

PART 2 — WRITING

Unit 3 – Responding to Texts

Lesson 8: Listening and Note-Taking

New York ELA Practice, pages 113 and 114

Read the following listening passage aloud twice, with a short pause between readings. Students should take notes during the second reading.

Jumps and Falls

by Ivy Barger

Niagara Falls, a set of three waterfalls on the Niagara River between Canada and New York, is one of the most famous natural wonders in the world. For almost 200 years, people have tried to borrow its fame by performing outrageous stunts—some have jumped over the falls, while others have floated in barrels. All have ignored laws and safety warnings in the process of performing their feats.

Sam Patch, a daredevil adventurer calling himself “The Yankee Jumper,” was the first person known to survive a leap from the falls. In October of 1829, Patch jumped twice from a platform he built on Goat Island at the top of the falls. Because Patch was not satisfied with the size of the crowd attending his first jump, he drummed up an audience of ten thousand for his second jump a few days later.

Hurling from a platform is dangerous enough, but floating down the river and over the falls adds the risk of hitting the rocky cliff or getting trapped behind the falls. The first person to survive a trip over the falls in a barrel was a teacher named Annie Taylor. She was poor, desperate for a way to pay off her debts, and she hoped the stunt would make her famous.

On October 24, 1901, she climbed into a harness inside a wooden pickle barrel. After Taylor was sealed inside the airtight vessel, her manager used a bicycle pump to put more air inside for her to breathe. A small boat towed the barrel into the river stream, and then Taylor was cut loose to drift over the falls.

Inside the barrel, Taylor was sure she had hit the rocks and would lose her life, as the rapids at the foot of the falls tossed her in every direction. But despite her fears, Taylor lived through the fall with only a minor cut on her forehead. Although she briefly earned a living by speaking about her voyage over the falls, she was not able to sustain her fame. She was still penniless when she died twenty years later.

After Annie Taylor completed her stunt, she remarked, “No one ought ever do that again.” But since Taylor’s feat, 14 daredevils have ignored her advice. Some escaped virtually unharmed. One lucky adventurer was Kirk Jones, a 2003 jumper who went down the falls with just his clothing to protect him, suffering only broken ribs, minor cuts, and bruises. But many have been seriously injured or killed by their exploits. For example, Robert Overcracker died when his parachute failed to open after he soared over the falls on a jet ski in 1995.

Survivors face steep fines, because intentionally going over Niagara Falls is illegal in both Canada and the United States. For the most determined jumpers, however, neither the law nor common sense will stop them. They are lured over the edge by the promise of fame, fortune, and an experience only a handful of people have lived to tell about.

Lesson 9: Responding to Short-Answer Items

Pages 115–121

1. Responses will vary.
2. Questions will vary.
3. Responses will vary. Possible response: Although Buck feels great loyalty and love for John Thornton, he feels the force of the primitive drawing him into the forest, where he feels closer to the “call.”
4. The main characters in this excerpt are Buck and John Thornton.
5. The point of view is third-person limited, focusing on Buck’s point of view.
6. Responses will vary. Possible response: Strong instinctive forces can struggle with the need for security and love.
7. C Buck seems to feel his primitive ancestors calling to him. He is compelled to run into the forest.
8. Responses will vary.
9. A The word choices and sentence structures create an urgent pace. There are many phrases and clauses that relay the excited nature of Buck’s dilemma.
10. Responses will vary.
11. Responses will vary.
12. Responses will vary.

Listening Passage for Practice Test A

Let There Be Light

by Tom Fitzpatrick

Andrew Carnegie, once the richest man in the world, did not start out as a person of wealth. He was born in Scotland in 1835 to a family of modest means. His father, a weaver, lost his job when large industrial looms forced many handweavers out of business. The family emigrated to America and settled near Pittsburgh.

Andrew Carnegie went to work in a textile factory at age 13. He was a hard worker, and in the evenings he took a bookkeeping course. A wealthy army officer allowed working boys like Andrew to borrow books from his collection. Carnegie was grateful for the chance to learn about history and literature.

Carnegie was a go-getter, and he found a job delivering messages for a telegraph company. Soon, Carnegie was not only delivering telegrams, but was sending and receiving them, as well. He was such a skillful telegraph operator that many businessmen insisted that Carnegie send their important messages.

One such businessman was Thomas Scott, head of the Western Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad. Scott offered 17-year-old Carnegie a job as his personal assistant and telegrapher. Carnegie accompanied his new employer up and down the rail line and learned every aspect of the business. Scott loaned Carnegie enough money to invest in stock. After Carnegie brought a passenger's idea for a sleeping car to Scott, he was given a share of the profits. Then, when Scott was promoted to vice president of the railroad, Carnegie was given Scott's old position, supervising the Western Division.

