## Smart Start Packet: 8th Grade ELA Name : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Block: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 29 January- 8 February 2018

## Analyzing Text: Informational Text: Read the following selection. Then answer the questions.

### *from* The Road to Wigan Pier George Orwell

1. Probably you have to go down several coal-mines before you can get much grasp of the processes that are going on round you. This is chiefly because the mere effort of getting from place to place makes it difficult to notice anything else. In some ways it is even disappointing, or at least is unlike what you have expected. You get into the cage, which is a steel box about as wide as a telephone box and two or three times as long. It holds ten men, but they pack it like pilchards in a tin,**1** and a tall man cannot stand upright in it. The steel door shuts upon you, and somebody working the winding gear above drops you into the void. You have the usual momentary qualm in your belly and a bursting sensation in the ears, but not much sensation of movement till you get near the bottom, when the cage slows down so abruptly that you could swear it is going upwards again. In the middle of the run the cage probably touches sixty miles an hour; in some of the deeper mines it touches even more. When you crawl out at the bottom you are perhaps four hundred yards under ground. That is to say you have a tolerable-sized mountain on top of you; hundred of yards of solid rock, bones of extinct beasts, subsoil, flints, roots of growing things, green grass and cows grazing on it—all this suspended over your head and held back only by wooden props as thick as the calf of your leg. But because of the speed at which the cage has brought you down, and the complete blackness through which you have travelled, you hardly feel yourself deeper down than you would at the bottom of the Piccadilly tube.**2**
2. What *is* surprising, on the other hand, is the immense horizontal distances that have to be travelled underground. Before I had been down a mine I had vaguely imagined the miner stepping out of the cage and getting to work on a ledge of coal a few yards away. I had not realised that before he even gets to his work he may have to creep through passages as long as from London Bridge to Oxford Circus.…
3. At the start to walk stooping is rather a joke, but it is a joke that soon wears off. I am handicapped by being exceptionally tall, but when the roof falls to four feet or less it is a tough job for anybody except a dwarf or a child. You have not only got to bend double, you have also got to keep your head up all the while so as to see the beams and girders**3** and dodge them when they come. You have, therefore, a constant crick in the neck, but this is nothing to the pain in your knees and thighs. After half a mile it becomes (I am not exaggerating) an unbearable agony. You begin to wonder whether you will ever get to the end—still more, how on earth you are going to get back. Your pace grows slower and slower. You come to a stretch of a couple of hundred yards where it is all exceptionally low and you have to work yourself along in a squatting position. Then suddenly the roof opens out to a mysterious height—scene of an old fall of rock, probably—and for twenty whole yards you can stand upright. The relief is overwhelming. But after this there is another low stretch of a hundred yards and then a succession of beams which you have to crawl under. You go down on all fours; even this is a relief after the squatting business. But when you come to the end of the beams and try to get up again, you find that your knees have temporarily struck work and refuse to lift you. You call a halt, ignominiously,**4** and say that you would like to rest for a minute or two. Your guide (a miner)

is sympathetic. He knows that your muscles are not the same as his. "Only another four hundred yards," he says encouragingly; you feel that he might as well say another four hundred miles.

But finally you do somehow creep as far as the coal face. You have gone a mile and taken the best part of an hour; a miner would do it in not much more than twenty minutes.…

1. It may seem that I am exaggerating, though no one who has been down an old-fashioned pit (most of the pits in England are old-fashioned) and actually gone as far as the coal face, is likely to say so. But what I want to emphasise is this. Here is this frightful business of crawling to and fro, which to any normal person is a hard day's work in itself; and it is not part of the miner's work at all, it is merely an extra, like the City man's daily ride in the Tube. The miner does that journey to and fro, and sandwiched in between there are seven and a half hours of savage work. I have never travelled much more than a mile to the coal face; but often it is three miles, in which case I and most people other than coal-miners would never get there at all. This is the kind of point that one is always liable to miss. When you think of a coal-mine you think of depth, heat, darkness, blackened figures hacking at walls of coal; you don't think, necessarily of those miles of creeping to and fro. There is the question of time, also. A miner's working shift of seven and a half hours does not sound very long, but one has got to add on to it at least an hour a day for "travelling," more often two hours and sometimes three. Of course, the "travelling" is not technically work and the miner is not paid for it; but it is as like work as makes no difference. It is easy to say that miners don't mind all this. Certainly, it is not the same for them as it would be for you or me. They have done it since childhood, they have the right muscles hardened, and they can move to and fro underground with a startling and rather horrible agility. A miner puts his head down and *runs*, with a long swinging stride, through places where I can only stagger. At the workings you see them on all fours, skipping round the pit props almost like dogs. But it is quite a mistake to think that they enjoy it. I have talked about this to scores of miners and they all admit that the "travelling" is hard work; in any case when you hear them discussing a pit among themselves the "travelling" is always one of the things they discuss. It is said that a shift always returns from work faster than it goes; nevertheless the miners all say that it is the coming away, after a hard day's work, that is especially irksome. It is part of their work and they are equal to it, but certainly it is an effort. It is comparable, perhaps, to climbing a smallish mountain before and after your day's work.

