Why did the author and his friends choose to travel with Dudjom Dorjee?

A. because he could show them the nomadic life he had lived in Tibet
B. because he was friends with many of the local Tibetans
C. because he could teach them to communicate with the nomads
D. because he could show them how to avoid traveling difficulties

Key: A

MEASURES CCLS: RI.7.3:
Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.7.3:
This question measures RI.7.3 because it asks students to analyze and make an inference about an interaction between individuals in an article. A student selecting a correct response demonstrates an understanding of how a single interaction fits into an article as a whole and is able to make a well-supported inference about this interaction.

WHY CHOICE “A” IS CORRECT:
A student selecting “A” shows an understanding of how an interaction between individuals fits into the article. Arriving at an accurate conclusion involves understanding the information the author presents about Dudjom Dorjee and making a valid inference about what motivation the author and his friends would have to travel with him. The reader learns that they wish to get a “taste of that ancient, nomadic way of life.” The author and his friends see the opportunity to travel with their teacher as a chance to witness a way of life that would otherwise be unavailable to them.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:
Choice B: A student selecting “B” is making an inference that might be true but which misses the bigger picture of why the author and his friends would travel with their teacher. Although it is not stated, it is possible that Dudjom Dorjee would know many local Tibetans, having spent part of his youth in the area of his birthplace; however, the text offers no support for the inference that this is the main reason why the author and his friends choose to travel with him. The reason behind the decision to travel with Dudjom Dorjee involves the expectation that Dudjom Dorjee’s personal experience of the region and its culture will be part of the group’s experience.

Choice C: A student selecting “C” is making an inference that makes sense but goes beyond the information presented in the article. Although possible, the larger purpose suggested by the decision is not encapsulated by the specificity of this response. The group’s decision to travel with Dudjom Dorjee is not limited to the possibility that he might teach them to communicate with the nomads; nor is this possibility specified in the article.

Choice D: A student selecting “D” is making a reasonable inference about why the group is choosing to travel with Dudjom Dorjee, presuming that difficulties will be in store for the travelers; however, the specificity of the conclusion misses a larger purpose (to experience Tibetan nomadic living) that is well supported by the text.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.7.3:
Choices “B,” “C,” and “D” express reasonable inferences as to why the author and his friends might choose to travel with Dudjom Dorjee; however, the inferences miss the larger purpose of their choice. “A” and “D”
describe possible reasons subsumed under the goal of learning about nomadic life. "C" expresses a conclusion that goes slightly beyond the scope of the passage while still being a believable goal for the group. To help students master RI.7.3, teachers might provide opportunities to discuss stronger and weaker inferences about interactions between individuals presented in a text, focusing on why one inference is more strongly supported than another.
What does the author mean by describing yaks as “true all-terrain travelers”?

A. The yaks are not afraid of rough country.
B. The yaks are very gentle and good-natured.
C. The yaks manage Tibet’s geographic obstacles very well.
D. The yaks provide everything the Tibetan nomads need.

Key: C

MEASURES CCLS: RI.7.4:

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.7.4:

This question measures RI.7.4 by asking students to interpret the meaning of a metaphorical phrase within the context of its use. A student selecting the correct response demonstrates an understanding of the meaning of a metaphorical phrase within the context of an article.

WHY CHOICE “C” IS CORRECT:

A student selecting “C” shows an accurate understanding of what a metaphorical phrase means in the context of the article. “True all-terrain travelers” suggests that the yaks are well-adapted to the challenges of all landscapes in Tibet like an “all-terrain” vehicle and that the yaks greatly expedite travel for the Tibetans who use them. The use of “true” suggests that absolutely nothing the geography of Tibet has to offer daunts these intrepid creatures, making yaks possibly a “truer” “all-terrain” vehicle than actual all-terrain vehicles themselves would be in this environment.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: A student selecting “A” demonstrates understanding that describing yaks as “all-terrain travelers” means that yaks can handle rough country just as much as an all-terrain vehicle can. However, the yaks encounter more than just rough country, and suggesting they lack fear does not as completely encompass the author’s meaning as does “C,” which describes the yaks as managing all the specific obstacles in Tibetan geography very well.

