the *real* battlefield.

10 At the end of the day, only one side was declared the victor. A huge banquet would be held to celebrate, and prizes would be awarded to the best knights from the melee.

The End of the Tournament

11 Although a bloody and often fatal form of entertainment, the medieval tournament was an effective way for a knight to practice his skills and gain some fame and fortune along the way. Because of the high risk of death, rules came into being that required swords be blunted. Initially, only chain mail was worn for jousting, but additional armor was used as time passed. The concerns of Europe's rulers over keeping their warriors alive seemed to have had an influence on these decisions.

12 The tournament finally ran its course and was seen only rarely after the fourteenth century, more to honor the past than anything else. However, for the knights who made their names on the tournament fields of history, the honor and glory of those days will live on forever.

Directions: Consider the selection *In The Name of Honor* as you answer the following questions

1. Why did people prefer to watch the melee versus the joust?
 - A. The melee had less action and crowds.
 - B. The melee had more action and excitement.
 - C. The melee was safer and shorter.
 - D. The melee had rides and food.

2. What information from the text gives you the impression that the tournaments ended due to an excessive number of deaths?

- A. Rulers became bored with the tournaments and eventually lost all interest in watching them.
- B. Rulers enjoyed the excitement of the tournaments, but didn't have enough knights to participate each year.
- C. Rulers felt that it was an unnecessary waste of life, and that the knights' skills should be saved for the real battlefield.
- D. Rulers wanted to participate in the battles themselves which was unacceptable during the Middle Ages.

3. What can you infer from the following excerpt?

Although a bloody and often fatal form of entertainment, the medieval tournament was an effective way for a knight to practice his skills and gain some fame and fortune along the way.

- A. The Knights believed that the reward of winning was worth the risk.
- B. Many knights did not compete because they were cowards.
- C. Kings believed that the reward was not worth the loss of life.
- D. Women did not participate in the tournaments.

4. Using context clues, find the meaning of the underlined word.

Everyone has a favorite to cheer for, and they settle happily in their seats, for it will be a long day filled with unparalleled action.

- A. exceptional
- B. terrible
- C. exhausting
- D. ordinary

5. Replace the underlined word with a synonym.

The tournament was a bloody and often fatal form of entertainment.

- A. dangerous
- B. deadly
- C. exciting
- D. terrifying

6. Using context clues from ***In the Name of Honor***, determine the meaning of the underlined word.

Regardless, the day of the melee was always a bloody and deadly one. Loss of life was inevitable, and knights came into the tournament prepared for the possibility that they would never return home. In fact, this was one of the main reasons the tournament eventually lost prominence in Europe.

- A. chemistry
- B. depression
- C. participants
- D. fame

7. Which of the following claims is not supported by the text?

- A. The tournaments eventually stopped because the rulers valued the knights' lives more than entertainment.
 - B. The knights participating in the tournaments were willing to risk their lives for the chance of gaining honor.
 - C. Knights enjoyed the melee more than the joust.
 - D. Medieval tournaments are associated with glory and honor.
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8. Which of the following quotes from the text best represents the main idea?
- A. The concerns of Europe's rulers over keeping their warriors alive seemed to have had an influence on these decisions.
 - B. Regardless, the day of the melee was always a bloody and deadly one.
 - C. The tournament, or "tourney," was a military exercise that served two purposes: it provided an opportunity for knights to practice and display their abilities on the battlefield, and it gave the people a great source of exciting entertainment.
 - D. This event was very popular, mainly because of the sheer size of it; thousands of knights from all over Europe would travel to take part in the melee of an important tournament.
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Knights' Day

By Diana Logue & Illustrated By: Les Gray

Sir Delbert sat dejectedly on a rotting tree stump. He had almost no chance of winning the award tomorrow, and he knew it.

Every year, the knights held a special festival called Knights' Day. They played games, had tournaments, and ate lots of food. The highlight of the day was when the king awarded a medal to the knight who had performed the most dramatic feat of daring during the past year.

Sir Delbert never won because at the crucial moment of every attempted rescue, he always fell off his horse, Edgar, or ran into a tree or tripped over a rock.

Loud screams interrupted his dismal thoughts. He clumsily leaped onto Edgar and galloped away to investigate.



At the top of a steep cliff, he dismounted and peered over the edge. Below, on a narrow ledge, stood a young woman. She shrieked as a chunk of the ledge crumbled, disappearing into the chasm below.



Delbert flung himself on the ground and reached down for her. But he slipped and quickly found himself hanging upside down over the cliff. Only his feet, tangled in a bush, prevented him from falling farther.

Suddenly Sir Ulric burst onto the scene. In one swift motion he reached down, grabbed the woman's hand, and lifted her to safety. Then he carried her away on his horse.

"The humiliation," murmured Delbert, still hanging by his feet. "The embarrassment, the *dizziness*. . . ."

He felt someone tugging on his boots, dragging him onto solid ground.

"I'm glad you're not any heavier!" said a cheerful voice.

Delbert rolled over to see another young woman, this one with a friendly smile.

"I'm Edwina," she said.

"I'm Sir Delbert," he replied. "Thank you for your efforts, although I did have the situation under control." Delbert paused awkwardly, then said, "Well, I'll be seeing you!"

Edwina stood by her horse and watched as Delbert stumbled over a tree root, climbed onto Edgar, and galloped away.

It wasn't long before he and Edgar whipped around a bend and crashed into a dragon that was carelessly napping in the road. The dragon awoke, snarled, and raised his claws to strike. Delbert tried frantically to pull out his sword.



There was a whooshing noise, then a loud bonk as a boomerang struck the enraged dragon on the snout. He fell to the ground with a thud.

