UNIT 20: The Mystery of the Missing Field Trip

The Mystery of the Missing Field Trip

I was waiting for the school bus on a beautiful spring afternoon. I was completely distracted, thinking about the recycling flyers I wanted to put up in my
neighborhood when I got home.
Suddenly, someone thumped me
so hard on the shoulder that I
almost lost my balance. "Whoa!"
I cried in surprise.

"Sorry," gasped my friend Ann, trying to catch her breath. "I have terrible news—our field trip has been canceled!" She had a frantic expression on her face.



Every spring, the Earthsavers Club visits the Natural History Museum. We'd been raising money and looking forward to this trip for weeks, and we were scheduled to go next Monday.



The word "spring" has more than one meaning: a wire coil; the season when plants begin to grow, and a source of water. Since spring describes a beautiful afternoon in this sentence, the meaning that fits best here is the season when plants begin to grow.

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"Canceled?" I asked with a sense of impending doom. "How do you know?"

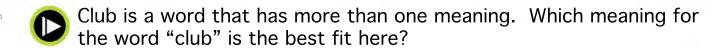
"I overheard Ms. Hernandez talking to Mr. Wong." Ms. Hernandez is our Assistant Principal, and Mr. Wong is in charge of the Earthsavers Club. "Ms. H. was showing him something in the newspaper, and then she told him he'd have to cancel the trip."

"But why?" I asked. "The club has always gone to the Natural History Museum. It's a **trad**ition!"

"Don't ask me," Ann replied.
"You're supposed to be the detective." It was true. Back in fourth grade, I figured out who broke into the school cafeteria. As a result, I've had a reputation for solving mysteries ever since. I don't like to brag, but I do seem to have a talent for investigation.



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- What cause/effect signal words can you spot in this passage? We cause and effects do they point to?
- Think about the setting of this story. When does the story take place? What effects does this have on the schedule for the school day?
- If you were paraphrasing these sentences, or putting them into your own words, what would you say?

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As soon as I got home, I rushed to my room and called everyone in the club.

They were as upset as I was because of the cancellation.

After the last phone call, I opened my detective's notebook and wrote, "Reasons Why the Field Trip Might Be Canceled." I listed every theory I could think of.

- The Museum will be closed on Monday.
- A major storm is expected that day.
- 3. The trip is too expensive.

Ms. Hernandez is just being mean.
 7.2

I looked up the Natural History Museum on my computer. According to their Web site, the museum is open every day of the year, except national holidays, which meant I had to cross the first item off my list.

Then I checked the National Weather Service Web site. The forecast called for sunshine and clear skies through the next week, so I crossed off number two on my list.

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Can you think of a synonym for the word "content" to paraphrase this sentence?{Pronounce the word "content" as in the emotion. Eg, the cat sat in the sunny window and seemed content."}



What meaning for the word "checked" is the best fit here?



There are several words in this passage that are spelled with the letters "oo." Do you notice that the letters "oo" do not sound the same in "school" as they do in "looking?" Is the sound of the "oo" in "doom" like the sound in "school" or in "look?"

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Next I called Luis, our club treasurer. I asked him if we rais- ed enough money to help pay for the field trip, and he assured me there was plenty of money in the club's bank account. As I	That left a big fat question mark. What could possibly account for the cancellation? Some people might be content to wait for Mr. Wong to ex-
hung up with Luis, I crossed off the third item from the list. I only had to glance at the fourth item before crossing it out. Ms. Hernandez was a great	plain at the next club meeting. I'm not like most people, be- cause when there's a mystery, I need to solve it. But this one had me stumped, so I decided to wait for the meeting. Fortunate-
Assistant Principal, and I knew she would never let us down.	ly, we meet on Wednesdays, and it was already Tuesday.
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The next day, the club gathered as usual during 6th period. We all waited anxiously for Mr. Wong to arrive. Where was he? It was definitely not normal for him to be late. We passed the time by discussing the city recycling project we'd been working on all year. I passed out handfuls of the flyers I had been putting up.

Finally, Mr. Wong arrived, but before anyone could ask him about the cancellation, he said, "Something has come up, so we can't meet today. I'll see you next week," and he promptly left. We felt so betrayed! Everyone started talking at once, and it wasn't long before all eyes were on me.

"Sorry," I said. "All I know is that Ann saw Ms. Hernandez talking to Mr. Wong yesterday wait a minute!" I suddenly remembered what she had told me. "Ann, didn't you say Ms. Hernandez was showing Mr. Wong something in the newspaper?"

"Yeah, so?"

"There must be a clue in yesterday's paper!" I said.

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for next Monday," said Luis, "why would there be anything about it in yesterday's paper?" I started to smile. "How could a bunch of Earthsavers not remember that Monday is April 22nd? That's Earth Day!" I grinned as I took yesterday's newspaper out of the classroom recycling bin.	to search for any reference to Earth Day. I was the one who found the article that Ms. Hern- andez must have been showing Mr. Wong. It said: ECO-FRIENDLY SIXTH-GRADERS TO BE HONORED ON EARTH DAY
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This year's Environmental Merit Award will be presented by Mayor Rashad to a group of local students at a special Earth Day assembly. "The identity of the winners will not be revealed until the day of the ceremony," said the mayor. "But I will say that these young people have been very active in teaching our community the importance of recycling. They deserve recognition. I hope they'll be pleasantly surprised by the award."

So that explained why our field trip had been canceled! No wonder Mr. Wong was acting so suspiciously! ECO-FRIENDLY SIXTH-SRADERS
TO BE HOMORED ON EARTH DAY

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On Monday, we attended the assembly. Sure enough, we were presented with the Environmental Merit Award. But the best part was when the mayor shook each of our hands and gave us lifetime memberships to the Natural History Museum!

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How can you change word order and use synonyms to paraphrase parts of this passage?



The narrator thought the best part of the assembly was when the mayor shook hands with the Earthsavers club members and gave them lifetime memberships to the Natural History Museum. Why do you think she thought that was the best part?



Why do you think the identity of the winners of the Environmental Merit Award was kept secret?

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