Choice B: A student selecting “B” is making an inference that suggests a possible characteristic of a “true all-terrain traveler,” but this option is otherwise not well-supported by the text and not a necessary characteristic of a beast able to easily manage Tibet’s geographic obstacles. The yaks could be ornery and cantankerous and still be characterized as “true all-terrain travelers.” The inference about a yak’s nature goes somewhat beyond what can be deduced from the phrase and misses the specific characteristic the author is implying in the description.

Choice D: A student selecting “D” is making a slightly inaccurate inference based on the text and one which goes beyond the characteristic the author is specifically pointing to with the phrase “true all-terrain traveler.” The interpretation in “D” fails to focus on the specific comparison the author is making. In addition, the author states that yaks provided “nearly” everything Tibetans need, making the statement inaccurate.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.7.4:

“A,” “B,” and “D” present possible conclusions about yaks, but each fails to accurately identify the meaning of the author’s description of yaks as “true all-terrain travelers.” Helping students succeed with questions
measuring RI.7.4 may involve providing practice interpreting figurative language in grade-level complex texts and having students justify their interpretations.
Why does the author include the story about his trouble setting up a tent?

A to explain why he wished he had bought a better tent
B to demonstrate the difficulty of working in the harsh climate
C to show why he would have preferred a Tibetan yak-hair tent
D to provide an example of the abilities and generosity of young Tibetans

Key: D

MEASURES CCLS: RI.7.3:

Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.7.3:

This question measures RI.7.3 by asking students to demonstrate understanding of how an interaction among individuals in a text develop and illustrate ideas the author seeks to convey. A student selecting a correct response shows an understanding of how examples provided by the author build and convey ideas in the article.

WHY CHOICE “D” IS CORRECT:

A student choosing “D” shows an understanding of how an example illustrating an interaction among individuals supports the central ideas of an article. The example that describes the Tibetan children helping the author set up his tent, a tent the children have never seen before, illustrates the abilities and the generosity of the young Tibetans. The example of this interaction serves the goal of illustrating reasons for the author’s overall admiration of the Tibetans, a central idea of the article.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: A student selecting “A” has interpreted the event of setting up the tent literally and failed to miss the event’s larger significance within the article. In addition, the student has made an inference about the author that is not well-supported. The role played by the event in the article is to illustrate what the author saw as a characteristic of the Tibetans. At this point in the article, the author has not indicated that he wants a better tent. Even if he did, the role played by the event in the article is to illustrate what the author saw as a characteristic of the Tibetan people, not to illustrate his own shortcomings in choosing equipment for his travels.

Choice B: A student selecting “B” shows an understanding of a larger thread present in the article—that the weather could be punishing; however, the question refers to the section of text about erecting the tent, not the section describing the lackluster performance of the tent itself. Drawing conclusions about the weather, at this point, is premature. Moreover, the anecdote reveals qualities of the Tibetans themselves more than the nature of their environment.

Choice C: A student selecting “C” has made an inference better supported by an upcoming portion of the article than by the identified anecdote. When the author is erecting his tent, he has yet to discover its failings in the Tibetan cold. Preference for a yak-hair tent is not likely to have entered his mind at the time the Tibetan youths help him with his tent. In addition, the anecdote supports the author’s conclusions about tents less than his conclusions about the nature of the Tibetan people.
HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.7.3:
“A,” “B,” and “C” all present somewhat reasonable possibilities for why the author would include the anecdote about setting up his tent, but only “D” describes a purpose for including this interaction that fits with the purpose of the article; in this case, describing the nature of the Tibetan people. To help students master RI.7.3, instruction should focus on building students’ capacity to comprehend grade-level texts and include instructional activities that focus on the way anecdotes and other details can develop ideas in articles, connecting to and supporting their central ideas. Students could also benefit from regular practice in thinking through the reasons for—and the benefits of—including particular anecdotes and details in their own writing.
Which sentences from the article best explain why Tibet is called “the roof of the world”?

