***DIRECTIONS***

*Read each of the passages. Then read the questions that follow and decide on the BEST answer. Read each question carefully before marking an answer on your answer sheet.*

***THE UNEXPECTED STORM Name:***

*The following selection is an excerpt from John Upton Terrell’s* BUNKHOUSE PAPERS*. In this chapter, a young cowhand is assigned an ordinary task that has extraordinary results.*

THERE WAS THAT EARLY SUMMER when I went to work on the ranch on Shields River, above Willsal. It was a beautiful country with the Crazy Mountains standing up against the east, their feet wrapped in the folds of dark green forests.

The bunkhouse was worse than some in which I had lived. The foreman didn*’*t like anybody who was born east of the Mississippi River, and he let me know it. But the food was good, and I decided to stay long enough to get a little money in my pocket.

He drove me out in a truck that morning, and he told me to patrol an irrigation ditch, to remove rocks and weeds and dirt that might have fallen into it.

He handed me a twenty-two rifle and a box of cartridges, and he said, “Shoot any jacks or prairie dogs or badgers, anything like that you see. There*’*s gettin*’* to be too many pests up here, an*’* they dig burrows, an*’* then the water breaks into them, an*’* wastes. I*’*m bringin*’* out some poison grain soon, but we*’*ll have to shoot *’*em until it gets here.”

He drove away. I felt the heaviness of the silence. It was as if the big mountains were pressing down on the country, crushing all sounds. But some sounds survived, little sounds and beautiful sounds, like a lark*’*s song and the rustling of the tall grass and the whir of a blue grouse's wings.

I walked slowly along the ditch with my shovel and my pitchfork and the gun. The water was seldom interrupted. It ran

smoothly and steadily toward its appointed destination … wherever that was.

Great white thunderheads gathered over the peaks. To the west a storm mounted in blue-black clouds. I heard the hail long before it reached me. I heard it first as a low ominous rumbling. Then I saw it coming up the valley, an immense dark blue broom swung from the sky and sweeping the earth. The rumble became a roar. I ran toward a headgate which stood at the end of a branch ditch, and crawled under it on the dry side.

The hail had almost reached me when I saw suddenly that I had company. An immense jack rabbit scurried into the headgate and sat beside me. His bloodshot eyes fastened on my face. But it was not an unfriendly look. One of his ears had been torn, and there were scars on his head and his haunches. I thought he must have been in a lot of battles.

We sat there together while the hail roared over us. It made the earth tremble, and it sounded like bullets striking the planks of the headgate. Some of the hailstones were as large as eggs. Both of us might have been killed had it not been for that shelter.

It ended as abruptly as it had come, sweeping on to destroy itself against the walls of the benchlands and the mountains.

Just before he leaped away the big rabbit glanced at me. There could be no mistaking the gratefulness in his eyes.

And I was just as grateful to him . . . for the trust he had placed in me.

**1**

When the author says the storm mounted, he means the storm was

A. decreasing in intensity.

B. gathering in force.

C. going around him.

D. already upon him.

**2**

How did the author feel about working on this particular ranch?

A. He stayed mostly to prove himself to the foreman.

B. He liked the area enough to consider a permanent stay.

C. He considered the jobs he was given beneath his abilities.

D. He was content enough to stay there temporarily.

**3**

In the end, why doesn*’*t the author carry out the farmer*’*s instructions?

A. He has a soft spot in his heart for pests.

B. He has an intense dislike for the foreman.

C. He realizes the jack rabbit has saved his life.

D. He views the jack rabbit differently due to a shared experience.

**4**

The end of the passage suggests that in the future the narrator will most likely

A. renew efforts to do as he is instructed.

B. refuse to kill other living creatures.

C. continue to respect other living creatures.

D. leave this farm without collecting his wages.

**5**

When the author says, “I felt the heaviness of the silence. It was as if the big mountains were pressing down on the country, crushing all sounds,” he uses figurative language in order to

A. identify the conflict between the narrator and the foreman.

B. describe how carefree the narrator was feeling at the time.

C. create a mood of peacefulness and suspense.

D. show how scared the narrator was in this setting.

**6**

Why does the foreman want to be rid of the “pests”?

A. They are eating the crops.

B. They are destroying the range land.

C. They are burrowing in the ditches.

D. They are polluting the irrigation water.

**7**

When the author says, “...the Crazy Mountains standing up against the east, their feet wrapped in the folds of dark green forests,” he is using the literary device of

A. dialect.

B. personification.

C. hyperbole.

D. simile

8. Summarize what the narrator learns from the rabbit. Full sentences.