**Grade 6, Unit 6**

**Directions**

Read the following selection. Then answer the questions that follow.

**Quit Procrastinating**

**Sheri Steinberg**

American author Mark Twain once said, “Never put off till tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow just as well.” Although he was poking fun at people, many of us follow his advice so perfectly that it's a wonder anything ever gets done in the world at all. In fact, procrastination, not doing today what you could do later, can be harmful to both individuals and society as a whole. So, if you make a regular habit of procrastinating, you have to stop—not tomorrow or the day after, but now.

**Do it for your health**. Because procrastination creates stress, it can have a horrific effect on your health. It can lower your resistance to infections, leaving your body more exposed to colds, flu, stomach upsets, and sleep problems*.* Dr. Bahman Guyuron just recently published an article in the medical journal of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. He says, “…anything that contributes to a person’s stress will show up “written on your face.” The choices we make and the stresses we suffer take a much harsher toll on our faces than most of us realize.

**Do it for others.** Your procrastination can also stress others. If you don't do your chores, for example, your brother or sister may have to take out the garbage, mow the lawn, or rake the leaves. The classmate you were supposed to help on a school project may become swamped without you and get a failing grade. The children with whom you promised to carve pumpkins may be sadly disappointed because you waited until the last minute to buy the pumpkins and by then there weren't any left.

**Do it to stay honest.** Procrastinating can make a liar out of you. You may not intend to lie, but if you say that you're going to do a job in an hour or a day, and you don't, you might be tempted to lie to cover up your behavior. Does “the dog ate my homework” sound familiar? People don't like being lied to. Don't

wait until you lose all your friends to stop procrastinating!

**Do it to avoid disastrous results.** Putting off tasks doesn't usually make them go away. It just decreases the time you have to do them, which can have dire consequences. According to psychologist William Knaus, an alarming nine out of ten college students is a procrastinator. What's so dire, or disastrous, about that? Well, about one-fourth of these students actually end up dropping out of school because they get so far behind.

**Do it to give yourself real free time for fun.** Some procrastinators might argue that if they didn't procrastinate they would never have any fun or get to be spontaneous—that is, that they would never get to act on impulse in the moment without regard for plans and deadlines. These are drastic overgeneralizations. You can have fun and be spontaneous but still fulfill your responsibilities, too. In fact, if you do what has to be done sooner than the last minute, you will really have free time—and a clear conscience—to do whatever you want. Now doesn't that sound like something worth going after right

away?

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**Directions**

Answer the following questions about “Quit Procrastinating.”

1. The author’s claim is that—
2. the time for people to stop procrastinating is now.
3. the negative effects of stress can affect you for the rest of your life.
4. a number of ex-procrastinators have created a series of helpful steps.
5. a group of psychologists have noted an increase of college students quitting school.
6. Which sentence contains evidence that supports the author’s claim?
7. Stress is reduced when you procrastinate.
8. Being spontaneous will make you responsible.
9. Procrastinating will make your brothers or sisters happy.
10. Procrastinating can make you lie to cover up your behavior.
11. The information in the 4th paragraph connects to the author’s claim by providing a/an─
12. call to action.
13. appeal to fear.
14. logical appeal.
15. counterargument.

1. Which statement best summarizes the key information in the chart?
2. You can take several small steps to quit the habit of procrastination.
3. You have to make a promise to yourself that you are going to quit procrastinating.
4. Successful ex-procrastinators are the only people who can offer advice on quitting.
5. Realistic goals will keep you motivated and help reduce the desire to procrastinate.
6. What information would better help us determine if William Knaus is a reliable source?
7. how old he is
8. state he works in
9. age of his patients
10. years in his practice
11. The loaded language used in paragraph 5 is meant to emphasize the—
12. humorous effects.
13. short amount of time left.
14. seriousness of the problem.
15. strength of the opposing viewpoint.
16. Which is the most compelling evidence to support the author’s argument? (4)
17. “People don’t like being lied to.”
18. “ These are drastic overgeneralizations”
19. “…an alarming 9/10 college students is a procrastinator.”
20. “Procrastination creates stress…(and) can lower your resistance to infections…”
21. Is the appeal to vanity effective in paragraph 2? Use information from the text to support your answer.

**Directions**

Read the following selections. Then answer the questions that follow.

**Old Comics Are Cash, *Not* Trash!**

**Vince Lee**

“When are you going to throw those old things away?” raged my mom.

“What ‘old things'?” I asked, picturing the outgrown gym shoes gathering dust under my bed, the busted CD cases scattered around my stereo, torn T-shirts and stained sweatshirts on the floor of my closet, and, with a flash of alarm, Binky, my childhood Teddy bear. (Certainly she didn't expect me to give up Binky—did she?)