Edwina rode into view and snatched up her boomerang. Grabbing Edgar's reins, she led horse and rider to safety just as the dragon started to awaken.

"Thank you," said Delbert. "I would have had him myself in another minute."

Edwina waved and rode away.

The day was nearly over. Just as the sun was setting behind the hills, Delbert heard cries coming from the river. A child was bobbing in the water, shouting, "I can't swim!"

Delbert leaped into the water feet first, holding his nose. It wasn't until he found himself floundering helplessly that he remembered he couldn't swim either.

Sir Baldric crashed out of the bushes, tied a cork-tipped arrow to a rope, and shot it across the treacherous waters. The child grabbed it, and Baldric pulled him ashore.



Meanwhile, the current carried Delbert downstream. Edwina was standing on a point of land, holding out a long branch to him. Delbert grabbed it and climbed onto the bank.

"Sir Delbert," said Edwina, her eyes twinkling, "you need some-one to look out for you."

Waterlogged, cold, and choking, Delbert looked up at her. "Maybe you're right," he said, coughing. "Say, would you like to attend the Knights' Day festival with me tomorrow?"

"I thought you'd never ask," said Edwina.

The next day Delbert wore mismatched boots, and his shirt was askew, but with Edwina beside him, he didn't have a single accident.

When it was time for the medal presentation,

everyone waited breathlessly to see who would win. Would it be Sir Ulric? Sir Baldric? Another knight?

"We've seen many impressive deeds during the past year," the king began, "but yesterday, in a feat unequaled by even the best of knights, Edwina rescued Sir Delbert three times. Instead of awarding the medal to a knight, I'm giving it to Edwina!"

Amid cheers, Edwina stepped forward to accept her award. Delbert slunk away, ashamed. But his mismatched boots left un-mistakable footprints in the soft dirt, and Edwina easily caught up with him.

"Why are you hiding?" she asked.

"Go away," he said. "Congratulations and all that, but GO AWAY! You may be a hero, but I made a fool of myself."

"But, Delbert," she protested, "I couldn't have done it without you. We're a great team. You're a very brave knight. You selflessly tried to rescue a woman in danger and a drowning boy. When faced with an angry dragon, you didn't turn and run; you stood your ground. With me to help you, think of all we could accomplish."

Sir Delbert considered this several times, from all sides. If there was a flaw in her reasoning, he couldn't find it. "Together? Us? A team?"

She nodded.

"Are you sure?"

"Absolutely," she said.

"OK, then," he said, smiling. "You're on."

They headed back, arm in arm. As Edwina carefully guided him around a mud puddle, Delbert knew he had won a prize far more precious than a mere medal.



Directions: Consider the selection *Knights' Tale* as you answer the following.

9. Which of the following is a logical conclusion that can be drawn about Sir Delbert based on the excerpt:

Sir Delbert sat dejectedly on a rotting tree stump. He had almost no chance of winning the award tomorrow, and he knew it.

- A. He was a well-known knight.
 - B. He was not a competent knight.
 - C. He was an overconfident knight.
 - D. He was a lazy knight.
10. Which of the following statements from the text supports the idea that Sir Delbert is clumsy?
- A. Sir Delbert sat dejectedly on a rotting tree stump.
 - B. At the top of a steep cliff, he dismounted and peered over the edge.
 - C. But he slipped and quickly found himself hanging upside down over the cliff.
 - D. Delbert leaped into the water feet first, holding his nose.
11. Which of the following statements best represents the story's resolution?
- A. Sir Delbert and Edwina are a team.
 - B. Sir Delbert is embarrassed.
 - C. Edwina was awarded the medal.
 - D. Sir Delbert saves Edwina and wins the medal.

12. Using context clues from ***Knights' Tale***, determine the meaning of the underlined word.

Sir Delbert never won because at the crucial moment of every attempted rescue, he always fell off his horse, Edgar, or ran into a tree or tripped over a rock. Loud screams interrupted his dismal thoughts.

- A. depressing
 - B. happy
 - C. fleeting
 - D. optimistic
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Directions: Consider the selections ***In The Name Of Honor*** & ***Knights' Day*** as you answer the following.

13. How does the author's portrayal of the festival of Knights' Day in ***Knights' Day*** compare to the historical account of Medieval tournaments presented in ***In The Name of Honor***?
- A. Both the Knights' Day festival and the Medieval tournaments were bloody, dangerous forms of entertainment.
 - B. The Knights' Day festival was identical to the medieval tournaments.
 - C. The Knights' Day festival was for women and the medieval tournaments were only for men.
 - D. Both festivals highlighted the bravery of knights.
14. Compare the two texts. How are they similar?
- A. Both texts are fictional accounts of a day in the life of a knight.
 - B. Both texts are set during the medieval time period.
 - C. Both texts reveal the importance of quality entertainment.
 - D. Both texts were written to inform audiences about courage.

Assessment 1 Breakdown

	Answer	CCSS	Skill
1	B	RI.7.1	Recall
2	C	RI.7.1	Cause / Effect
3	A	RI.7.1	Infer
4	A	RI.7.4	Use Context Clues
5	B	RI.7.4	Use Context Clues
6	D	RI.7.4	Use Context Clues
7	C	RI.7.1	Cite Evidence
8	C	RI.7.2	Cite Evidence
9	B	RL.7.1	Draw Conclusions
10	C	RL.7.1	Cause /Effect
11	A	RL.7.3	Draw Conclusions
12	A	RL.7.4	Use Context Clues
13	D	RL.7.1 & RI.7.1 RL.7.9	Compare
14	B	RL.7.2 & RI.7.2 RL.7.9	Compare