



Genesis: Creation to Isaac

Complete Workbook · Parts 1–8 · Genesis 1–23

TEACHER / PARENT EDITION — WITH ANSWER KEY

Keyed to the ESV® Bible

Part 1

In the Beginning: Creation & the Ancient World · Genesis 1–2

Overview

What Happens in Part 1

In Genesis 1, God makes the heavens and the earth. At the start the earth has no shape and is covered in water and darkness. God speaks, and things come to be. On the first three days he makes empty places: light and dark, then sky and sea, then dry land and plants. On the next three days he fills them: sun, moon and stars for the day and night; fish and birds for the sea and sky; animals and people for the land. God makes people in his own image and tells them to care for the earth and the animals. Then God looks at everything he has made and calls it very good. On the seventh day he rests. Genesis 2 then looks closer at that sixth day: God forms the first man from the dust of the ground and breathes life into him, plants a garden in Eden for him to work and keep, and brings the animals to him to be named. Seeing that the man is alone, God makes a woman from the man's own side, and the two become one family — “one flesh.”

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words the chapters are built from: create, separate, form, bless, image, breath, garden
Bible Study	How to read a list, and how to spot a pattern in a chapter
Scripture Discovery	The land and water of the ancient Near East, and why sea and sky mattered so much there

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
1	The Seven Days — The earth begins dark, deep and without shape. God speaks and light comes. Days one, two and three make room: day and night, sky and water, then dry land with plants and seeds. Days four, five and six fill that room: lights in the sky, fish and birds, then land animals and people. God makes people in his own image, male and female, and gives them the job of caring for the earth. He calls everything he has made very good. On the seventh day he stops working and rests.
2	The Garden — A closer look at the sixth day. God forms the man from the dust of the ground and breathes life into him. He plants a garden in Eden, with a river running through it, and puts the

man there to work it and take care of it. God brings the animals to the man, who names them — but none of them is a fitting partner for him. So God makes a woman from the man's side, and the two are joined as one family.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom • The Words That Build a World [Word Study • Making and Sorting]

Word Study • Making and Sorting Look at what kind of words these chapters are made of. Genesis 1 has making words: create means to make something new, and separate means to put two things apart. Genesis 2 zooms in and uses closer, hands-on words: to form something is to shape it, the way a potter shapes clay, and breath is the air that makes something alive. Learning both sets of words helps you see how the two chapters work together, one wide and fast, the other close and slow. A garden is where all of it happens — ground that has been made, sorted, and now cared for by hand.

Word	Part of Speech • Ref	Definition	Example
create	v. • Gen 1:1	To make something new	<i>“The first line of the Bible says that God created the heavens and the earth.”</i>
separate	v. • Gen 1:4	To put two things apart from each other	<i>“God separated the light from the dark, and called them day and night.”</i>
bless	v. • Gen 1:28	To wish or give someone good things, especially from God	<i>“God blessed them and told them to be fruitful and multiply.”</i>
image	n. • Gen 1:27	A picture or likeness of something	<i>“The chapter says people were made in the image of God.”</i>
form	v. • Gen 2:7	To shape or make something by hand	<i>“The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground.”</i>
breath	n. • Gen 2:7	The air a living thing takes in and lets out	<i>“God breathed into the man’s nostrils the breath of life.”</i>
garden	n. • Gen 2:8	Ground where plants are grown and cared for	<i>“God planted a garden in a place called Eden.”</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. To make something new is to ____ it. (Gen 1:1)

✓ A) create

B) gather

C) form

D) swarm

Why: It is the very first thing the Bible says God does.

2. To 'separate' two things means to put them apart from each other. (Gen 1:4)

✓ Answer: TRUE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 1:28)

Word choices: *bless · create · form · image*

To wish God's good gifts on someone is to bless them.

4. Which word means 'a picture or likeness of something'? (Gen 1:27)

A) form

✓ B) image

C) garden

D) breath

Why: The chapter says people were made in the image of God.