A  “When I climbed mountain passes over 17,000 feet above sea level, I gasped for air. I was more than three miles high!” (lines 5 through 7)

B  “Times are changing in Tibet, and more and more people live and work in villages and cities. But there are still nomads who survive on the high plateau just as their ancestors did.” (lines 25 through 27)

C  “But when we had to cross a river, our four-wheel drives turned out to be not so loyal and reliable. We got stuck in the muddy banks of the river, and it took at least a dozen people pushing to get us out.” (lines 40 through 42)

D  “The weather in Tibet is cold, and the brutal wind seems to show no mercy. Sitting inside a nomad tent, though, you’d never know it.” (lines 48 and 49)

Key: A

MEASURES CCLS: RI.7.1:

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.7.1:

This question measures RI.7.1 by asking students to identify textual evidence that supports an analysis of the article. A student choosing the correct response is able to choose evidence that is relevant and supportive of statements made in or about the text.

WHY CHOICE “A” IS CORRECT:

Students selecting “A” demonstrate competence in identifying textual evidence that supports a statement in the text. Tibet is called “the roof of the world” because of its high elevation and presence amongst some of the highest mountain peaks in the world. Understanding the full import of this phrase requires combining a metaphorical interpretation of the phrase with evidence sufficient to support the interpretation. A “roof of the world” could indicate any number of things, but in the context of the article, it ties in best with the idea that elevations in Tibet are high as though Tibet were a “roof of the world” just like a roof is the highest part of a building. The quotation in “A” directly states that the region has elevations “over 17,000 feet above sea level,” or “more than three miles high,” making this choice the best fit.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice B: A student selecting this response may have noted the connection between “high plateau” and “roof of the world”; however, the other details in the statement that discuss demographic changes do not provide the strongest support for the idea behind calling Tibet “the roof of the world.” The movement of people from country to city and the persistence of some groups that choose a nomadic and traditional life, do not fit well with the intended figurative meaning of “roof of the world.”

Choice C: A student selecting this response has chosen support that describes some of the challenges of the terrain in this region of the world; however, the description focuses on the difficulty of forging rivers in the travelers’ four-wheel-drive vehicles, an idea that does not support or explain why the author calls Tibet “the roof of the world.”

Choice D: A student selecting this response has chosen text that describes one of the ways nomads overcome the challenges of living in Tibet. The weather is brutal, but nomadic tents provide protection. Although having
a roof during poor weather is helpful, this information does not support a figurative interpretation of Tibet as “the roof of the world” since Tibet is not providing protection during inclement weather.

**HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.7.1:**
Answer choices “B,” “C,” and “D” are attractive for describing information about Tibet; however, none of them includes enough details to show why the author describes Tibet as “the roof of the world.” In interpreting this phrase, students might consider possible meanings for “roof of the world” and look in the text for details that support their interpretation. To help students master RI.7.1, teachers can focus instruction on building students’ capacity to comprehend grade-level complex texts. In addition, students who struggle with interpreting text in questions measuring RI.7.1 might benefit from practice in close reading of texts that use figurative language. Instructors might also provide opportunities to practice interpreting figurative language by having students brainstorm and justify their ideas and eliminate interpretations that are not well-supported.
Which sentence from the article best supports the conclusion that traditional nomadic customs can be as good as modern conveniences?

A  “We had the advantage of automobiles—a luxury that nomads have happily survived without. When it comes time for a nomad family to move, they pack all their things into large backpacks that they strap over their yaks.” (lines 33 through 35)

B  “At one campsite, I remember wrestling with one of my tent poles trying to pass it through the loops of my tent. Some smiling nomad kids approached and had me set up in no time, though they’d never seen a tent like that before.” (lines 45 through 47)

C  “With a warm fire burning in the mud stove and the snug black walls of the tent, you are comfortable as can be. This was not the case in the fancy modern tents my friends and I slept in.” (lines 49 through 51)

D  “Though their lives are full of challenges, the nomads never take their day-to-day problems too seriously. They know how impermanent things are, including their homes.” (lines 65 and 66)

Key: C

MEASURES CCLS: RI.7.1:

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.7.1:

This question measures RI.7.1 by asking students to identify textual evidence that supports a conclusion based on the text. A student selecting the correct response has determined which lines of text most strongly support the given conclusion and has eliminated those lines of text which do not.