When his investments became a greater source of income than his salary at the Pennsylvania Railroad, Carnegie quit his job in order to build his fortune. He bought into many industries and even turned a Pittsburgh iron company into the most successful in the nation, but he made his fortune in steel. Carnegie knew of a new process that improved iron by turning it into steel, which was stronger and more durable than iron. Steel would be the metal of the future. Carnegie turned his iron company into a steel mill, and it quickly became the biggest and most powerful in the United States.

He was now a rich man, but he knew there was more to life than making money. Carnegie wrote an article called "The Gospel of Wealth" in which he urged the wealthy to spread their riches to others. He began a second career of philanthropy, donating large sums of money to towns and universities to improve their facilities. Retiring in 1901, he sold his company to J. P. Morgan, then the most powerful financier in the country. Morgan and his partners paid Carnegie almost half a billion dollars for the company. "I want to congratulate you," said Morgan, "on being the richest man in the world." For Carnegie, however, the greatest achievements were yet to come.

Practice Tests

Andrew Carnegie gave most of his money back to the country that had allowed him to make his fortune. His endowments funded Pittsburgh's Carnegie Mellon University and New York City's Carnegie Hall, but perhaps his greatest legacy was the building of libraries. Carnegie encouraged communities to buy land and books. If a town would make that commitment, he would fund the building of its library. In all, Carnegie funded the construction of more than 2,800 libraries around the world. To illustrate that reading was the source of enlightenment, he asked that each library should feature an engraving showing rays of sunshine. Beneath the rising sun, this proclamation would appear: LET THERE BE LIGHT.

Listening Passage for Practice Test B

Ever Upward!

by John Ham

Stan Lee may not be a household name, but his creations are world-famous: The Fantastic Four, Spider-Man, and the X-Men are only a few. But the writer behind these marvelous superheroes never thought that comic books would be his career. That's why his thousands of stories were never signed with his real name.

Stan Lee was born Stanley Lieber, the son of Romanian immigrants in New York City in 1922. Money was scarce, and Stan escaped into books, adventure movies, and Shakespeare plays. When Stan Lieber was 17, a family connection led him into the industry he would one day revolutionize.

Stan's uncle Robbie worked for Martin Goodman, publisher of Timely Comics. Robbie got Stan a job as an assistant at Timely, working on *Captain America*. Before long, Stan had written his first story, and it appeared with the byline "Stan Lee." Stan dreamed of being a "serious" writer, so he saved his real name for his important works.

Soon Stan was writing dozens of scripts for Timely, all signed with Stan Lee or another made-up name. The next year, 18-year-old Stan was made editorial director of Timely Comics. Through the 1940s and '50s, Stan managed Timely's artists and wrote many of its scripts. Times were changing, however, and the comic book business was beginning to slow down. Superheroes like Captain America weren't selling well any more, so Stan became a master of Westerns, romances, and crime and horror stories.

In 1954, a public outcry over violent comic books threatened to destroy the industry. The next few years were hard ones for Stan Lieber and Timely. Many artists who had worked for Stan could no longer find jobs. Stan began to lose hope. But in 1961, Timely's rival, National Comics, revived superhero comics with a popular series starring a team of heroes. Martin Goodman instructed Stan to come up with his own superhero team.

As Stan tells it, this was a crucial moment. "That very afternoon . . . I had been planning to tell [Martin] that I wanted to leave the company," he writes. But Stan's wife convinced him to give comic books one more try, only this time, to make superheroes his "serious" writing. Stan turned to a reliable artist, Jack Kirby, who had worked with him on *Captain America*, and together they produced *Fantastic Four #1*. The series quickly became a hit, thanks to Kirby's exciting illustrations and Stan's clever dialogue, plus one small innovation: These superheroes didn't get along.

Over the next several months, Stan Lee and Jack Kirby created one popular new character after another, including the Hulk, Thor, and Iron Man. With artist Steve Ditko, Stan had his greatest success ever, introducing the teenage superhero Spider-Man. All of these characters bore Stan's special touch: They had problems. Other superheroes led perfect lives, but Stan's new characters had money troubles, romantic failures, and just plain bad luck. Their stories were more complex than superhero comics had ever been before.

Practice Tests

The new comic book line became known as Marvel Comics, and under Stan's leadership, the company boomed. But Stan didn't just build a new line of comics; he went one step further, giving Marvel Comics a personality of its own. He addressed readers like a circus ringmaster. He used catchphrases like "Face Front," "Nuff Said," and most famously, "Excelsior!" (The word is the New York state motto, and it means "ever upward.") By making readers feel they were part of a hip club, Stan created a generation of Marvel fans.

In the 1970s, Stan moved to Hollywood to turn his comics into films. By then, Stan had become so well known that he and his wife legally changed their last name to Lee. The last few years have even seen Stan leap onto the screen with his colorful creations. If you notice a white-haired man with a mustache and sunglasses in the background of a *Spider-Man* movie scene, then you have just spotted Stan Lee.