5. To 'form' something means to shape it or make it by hand. (Gen 2:7)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. God breathed the 'breath of life' into the man's ears. (Gen 2:7)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 2:8)

Word choices: *garden · create · image · separate*

God planted a garden in a place called Eden, for the man to work and take care of it.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · How to Read a Chapter That Repeats *[Bible Study Skill · Spotting a Pattern]*

Bible Study Skill · Spotting a Pattern When a chapter says almost the same thing over and over, that is a clue, not a mistake. Try this. Write the six days in two short columns, days 1 to 3 on the left and days 4 to 6 on the right. Light and dark sit beside sun and moon. Sky and sea sit beside birds and fish. Land and plants sit beside animals and people. The left column makes an empty place. The right column fills it. Genesis 2 uses a different trick with the sixth day: it stops and looks closely instead of repeating. Finding a pattern, and noticing when a writer breaks one on purpose, are things a good Bible reader learns to do.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What is the earth like at the very start of the chapter? (Gen 1:2)

✓ A) dark, deep water with no shape

- B) a dry desert with no water
- C) a green field full of animals
- D) a city with no people in it

Why: No shape, no light, and water over everything.

2. What is the first thing God makes? (Gen 1:3)

- A) the animals
- B) the sun
- C) dry land

✓ D) light

Why: Light comes first, on day one — the sun and moon aren't made until day four.

3. In Genesis 2, what does God use to form the man? (Gen 2:7)

- A) water from the river
- B) one of his ribs
- C) light from the sky

✓ D) dust from the ground

Why: Then God breathes into him, and he becomes a living being.

4. What is made on the sixth day? (Gen 1:24-27)

- A) the sea and the sky
- B) the stars

✓ C) land animals and people

- D) the plants

Why: Genesis 2 then slows down and looks closely at this same day.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 1–2. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 1–2)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) The earth is dark and covered with water. 2) God says “Let there be light,” and there is light. 3) God forms the man from the dust of the ground. 4) God plants a garden in a place called Eden. 5) God makes a woman from the man’s own side.

6. God says that it is not good for the man to be alone. (Gen 2:18)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. The man and the woman become ‘one flesh,’ one family. (Gen 2:24)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · Two Ways to Tell One Story [Literary Craft · Wide Lens, Close Lens]

Literary Craft · Wide Lens, Close Lens Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 are not two different stories. They are one story told twice, in two different ways. Genesis 1 moves fast through the whole week, like a list: day one, day two, day three, all the way to day seven. Genesis 2 does something different. It slows all the way down and looks closely at just one part of day six — the man, the garden, the animals, the woman — like a scene instead of a line in a list. Zoom out, then zoom in. Both are true, and both are needed to see the whole picture.

Term	What it means
Pattern	Something that repeats. Genesis 1 repeats the same shape every day: God speaks, it happens, God sees it is good, evening and morning.
Structure	The way a piece of writing is put together. Genesis 1 moves fast, like a list of seven days. Genesis 2 slows down and tells one day, the sixth, like a close-up scene.
Refrain	A line that comes back again and again, like a chorus in a song. “And God saw that it was good” is the refrain of Genesis 1.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. Something that repeats again and again is a _____. (Gen 1)

- A) refrain
- B) seed
- ✓ C) pattern
- D) creature

Why: Every day in Genesis 1 has the same shape.

2. Write your answer in each blank, then click Check. (Gen 1)

Word choices: *pattern · refrain · seed · image*

A line that comes back again and again is a refrain. Something that repeats is a pattern.

3. Days 1, 2 and 3 make empty places, and days 4, 5 and 6 fill them. (Gen 1)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

4. Genesis 2 tells about the whole week, from day one to day seven. (Gen 2)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

5. What does Genesis 2 do that Genesis 1 does not? (Gen 1–2)

A) it lists all seven days

✓ B) it zooms in on just one day

C) it talks about the stars

D) it ends with the Sabbath

Why: Wide lens in Genesis 1, close lens in Genesis 2.

6. Why does the writer put the same words at the end of each day in Genesis 1? (Gen 1)

A) to show that each day was hard work

B) because there were no other words to use

✓ C) to make the days feel like one whole week

D) to help people count to seven

Why: The repeat ties the days together.