WHY CHOICE “C” IS CORRECT:

A student selecting “C” has ranked the quotations and reasoned that the lines in choice “C” most strongly support the conclusion stated. Choice “C” compares traditional tents and their amenities with modern ones and finds modern ones lacking and not up to the task of providing maximum comfort. This example most strongly supports the conclusion that traditional nomadic customs are as good as modern conveniences.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: A student selecting “A” may have noted that both automobiles and yaks are helpful in nomadic travel; however, the author states that automobiles are an advantage the travelers readily choose, even though the nomads have “happily survived without” them. This statement suggests the nomads have reasons for not incorporating vehicles into their lives and have no desire to; however, these reasons are not elaborated. On the other hand, the phrase “We had the advantage of automobiles” makes clear the travelers prefer using automobiles even if they understand nomadic techniques. Due to what appears to be a disagreement, the idea that traditional ways are as good as modern conveniences is not as well-supported here as in choice “C.”

Choice B: A student selecting “B” may have noted that the nomads are more adept at tent-raising than the travelers. The incident depicted in “B” suggests that the nomadic youths who helped set up the author’s tent are skilled at figuring things out and putting things together. The quality of the tent is unclear, though, as are the reasons why the tent was difficult for the author to erect. The incident does not provide the best support for an evaluation of nomadic customs against modern conveniences.
Choice D: A student selecting this choice may have noted the author’s description of how the nomads view the world, and it can be deduced that the author sees value in this perspective. Because the information is presented in a largely objective manner and does not compare traditional nomadic customs with modern conveniences, it does not provide the best support for evaluating nomadic customs against modern conveniences.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.7.1:

"A," "B," and "D" are attractive because they offer the author’s thoughts and opinions on nomadic Tibetan life; however, only "C" fully supports the idea that traditional nomadic customs can be as good as modern conveniences by showing that traditional tents provide comfort that the modern tents do not. To help students succeed with questions like this, focus instruction on building students’ capacity to comprehend grade-level complex texts and on practicing close reading techniques that lend themselves to making inferences and conclusions. Coupling this activity with having students locate evidence in the text to support their inferences and conclusions and eliminating weaker support may also help students improve this skill.
How is the article **mainly** structured?

A  with sub-sections focused on specific topics
B  with an exploration of one nomadic group's life
C  by presenting observations in chronological order
D  by contrasting positive and negative aspects of nomadic life

**Key:** A

**MEASURES CCLS: RI.7.5:**

Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.

**HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.7.5:**

This question measures RI.7.5 by asking students to describe how an author has organized an article. A student selecting the correct response is able to describe how an author has arranged the parts of an article.

**WHY CHOICE “A” IS CORRECT:**

A student selecting “A” demonstrates the capacity to describe how an article is organized separate from, but in conjunction with, its specific content. In this article, the author provides discussion of several topics to do with time spent with Tibetan nomads. The headings “Becoming a Modern Nomad,” “Problems Along the Way,” “It’s Cold Up There!” and “Having the Right Attitude” suggest discussions of various topics, which is confirmed after closer reading of the information provided in each of these sub-sections.

**WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:**

**Choice B:** A student choosing “B” has selected a thread that runs through the article: the reader does learn about nomadic life; however, there are other topics touched upon, such as yaks, Tibet itself, and how the author came to spend time with some nomads—none of which are included in this description of how the article is organized.

**Choice C:** A student selecting “C” has chosen a popular organizational method, but one which does not accurately describe how this article is organized. Although parts of the article, particularly examples, are presented chronologically, as a whole the article is better described as a collection of discussions of various subtopics.

**Choice D:** A student selecting “D” has noted that the author describes both positive and negative aspects of nomadic life; however, the article is not organized as a comparison of positive and negative aspects of nomadic life.

**HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.7.5:**

“B,” “C,” and “D” are attractive for touching upon aspects of the article as a whole. “B” and “D” describe components of the author’s discussion, and “C” describes the way parts of the article are conveyed. Only “A” accurately describes how the author presents the information. To help students with questions measuring RI.7.5, teachers might have students collect examples of articles organized in a range of ways, as well as analyze how an author uses these same organizational methods within an article. For example, this article is organized as a collection of discussions on various topics, but some of these topics are discussed using examples that are presented in chronological order.
Which of these is the best summary of this article?

A  On his travels to Tibet, the author found that although many Tibetan people have moved to cities, there are still those who prefer the nomadic life. They do not live in permanent homes but instead move around in this three-mile high country. Their yak-hair tents provide greater warmth than the author’s modern tents.

B  As the author learned during his visit to Tibet, Tibetan weather is harsh. However, the Tibetan nomads continue to follow the old ways, raising yaks for all of their survival needs. During their moves from place to place, they often have to cross difficult rivers and rough terrain. Nevertheless, they maintain a wonderful attitude about life.

C  When the author traveled with friends to Tibet, he learned that many Tibetans continue to live as nomads. They follow the old customs of raising yaks, which help the nomads move from place to place as well as provide for their basic needs. Though the lives of the nomads present many difficulties, they have developed happy attitudes that suit their lives.

D  Traveling in Tibet, the author saw that Tibetan nomads have learned to depend on the yaks for survival. They get food, clothing, shelter, and even warmth from the animals, which are extremely good natured. The author refers to them as “all-terrain vehicles” for their ability to cross any river without problem. In one situation, the yaks proved to be more dependable than automobiles.

Key: C

MEASURES CCLS: RI.7.2:
Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.7.2:
This question measures RI.7.2 because it asks students to identify the best objective summary of a text. A student selecting the correct response demonstrates an ability to eliminate responses which include evaluations or judgments instead of objective description. In addition, the student also demonstrates an understanding of which information is most important to include in a summary, how to effectively organize and present this information, and how to avoid including extraneous, superficial, and/or unnecessary information.

WHY CHOICE “C” IS CORRECT:
A student choosing “C” shows an ability to select an objective summary that emphasizes the most important information in the article, organizes the information appropriately, and avoids unnecessary information. “C” describes the major components of the article: the author’s travels to Tibet and participation in—and observation of—nomadic life. Yaks, a central aspect of the article, are also mentioned. The answer is completed with an inclusive conclusion. No evaluation of the article is presented, and no major information is omitted. The summary gives appropriate space to the key points without mentioning less-important details.
WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: A student selecting "A" has chosen an objective summary, but one which focuses too closely on specific details in favor of providing a bigger, more general picture that cites the major ideas. Although the details are accurate, their organization is not cohesive and does not reflect what is emphasized in the article itself.

Choice B: A student selecting "B" has chosen a summary, but one which focuses too closely on specific details like the weather or crossing difficult rivers. At the same time, it fails to describe more significant components like nomadic life or the landscape. In addition, the final conclusion that the nomads maintain a "wonderful attitude" is more of an evaluation than an objective description of nomadic philosophical beliefs.

Choice D: A student selecting "D" has chosen a summary focused on a specific part of the article: the value of yaks to Tibetan nomads. Because the summary fails to include information from the entire article, it is not the best summary.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.7.2:

"A," "B," and "D" are appealing for summarizing some or all of the article; however, each exhibits flaws that prevent it from being the best summary. A high-quality summary, like "C," mimics the emphasis of the article it is summarizing and remains objective. To help students master RI.7.2, teachers should first focus instruction on building students' capacity to comprehend grade-level complex texts, because without comprehension, there can be no summarizing. If students are able to comprehend the text, teachers can then proceed by providing opportunities for students to practice writing summaries, obtaining feedback, and rewriting to incorporate that feedback. Instruction could also focus on support techniques, like outlining, and practice differentiating objective statements from non-objective statements. In addition, students may need guidance determining the scope and length of a summary in relation to its full text and in rephrasing sections of a text in their own words.