

Reading

Read the following passage and answer questions 1 through 9.

A Day Away

by Maya Angelou

Most people today know Maya Angelou as one of America's most important poets. One of her stories, "Georgia, Georgia," was the first story by an African-American woman to be made into a television movie. Angelou also wrote the screenplay for the movie *All Day Long* and even directed it. The variety, quality, and passion of her work continue to inspire people today.



We often think that our affairs, great or small, must be tended continuously and in detail, or our world will disintegrate, and we will lose our places in the universe. That is not true, or if it is true, then our situations were so temporary that they would have collapsed anyway.

Once a year or so I give myself a day away. On the eve of my day of absence, I begin to unwrap the bonds which hold me in harness. I inform housemates, my family and close friends that I will not be reachable for twenty-four hours; then I disengage the telephone. I turn the radio dial to an all-music station, preferably one which plays the soothing golden oldies. I sit for at least an hour in a

very hot tub; then I lay out my clothes in preparation for my morning escape, and knowing that nothing will disturb me, I sleep the sleep of the just.

On the morning I wake naturally, for I will have set no clock, nor informed my body timepiece when it should alarm. I dress in comfortable shoes and casual clothes and leave my house going no place. If I am living in a city, I wander streets, window-shop, or gaze at buildings. I enter and leave public parks, libraries, the lobbies of skyscrapers, and movie houses. I stay in no place for very long.

On the getaway day I try for amnesia. I do not want to know my name, where I live, or how many dire responsibilities rest on my shoulders. I detest encountering even the closest friend, for then I am reminded of who I am, and the circumstances of my life, which I want to forget for a while.

Every person needs to take one day away. A day in which one consciously separates the past from the future. Jobs, family, employers, and friends can exist

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one day without any one of us, and if our egos permit us to confess, they could exist eternally in our absence.

Each person deserves a day away in which no problems are confronted, no solutions searched for. Each of us needs to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us. We need hours of aimless wandering or spaces of time sitting on park benches, observing the mysterious world of ants and the canopy of treetops.

If we step away for a time, we are not, as many may think and some will accuse, being irresponsible, but rather we are preparing ourselves to more ably perform our duties and discharge our obligations.

When I return home, I am always surprised to find some questions I sought to evade had been answered and some entanglements I had hoped to flee had become unraveled in my absence.

A day away acts as a spring tonic. It can dispel rancor, transform indecision, and renew the spirit.

From *WOULDN'T TAKE NOTHING FOR MY JOURNEY NOW* by Maya Angelou, copyright © 1993 by Maya Angelou. Used by permission of Random House, Inc.

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1. What is the narrator's main purpose in this passage?

- A to entertain readers with a story of an unusual day
- B to inform readers how to organize a day away from home
- C to persuade readers to take some time for themselves
- D to describe to readers what it is like to rediscover a city

L164B007

2. Which sentence below is an example of a simile?

- A I will have set no clock . . .
- B I do not want to know my name . . .
- C We need hours of aimless wandering . . .
- D A day away acts as a spring tonic.

L164B013

3. The words *casual*, *wander*, and *gaze* in paragraph 3 suggest a feeling of—

- A determination.
- B solitude.
- C bewilderment.
- D relaxation.

L164B006

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4. The narrator **MOST** likely laid out her clothes the night before her day away so that she—

A wouldn't forget what she wanted to wear.
B wouldn't have to make a decision in the morning.
C would be able to sleep late in the morning.
D would be as stylishly dressed as possible.

L164B010

5. Which **BEST** describes the narrator's tone in the second half of the passage?

A persuasive
B humorous
C sarcastic
D frustrated

L164B016

6. Which sentence from the passage is an example of figurative language?

A Once a year or so I give myself a day away.
B On the eve of my day of absence, I begin to unwrap the bonds which hold me in harness.
C I enter and leave public parks, libraries, the lobbies of skyscrapers, and movie houses.
D It can dispel rancor, transform indecision, and renew the spirit.

L164B014

7. In which sentence from the passage does the narrator acknowledge those who disagree with her main argument?

A I inform housemates, my family and close friends that I will not be reachable for twenty-four hours; then I disengage the telephone.
B I detest encountering even the closest friend, for then I am reminded of who I am, and the circumstances of my life, which I want to forget for a while.
C If we step away for a time, we are not, as many may think and some will accuse, being irresponsible, but rather we are preparing ourselves to more ably perform our duties and discharge our obligations.
D When I return home, I am always surprised to find some questions I sought to evade had been answered and some entanglements I had hoped to flee had become unraveled in my absence.

L164B015

8. Which statement from the passage **BEST** describes the narrator's motivation for "a day away"?

A . . . we will lose our places in the universe.
B . . . I sleep the sleep of the just.
C . . . I want to forget for a while.
D . . . friends can exist one day without any one of us.

L164B009

9. Which of the following is the main theme of the passage?

A Self-energizing oneself is necessary.
B Time is of the essence.
C Problems will solve themselves.
D A single decision has many consequences.

L164B011