7. Write your answer in each blank, then click Check. (Gen 1–2)

Word choices: *list · scene · song · page*

Genesis 1 moves fast, like a list. Genesis 2 slows down and tells one day like a scene.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · A Narrow Land Between Sea and Desert *[Scripture Discovery · Places & Geography]*

Scripture Discovery · Places & Geography The first people to read Genesis lived in Canaan, where Israel is today — a thin strip of land on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. A great sea lay to the west and a great desert to the east, with little room between. Rain fell in only one season, so towns were built wherever there was a spring or a well. That same geography matters for Genesis 2: the garden of Eden sits in this same world, watered by rivers the first readers knew. Keep that in mind as you read. A story that starts in dark water, makes dry land, and then plants a garden on it was speaking straight into the world its first readers lived in.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 tell one story in two different ways.” — choose the two details that best prove it. *(Claim & Evidence)*

✓ **Genesis 2 slows down and tells one day like a scene**

- ☐ Genesis 2 never mentions God
- ☐ Both chapters are about the same six days of making
- ☐ Genesis 1 is written in a different language
- ☐ Genesis 2 has a sad ending

✓ **Genesis 1 moves through the whole week like a list**

- ☐ Genesis 1 has seven days in it

Why: The first two are about HOW each chapter tells the story — fast and wide, then slow and close. The others are just facts, not proof of how it is told.

2. In Genesis 1, or in Genesis 2? *(Sort into two)*

✓ **[In Genesis 2] The man is formed from the dust of the ground**

✓ **[In Genesis 1] The sun, moon and stars are set in the sky**

✓ **[In Genesis 2] A garden is planted in a place called Eden**

✓ **[In Genesis 1] Land animals and people are made on the sixth day**

✓ **[In Genesis 2] A woman is made from the man’s own side**

✓ **[In Genesis 1] Light is separated from the darkness**

Why: Genesis 1 covers the whole week at a distance. Genesis 2 zooms in on the sixth day.

3. Match each detail on the left with what goes with it on the right. (Match the Pairs)

Day 1 — light and dark → **A) Day 4 — sun, moon and stars**

Day 2 — sky and sea → **B) Day 5 — birds and fish**

God forms the man from the dust → **C) God breathes into him and he becomes a living being**

The man is alone in the garden → **E) God makes a woman from his side**

God sees everything he has made → **D) God calls everything very good**

Why: Two of these pairs come from Genesis 1's wide lens, two from Genesis 2's close lens.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis 2 slows down to tell about day six because **[B]**, which shows that **[F]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. the writer forgot the other days

B. it wants to look closely at something important

C. it ran out of things to say

D. the days are out of order

E. Genesis 1 must be wrong

F. the man, the garden and the woman matter enough to tell twice

Why: A writer who slows down is telling you: pay attention here.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

Land and Water in the Ancient Near East

The people who first read Genesis lived in Canaan — the same land where the country of Israel is today. It is a narrow strip of land on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, with a great desert on its other side. Water decided almost everything there. Rain came only in one season, so a village was built where a spring or a well was, and rivers like the Jordan were landmarks everyone knew. The sea to the west was not a holiday place. It was deep, dark and dangerous, and very few Israelites were sailors. That is worth remembering when you read Genesis 1. A chapter that begins with dark water and then makes dry land, and puts a sky over it and light in it, is describing the exact things those readers worried about most.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) how deep the Jordan River is
- B) how to sail on the Mediterranean Sea
- C) the best season to plant seeds

✓ **D) why land and water mattered so much**

Why: Water decided almost everything for them.

2. Where were villages built? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

✓ **A) where a spring or a well was**

- B) on the beach beside the sea
- C) on the highest hill
- D) in the middle of the desert

Why: Because rain only came in one season.

3. In this passage, a “landmark” is _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) a kind of boat
- B) a kind of building

✓ **C) something everyone knows**

- D) a rule about land

Why: Rivers like the Jordan were landmarks everyone knew.

4. You can guess from the passage that a well was _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

A) easy to dig anywhere

✓ B) very valuable

C) used only in winter

D) built beside the sea

Why: A whole village was placed around one.

