

Directions

Read this passage from the story “Building Bridges.” Then answer questions 13 through 17.

Building Bridges

by Andrea Davis Pinkney

The story “Building Bridges” is about a girl who lives with her grandmother, Mama Lil, and who dreams of someday becoming an engineer. In this passage from the story, the narrator is waiting for her grandmother to sign a consent form for her to participate in a summer program in which a group of students would work with a team of engineers to help repair the Brooklyn Bridge.



Ahead, in the distance, stood the Brooklyn Bridge. This was the best spot in Brooklyn’s Red Hook section for seeing the bridge. I’d come to this corner and studied the bridge a million times. And on every one of those times, I was taken with what I’d come to call Brooklyn Belle.

I never got tired of looking out at its steel girders and iron cables—at its beautiful crisscross rafters that had started out in somebody’s imagination, had been put to paper, formalized in an engineer’s plans, then woven together, bolt by bolt. Now Belle was a powerful giant who carried all kinds of people to all kinds of places, day after day.

At night Belle was dressed in tiny lights that spanned her limbs. On a cloudless night like this one, she was a sight like no other sight in the whole city. Jeweled in light. *Beautiful.*

My fingers had tensed into fists at my sides, fists full of strength and eagerness. I uncurled my knuckles and shook them free of their strain. Then I reached into my jacket

pocket—where my consent form for the bridge project had been neatly folded for days—and pulled out my pencil. Slowly, I flipped through the pages of my sketchbook. I’d drawn Belle in the high-noon light, at sunset, on snowy days, and on foggy twilight mornings. My favorite sketches were those of Belle during rush hour, when cars and taxis danced like trinkets along her outstretched beams.

Tonight I’d draw Belle with her lighted cape. I sketched slowly at first, then faster, my pencil working with the speed of my excitement—the thrill that worked me over every time I sketched that bridge.

I was proud of my drawings (I liked to think of them as portraits), but with each page they showed a sad truth about Belle: She needed repair. She was some forty years older than Mama Lil. And as lovely as she was, she had some serious rough spots—corroded cables, rust, chipped paint, and plain old grit that had built up over the decades. That bridge renovation project needed me; and I needed it, in more ways than I could count.

13 When does this passage take place?

- A** at night
- B** at sunset
- C** on a snowy day
- D** on a foggy morning

14 What are the narrator’s favorite sketches?

- A** the city in lights
- B** the bridge at twilight
- C** the bridge at rush hour
- D** the city in high-noon light

15 The author refers to the Brooklyn Bridge as “Brooklyn Belle” to help the reader

- A** understand that the bridge is very old
- B** remember the bridge’s history
- C** imagine the noise around the bridge
- D** appreciate the bridge’s beauty

16 Which sentence from the passage includes a metaphor used by the author to describe Belle?

- A** “I was taken with what I’d come to call Brooklyn Belle.”
- B** “Now Belle was a powerful giant who carried all kinds of people to all kinds of places, day after day.”
- C** “On a cloudless night like this one, she was a sight like no other sight in the whole city.”
- D** “I’d drawn Belle in the high-noon light, at sunset, on snowy days, and on foggy twilight mornings.”

17 In the passage, the narrator refers to the bridge renovation project. Based on information in the passage, the “renovation” project **most likely** refers to

- A** repairing the bridge
- B** removing the bridge
- C** replacing the bridge
- D** remembering the bridge

Go On