

READING

Read the following passage about how the Austin family deals with a challenging situation. Then answer the questions that follow.

Meet the Austins

an excerpt
by Madeleine L'Engle

The rain didn't stop and the fog lifted and the thermometer stayed right around thirty. By lunchtime the black branches of the trees began to get a coating of ice, and the catalpa pods got coated too, and the noise against the east windows was constant. Mother stayed in the kitchen, "cooking things against the storm." She made two pies and a big bowl of bread pudding with lots of raisins, and some tapioca, which Suzy and Daddy especially love, and lots of Jell-O for Rob. Daddy came in about one o'clock and said the roads were not good at all, and the road up the long hill from Clovenford, the same one we come up from the station, was beginning to ice badly, and he'd passed several cars that hadn't been able to make it, and he hadn't seen the sanding trucks out yet. They're always prompt in little Thornhill, but down in Clovenford, where the station and the hospital and Daddy's office are, they're much slower, partly because we have more ice up here than they do down in the town, I guess.

Saturday afternoon Daddy doesn't usually have office hours, but he went right back after lunch to make up some of the appointments he'd missed in the morning. John and I were both feeling sleepy, so we sat in front of the kitchen fire and read. I was rereading *The Secret Garden* and John was reading *The Sword in the Stone*. About five, Mother sent us to

have baths, Suzy and Maggy and me upstairs, and John and Rob downstairs, and we were to fill the tubs again as soon as we were through. While we were in the tub the lights flickered and went off and then came on again. Mother came tearing up and told us to get out quickly and let the water right out and fill the tub again. Maggy said she hadn't washed yet, and Mother said that was just too bad, she'd had plenty of time to wash and she'd just have to stay dirty because those tubs had to be filled before the power went off.

Our tub was almost filled and we were about half dry when the lights flickered and went down, and then all the way out. And after a few moments the water stopped running.

Not only darkness comes when the power goes off, but silence, too. The perpetual winter purr of the furnace stops. Most of the time we don't hear the refrigerator, but when it goes off there's a strange silence. The deep freeze makes its noise, and whenever we run water the pump thrums away. The television wasn't on, but Mother was playing records, Schönberg's *Verklärte Nacht*, and that sighed off in the middle of a note. It was somehow a shock when the telephone rang and I remembered that it didn't depend on the Light and Power Company. It was the house phone and I ran

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to answer it in Mother and Daddy's bedroom. The house phone is on Mother's side of the bed and the office phone on Daddy's. I lay across the bed and picked up the phone and Daddy said, "Who's this? Vicky? I can hardly hear you, it's such a bad connection."

"Yes, Daddy."

"Tell your mother, tell Uncle Douglas, tell everybody, not to go out in the car. Period. The roads are a glare of ice. I'm at the hospital now and I'll be home when I can, and if it's not by dinnertime I'll call again, but tell Mother that whatever she's forgotten at the store, or whatever she's out of, she'll just have to stay out of."

"Okay, Daddy," I said. "Our power just went off."

Daddy groaned. "Wouldn't you know. Tell Uncle Douglas and John to help get the fires going in the fireplaces. I'm glad Uncle Douglas is there. Okay, honey, you help Mother with the little ones."

I gave Daddy's messages and Uncle Douglas and John lit the fires and Mother lit candles. The ice was beating against the windows and Rob stayed very close to Mother, holding on to her skirt, until she said, "Rob, darling, I love you very much, but I cannot move with you hanging on to me and there are certain things I have to do. All of you children sit in front of the fire and keep warm while I get the rest of the candles lit."

"Let's watch television," Maggy said.

"Let's play the Peter Pan record," Rob said.

"You can't do either," John said. "They don't work without electricity."

"Come on," Uncle Douglas said. "Let's sit down and feed the fires and I'll tell you stories."

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A.1.4.1

1. This passage is mainly about a family dealing with problems caused by
- C sibling rivalry.
 - D a powerful storm.
 - E an equipment failure.
 - F disagreeable neighbors.

