

Notes

Practice with Hints

Use the Notes column to take notes and use SALSA™ strategies. There are a few hints to get you started.

Skim The title often points to the main idea of the selection.

Skim Why does the author use *italics* here?

Max Tries Something New

Max thought he might go insane if he heard one more cricket chirp. He lived in the city with police sirens and constantly honking horns that didn't bother him. But these crickets—*chirp, chirp, chirp*—Argggh!

His mother had rented a cabin out in the woods for the entire summer, declaring that a little nature would be good for him. "You'll get accustomed to it," she laughed. "You just have to discover something new to interest yourself." The long days of summer stretched out before him with no friends, video games, or even cable television! Max grunted and went back to watching a boring movie. At least it drowned out the crickets.

The next afternoon, his mother showed up with Mr. Johnson following behind. Grandpa and he had been good friends for years, and he owned a cabin a little ways down the road. "I was telling Mr. Johnson how bored you are," his mom said. "And he kindly offered to take you bird-watching."

Solve Do you know what bird-watching is? If not, try to *Read Ahead*.

Max couldn't believe his ears! Bird-watching would be boring and pointless, and a thousand bugs would bite him. They probably wouldn't even see any birds! But good manners won out, and the guy was his grandfather's friend, so Max said, "Uh, that would be great, I guess."

Max and Mr. Johnson trudged into the woods for a long time until Mr. Johnson stopped abruptly. "There!" he exclaimed, pointing upward at a red flash that disappeared a second later.



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“What was that?” Max asked, trying to find it again.

“With those red feathers it’s a cardinal, of course!” Mr. Johnson shook his head. “Do you know the names of any birds?”

“Ummm...bald eagles... and pigeons?” Max suggested.

“You’re a real city kid, aren’t you?” Mr. Johnson laughed. He took out two pairs of binoculars and handed one to Max. “I used to be a city kid, too,” Mr. Johnson said. “I grew up watching the pigeons from my apartment window. Now I watch all kinds of birds, because watching them makes you really see nature.”

“And,” Mr. Johnson went on, “sometimes there’s that special thrill of seeing a rare bird. I’ve been looking for a painted bunting for almost 20 years, and every day I go looking could be the day I finally spot one!”

They crouched down and waited in silence. They had to stay quiet so they could hear the trilling cardinals, the sad mourning doves, and the cheery robins. Max decided that it was weirdly peaceful to hang out with somebody without talking. With each bird they heard or saw, Mr. Johnson made a few notes in a worn notebook as he whispered details about it. After several hours of watching, Max could identify four or five different birds by himself.

As they walked back along the path to the cabin, Max kept his eyes glued to the trees. A clear, musical call led his eye to an oak tree in which sat a bird with a red belly, green wings, and a purple head. He pulled Mr. Johnson’s arm excitedly and pointed to it. Mr. Johnson’s jaw dropped. “It’s a painted bunting!” he whispered in awe. The two of them stared respectfully at it until, a few seconds later, the bird flew away.

When they reached Max’s cabin, Max started to return his borrowed binoculars. “Keep ’em, partner,” Mr. Johnson said happily. “I never would have spotted that painted bunting without your sharp eyes.”

Max’s mom was waiting on the porch, and she smiled when he showed her his new binoculars. “I told you that trying something new would be fun.”

“Sure, sure,” said Max, not wanting to admit that it was true. They sat silently on the porch together as the daylight faded. The crickets chirping and the owls hooting actually sounded kind of nice, like they were playing music just for Max to hear.

Ask Does Max seem to be enjoying this experience? How is it different from his usual activities?

Look If the title of the passage is echoed in the passage itself, you should make a note.

Assemble The concluding sentence is often a place for the author to sum up an important idea or message.

1 What causes Max to spot the painted bunting?

- (A) He has Mr. Johnson's binoculars.
- (B) He sees a flash of red in the trees.
- (C) He hears it calling.
- (D) Mr. Johnson is looking for it.



Hint—What is Max doing right before finding the bird?

2 Which statement includes an opinion?

- (A) Trying something new is always good for you.
- (B) Max's mother rented a cabin in the woods.
- (C) They sat silently on the porch together.
- (D) A cardinal has red feathers.



Hint—Remember that facts can be proven, but opinions cannot.

3 What is most likely true of Max?

- (A) Video games are his favorite thing to do.
- (B) He has a pet bird at home.
- (C) He has never been bird-watching before.
- (D) His mom thinks he is lazy.



Hint—Inferences need evidence. Which answer choice is supported by story details?

4 Which of the following events is most likely to happen next?

- (A) Max and his mom will move to the country for good.
- (B) Max will go bird-watching again with Mr. Johnson.
- (C) Max will go bird-watching every day when he gets back home.
- (D) Max will never go bird-watching again.



Hint—Consider what you know both from the story and how people act. Which answer has the most support?


5 What is the main idea of the selection?

- (A) A friend of a city boy's grandfather takes the boy out to watch birds.
- (B) A city boy finds out through bird-watching that the outdoors can be fun.
- (C) A boy and his mother rent a cabin in the woods for the whole summer.
- (D) A boy doesn't like being outside because of the bugs and the sound of the crickets.




Hint—Ask yourself which choice best tells you what happens in the selection.

- 6** Which detail supports the idea that Max felt more at home in the country after going bird-watching?
- (A) The long days of summer stretched out before him with no friends, video games, or even cable television!
 - (B) They had to stay quiet so they could hear the trilling cardinals, the sad mourning doves, and the cheery robins.
 - (C) When they reached Max’s cabin, Max started to return his borrowed binoculars.
 - (D) The crickets chirping and the owls hooting actually sounded kind of nice, like they were playing music just for Max to hear.

 *Hint*—Think about the sequence of events in the story. Which choices happen *after* bird-watching?

- 7** Number the events from the selection in the order that they happened.


- _____ Max sees the painted bunting.
- _____ Max’s mom brings Mr. Johnson over.
- _____ Max sits on the porch with his mom.
- _____ Max sees a cardinal.

 *Hint*—Scan the selection for key words from the choices.

- 8** Describe two ways that Max is different at the beginning of the selection from how he is at the end.

- a. _____

- b. _____

 *Hint*—Compare what Max says and does at the two different times in the story.