**Monday, 29 January 2018:**

**1.** Which of the following clues from paragraphs 1 and 2 tell you that Orwell is writing for a British audience?

1. "Probably you have to go down several coal-mines…"
2. "The steel door shuts upon you, and somebody working the winding gear above drops you into the void."
3. "What *is* surprising…is the immense horizontal distances that have to be travelled underground."
4. "…he may have to creep through passages as long as from London Bridge to Oxford Circus."

**2.** In paragraph 1, the phrase "like pilchards in a tin" suggests that the elevator trip was

1. as smelly as a tightly-packed can of fish.
2. as refreshing as a newly opened can of fish.
3. as energizing as eating a bunch of protein-packed fish.
4. as uncomfortable as being packed into a small can like a sardine.

**Tuesday, 30 January 2018**

Define the term claim. Explain the purpose of a claim in an informational text: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Wednesday, 31 January 2018:**

**3.** In paragraph 1, Orwell's description the soil above the coal-mine creates a feeling of

1. vast emptiness.
2. intense loneliness.
3. immediate danger.
4. close friendship among the miners.

**4.** Which sentence from paragraph 1 contains one of the author's main claims?

1. "Probably you have to go down several coal-mines before you can get much grasp of the processes that are going on round you."
2. "This is chiefly because the mere effort of getting from place to place makes it difficult to notice anything else."
3. "In some ways it is even disappointing, or at least is unlike what you have expected."
4. "You get into the cage, which is a steel box about as wide as a telephone box and two or three times as long."

**Thursday, 1 February 2018:**

Explain the term sensory details. Provide an example of a sentence that uses sensory details.

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**Friday, 2 February 2018 – No Smart Start**

**Monday, 5 February 2018**

**5.** In Orwell's description of "travelling," the most powerful sensory details describe what a person

1. feels.
2. hears.
3. tastes.
4. smells.

**6.** What can you conclude about Orwell's first reaction to "travelling" based on the first sentence in paragraph 3?

1. He thought it was an amusing way to get from one place to another and enjoyed the journey.
2. He thought it was fun but understood that other people may find the journey challenging.
3. He thought it was a joke but quickly realized that it was extremely difficult and uncomfortable.
4. He thought it was difficult but saw humor in how much his height put him at a disadvantage.

**Tuesday, 6 February 2018:**

**7.** What does Orwell accomplish by including the phrase "(I am not exaggerating)" in paragraph 3?

1. He adds humor to support his earlier descriptions of "travelling" as a joke.
2. He introduces a new claim about coal-mining through his use of exaggeration and irony.
3. He addresses the possible counterargument that he is overemphasizing the difficulty of "travelling."
4. He provides supporting evidence for the idea that he is not suited for coal-mining.

**8.** What do the last five sentences from paragraph 3 illustrate about the journey to the coal face?

**A** It develops athletic ability and encourages workers to get to work quickly. **B** It requires endurance and uses muscles that only miners have developed. **C** It is not as difficult as Orwell makes it seem; anyone could do it.

**D** It tests the relationship between the miner guide and Orwell.

**Wednesday, 7 February 2018:**

**9.** In which of the following excerpts from paragraph 4 does Orwell introduce a possible opposing viewpoint?

1. "It may seem that I am exaggerating, though no one who has been down an old-fashioned pit…is likely to say so."
2. "Here is this frightful business of crawling to and fro, which to any normal person is a hard day's work in itself..."
3. "The miner does that journey to and fro, and sandwiched in between there are seven and a half hours of savage work."
4. "This is the kind of point that one is always liable to miss."

**10.** In paragraph 4, Orwell supports his ideas about "travelling" by

1. suggesting that miners do not mind "travelling."
2. emphasizing that "travelling" is extremely difficult for people like Orwell. **C** pointing out that miners find "travelling" easy since they are used to it. **D** stating that many miners agree that "travelling" is hard work.

**Thursday, 8 February 2018:**

**11.** Which of the following details illustrate that Orwell is both amazed and disturbed by the miners' quick "travelling" abilities?

1. "…it is not the same for [miners] as it would be for you or me."
2. "…they can move to and fro underground with a startling and rather horrible agility."
3. "A miner puts his head down and *runs*, with a long swinging stride…"
4. "It is part of their work and they are equal to it, but certainly it is an effort."

**12.** Based on paragraph 4, you can conclude that Orwell probably believes that

1. elevator shafts should be placed within a few yards of the coal face.
2. coal miners should be paid for time spent travelling to and from the coal face.
3. coal miners should not complain about the time they spend travelling to work.
4. coal-mines should be shut down because they are unsafe work environments.

**Friday, 9 February 2018 – no Smart Start**

**FRIDAY, 9 FEBRAURY 2018 – SMART STARTS DUE!**