A.1.3.1

2. Why does the mother in the story insist on refilling all the tubs with water?
- A to cook in them
 - B to wash in them
 - C to clean them thoroughly
 - D to keep a water supply in them

A.1.2.2

3. As used in the passage, what does the word perpetual mean?
- A hesitant
 - B purposeful
 - C stubborn
 - * D continuous

B.1.1.1

4. Which word **best** describes the father?
- A argumentative
 - * B protective
 - C irritable
 - D scholarly

B.2.2.1

5. The passage is told from the point of view of which character?
- A Mother
 - * B Vicky
 - C Suzy
 - D Rob

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B.1.1.1

6. Based on their actions, how could the Austin family be described? Use two examples from the passage to support your response.

[illegible]

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Item # 6

This item will be reported under Category B, Interpretation and Analysis of Fiction and Nonfiction.

Assessment Anchor:

B.1 Describe/interpret components within and among texts.

Specific Eligible Content addressed by this item:

B.1.1.1 Describe/interpret the relationships among the following within or across fiction and literary nonfiction texts:

Character (Narrator, Speaker, Subject): describe/interpret character actions, motives, dialogue, emotions/feelings, traits, and relationships among characters within or across texts and/or the relationship between characters and other components of the text.

Scoring Guide:

Score	In this item, the student—
3	Demonstrates complete knowledge in describing the family based on their actions and uses two examples from the passage to support the description.
2	Demonstrates partial knowledge in describing the family based on their actions. (Example—Student uses only one example from the passage to support explanation.)
1	Demonstrates incomplete knowledge in describing the family based on their actions. (Example—Student gives explanation without any examples from the passage.)
0	Response provides insufficient material for scoring or is inaccurate in all respects. Categories within zero: blank, off task/topic, response in a language other than English, illegible

Example of the requirements for a Top Scoring Response—3 Points:

Description	Examples
The family values preparation and is concerned about safety. OR Other explanation such as “The family members were cooperative...” with two supporting examples from the passage.	The mother filled the tubs before the electricity went off and the water stopped running. The dad called and gave the message not to go out in the car because the roads were a “glare of ice.”

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B.1.1.1 Response Score: 3

6. Based on their actions, how could the Austin family be described? Use two examples from the passage to support your response.

Based on the Austins actions the family can be described as caring, thoughtful and obedient, and protective. The action that the father displayed was protective because in the story he warned them not to drive on the roads and to start the fire in the fireplace. It was very thoughtful that Uncle Douglas thought about telling stories to the kids so they wouldn't get bored. The kids showed that they were obedient by not putting up a fight when their Mother said they couldn't watch TV or play the record.

The student describes the Austin family based on their actions.

The student cites two examples from the passage that support the description.

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B.1.1.1 Response Score: 2

6. Based on their actions, how could the Austin family be described? Use two examples from the passage to support your response.

Based on their actions, the Austin family could be
described as a close, smart-thinking family:
I described them as smart-thinking because
they knew what to do even before the storm
because they filled the tubs with water.

The student describes the Austin family based on their actions.

The student cites one example from the passage to support the description.

READING

B.1.1.1 Response Score: 2

6. Based on their actions, how could the Austin family be described? Use two examples from the passage to support your response.

Based on the Austin family actions, they can be
described as sharing because everyone did something
to help around the house when the light went out
For example Uncle Douglas and John help get the
fires going in the fireplaces.

The student describes the Austin family based on their actions.

The student cites one example from the passage to support the description.

READING

B.1.1.1 Response Score: 1

6. Based on their actions, how could the Austin family be described? Use two examples from the passage to support your response.

The Austin family can be described in many different ways but I choose one and that is a hard working family.

The student describes the Austin family based on their actions.

The student does not cite any examples from the passage to support the description.

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B.1.1.1 Response Score: 1

6. Based on their actions, how could the Austin family be described? Use two examples from the passage to support your response.

There family could be described as a family that sticks together. A family that is brave and got through it all. One of the main things is the fact they can't watch tv. I probably would go crazy. But in the story it says that the dad is irritable because when the mom was trying to make do and help out he wants to grab on her skirt. That is how his family could be described.

The student describes the Austin family based on their actions.

The student does not cite any examples from the passage to support the description.

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B.1.1.1 Response Score: 0

6. Based on their actions, how could the Austin family be described? Use two examples from the passage to support your response.

to have both not only darkness at the very after
more they all went to the store
to say some things that they need for
their house.

The student does
not provide
sufficient material
for scoring.