“Those sliding mounds of comic books I trip over every time I enter your room!” she shouted, as though I should know what she meant. “Once you've read the stories, why can't you just throw them out? Instead, you leave them in piles for me to step on,” she added for emphasis.

I tried to explain that what she was stepping on would one day be as good as gold, but she just didn't get **10** it. Or she didn't agree. So I decided to do some research to prove, once and for all, that she should regard my comic books more as piles of cash than piles of trash. I found out quite a bit.

Old editions of comic books in good condition can sell for thousands, or even hundreds of thousands, of dollars. One reputable online price guide recently listed thirteen of the top 100 comics at over $200,000 dollars each. The most valuable one was priced at over $1,000,000!

Yes, a collector like me, who has been purchasing newly released comics **20** for only a short time, won't make that kind of money. Nevertheless, it's still possible for me to get back many times what I paid for a comic. According to some of the serious collectors I interviewed, an early edition of a $3.00

superhero comic recently sold at an online auction for $600. That's 200 times the original price! Another more recent edition sold for $345 only a few months after it came out.

**20** It would make me heartsick if I were to throw away my comics and then find out six months later that they were worth hundreds of dollars more than I'd paid for them.

I realize that online auction sites and price guides can give me only an idea of what my comics might be worth. They can't guarantee that I'll get those prices for my comics, or that I'll be able to sell them at all. But I believe that as long as there are collectors of comic books, there will be buyers of comic books. I may have to wait a while for the right buyer to come along, but I'm in no hurry. After all, as I wait, the value of my comics will be steadily climbing!

I also realize, however, that the condition of my comics will influence how much money I can get for them. Wrinkled, ragged, or missing pages; a torn or creased cover; and even missing coupons can radically reduce the value of a comic book. So, if I want to get top dollar for my treasures, I will have to store them better. But that fact doesn't turn my mounds of comics into trash. If I start taking good care of my comic books, they just might pay for my college education— or a down payment on a house!

**Comprehension**

**Directions**

Answer the following questions about “Old Comics Are Cash, *Not* Trash!”

1. Which element of an argument is the author using when he states that one comic was priced at over a million dollars?
2. Claim
3. Support
4. Conclusion
5. Counterargument
6. Which persuasive technique does the author use in lines 20–21?
7. Bandwagon
8. Appeal to vanity
9. Emotional appeal
10. Appeal by association
11. Which statement best adds support to the author’s claim?
12. Collectors often buy comics online.
13. Old comics usually increase in value.
14. Dealers resell comics at unfair prices.
15. Some stores sell only specialty comics.
16. How do lines 1 – 8 contribute to the development of ideas?
17. The author wants you to see his room.
18. He uses a source quickly to provide evidence.
19. He uses personal background to begin his claim.
20. It jumps straight into the claim on comic books as cash.
21. Which passage contains an author’s bias? Use information from the text to explain your answer.
22. Which author was more persuasive? Use information from the text to explain your answer.

Grade 6, Unit 6 Assessment

Answer Key:

1. A 6. C 11. B

2. D 7. D 12. C

3. B 8. CR 13. CR

4. A 9. B 14. CR

5. D 10. C

**8. Is the appeal to vanity effective in paragraph 2? Use information from the text to support your answer.**

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| --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Description** |
| 2 | The response is an *adequate* explanation that shows *satisfactory* understanding of the effectiveness of vanity in paragraph 2, supported with *relevant* information from the text. |
| 1 | The response is a *limited* explanation that shows *partial* understanding of the effectiveness of vanity in paragraph 2, supported with *general* information from the text. |
| 0 | The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant. |
|  |  |

Good responses include:

**13. Which passage contains an author’s bias? Use information from the text to explain your answer.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Description** |
| 2 | The response is an answer with an *adequate* explanation that shows *satisfactory* understanding of bias, supported with *relevant* information from the text. |
| 1 | The response is an answer with *limited* explanation that shows *partial* understanding of bias, supported with *general* information from the text. |
| 0 | The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant. |
|  |  |

 Good responses include:

* “Old Comics are Cash, N*ot* Trash!” contains a bias because he believes he can gain personally from persuading his mother--making money off the collection. (auction $600, $3.00 for one edition). He also uses the words with positive connotations when referring to his point of view like “piles of cash” and “good as gold”.
* “Quit Procrastinating” contains a bias because she uses words with positive connotations to support her point of view and words with negative connotations to support the other side. For example, “avoid disasterous results” and “alarming 9/10.”
1. **Which author was more persuasive? Use information from the text to explain your answer.**

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| --- | --- |
| **Score** | **Description** |
| 2 | The response is an answer with *adequate* support, that shows *satisfactory* understanding of effective persuasion, supported with *relevant* information from the text. |
| 1 | The response is an answer with *limited* support, that shows *partial* understanding of effective persuasion, supported with *general* information from the text. |
| 0 | The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant. |
|  |  |

Good responses include: