

SESSION 2

Read the following passage about a man who loved the outdoors. Then answer questions 23–31 that follow.

A Man of Vision

by Marlena Garcia

Have you ever dreamed of a place where you could escape—even for just a little while—from the pressure of school, work, or other obligations? If you have, you are not alone. For many people, the burdens of everyday life can be overwhelming. Benton MacKaye understood this. He imagined a place where people could go and enjoy the beauty and peacefulness of nature. A place where, as he described it, one would have “a chance to catch a breath, to study the dynamic forces of nature and the possibilities of shifting to them the burdens now carried on the backs of men.”

An Early Interest

Benton MacKaye was born in Massachusetts in 1879. He grew up reading the works of American naturalists, but it was his experiences in the mountains that influenced him most directly. As a youth, he enjoyed walks in the mountains of Massachusetts and Vermont. One day, while sitting in a tree on top of Stratton Mountain in Vermont, he had a moment of inspiration. What if there was a continuous footpath—a trail—where people could walk through the Appalachian Mountains from the highest peak in the northeast to the highest peak in the southeast? The 210-mile “Long Trail” had already been built through the Green Mountains in Vermont; but the trail that MacKaye pictured would run from New Hampshire to North Carolina, or over 1,000 miles long. With passion and determination, MacKaye set out to make his vision a reality.

The Plan

In 1921, MacKaye published the article that would set his plan in motion. In “An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning,” he detailed the benefits of this ambitious effort. He saw the trail as a way of developing “the outdoor community life.” Thousands of volunteers would build different sections of the trail, which would eventually be connected. But MacKaye did not propose that the trail be solely for walking. He saw the trail as a place that could also house food and farm camps as well as shelters and community groups.

Building the Trail

In 1922, construction began in the Bear Mountain region of New York State. Thousands of volunteers, many of them hikers, began clearing bush and marking paths. It would take until 1937 for the trail to be completed. During that time, several organizations were formed, including the Appalachian Trail Conference (ATC).

The Trail Today

The trail grew to be larger than originally planned. Currently, it extends from Maine to Georgia and covers over 2,100 miles. No other trail compares to it. It is enjoyed by thousands of people every year, and an average of 200 hikers per year manage to hike the trail from one end to the other. The Appalachian Trail began as one man's dream. Today, he is honored by an especially scenic trail. The Benton MacKaye Trail covers 300 miles from Georgia to North Carolina. MacKaye died in 1975. For many, he is known as "the father of the Trail."

23. The author most likely wrote this passage to
- A persuade the reader about the benefits of hiking.
 - B entertain the reader with stories about MacKaye's camping trips.
 - C illustrate MacKaye's central role in creating the Appalachian Trail.
 - D inform the reader about the steps required to construct a hiking trail.
24. Which statement from the passage **best** supports the author's purpose?
- A "Currently, it extends from Maine to Georgia and covers over 2,100 miles."
 - B "For many, he is known as the father of the Trail."
 - C "Thousands of volunteers . . . began clearing bush and marking paths."
 - D "For many people, the burdens of everyday life can be overwhelming."
25. According to the passage, the Appalachian Trail was completed in
- A 1921.
 - B 1922.
 - C 1937.
 - D 1975.

26. Why did the Appalachian Trail project most likely draw so many volunteers?

- A They would be able to own the land they cleared.
- B They were unemployed and were looking for something to do.
- C They were hoping organizers would pay them after all.
- D They enjoyed hiking and the outdoors.

27. Which statement is an opinion?

- A “No other trail compares to it.”
- B “The trail grew to be larger than originally planned.”
- C “Benton MacKaye was born in Massachusetts in 1879.”
- D “Currently, it extends from Maine to Georgia and covers over 2,100 miles.”

28. Which generalization is supported by the passage?

- A Healthy living leads to a happy heart.
- B People working together can achieve great things.
- C Life in the mountains is better than life in the city.
- D People place too much value on material things.

29. Read the following sentence.

“The ATC is largely responsible for maintaining the Appalachian Trail.”

The **best** place to add this sentence to the passage would be in which section?

- A “An Early Interest”
- B “The Plan”
- C “Building the Trail”
- D “The Trail Today”

30. Read the following sentence from the passage.

“He imagined a place where people could go and enjoy the beauty and peacefulness of nature.”

What does the word peacefulness mean?

- A not being peaceful
- B the quality or state of being peaceful
- C being peaceful again
- D a person who is peaceful