5. In this passage, “narrow” means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

✓ A) not wide

B) not deep

C) very dry

D) very old

Why: A narrow strip of land between a sea and a desert.

6. Why does the passage say this matters for reading Genesis 1? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

A) the chapter says how much rain will fall

B) the chapter was written beside the sea

C) the chapter names the Jordan River

✓ D) the chapter makes what they cared about

Why: Dark water, then dry land, then sky and light.

7. Which day of Genesis 1 would matter most to a farmer with little rain? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

A) the first day, when light comes

✓ B) the third day, when land and plants come

C) the fourth day, when the stars come

D) the seventh day, when God rests

Why: Dry land and seed-bearing plants are the farmer’s whole life.

Part 2

Eden, the Fall & Life Outside the Garden · Genesis 3–4

Overview

What Happens in Part 2

In Genesis 3, a crafty serpent questions God's command. The woman and the man eat the fruit God told them not to eat. They notice that they are naked, make coverings from fig leaves, and hide. God questions them, and each person tells what happened. God speaks consequences to the serpent, the woman, and the man. The ground will now produce thorns and thistles, and growing food will be hard work. God makes garments for the man and woman and sends them out of Eden. In Genesis 4, Eve gives birth to Cain and Abel. Cain works the ground, while Abel keeps sheep. Both bring offerings from their work. After God regards Abel and his offering but not Cain and his offering, God questions and warns Cain. Cain later attacks his brother, and Abel dies. God sends Cain away as a wanderer but also protects him from retaliation. The chapter then follows later family members who build a city, keep livestock, make music, and work with metal. Life continues outside Eden, but it is no longer life in the garden.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for choices, work, care, and life outside Eden: crafty, offering, flock, keeper, wanderer, sin, forge
Bible Study	How to separate what a passage states from background information and inference
Scripture Discovery	Eden, early farming and shepherding, and the work of later family generations

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
3	The Garden Is Left Behind — The serpent questions God's command, and the woman and man eat the forbidden fruit. They make coverings and hide. God questions them and speaks consequences. The ground will produce thorns and thistles, making food harder to grow. God clothes the man and woman, sends them out of Eden to work the ground, and guards the way to the tree of life.
4	Family Life Outside Eden — Eve gives birth to Cain and Abel. Cain works the ground, and Abel keeps sheep. Both bring offerings. God questions and warns an angry Cain, but Cain later attacks

Abel, who dies. Cain must wander, though God also protects him from retaliation. A family line then names people connected with a city, tents and livestock, music, and metalwork. Seth is born, and the chapter closes with another branch of the family.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · Work Words and a Family Question [Word Study · Work and Responsibility]

Word Study · Work and Responsibility Genesis 3–4 uses work words to show how life changes. Outside Eden, the man must work the ground, and Cain becomes a worker of the ground. Abel is a keeper of sheep, caring for a flock. Both brothers bring an offering connected with their work. Later, Cain asks whether he is his brother's keeper. In the ESV, the English word keeper appears in both descriptions, but the underlying Hebrew verbs are different. Readers should not treat this as repeated Hebrew wordplay. Still, each English use involves watching over or caring for someone or something. Daily work and family care meet in the question of responsibility.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
crafty	adj. · Gen 3:1	Clever in a tricky or misleading way	<i>“The serpent speaks in a crafty, tricky way.”</i>
offering	n. · Gen 4:3–4	Something presented as a gift in worship or honor	<i>“Each brother brings an offering connected with his work.”</i>
flock	n. · Gen 4:4	A group of sheep or similar animals	<i>“Abel brings firstborn animals from his flock.”</i>
keeper	n. · Gen 4:2, 9	A person who watches over or cares for someone or something	<i>“Abel keeps sheep, and Cain later asks about being his brother's keeper.”</i>
wanderer	n. · Gen 4:12	A person who moves from place to place without a settled home	<i>“Cain is told that he will become a wanderer on the earth.”</i>
sin	n. · Gen 4:7	Wrongdoing that goes against what God wants	<i>“God warns Cain that sin is crouching at the door, ready to control him.”</i>
forge	v. · Gen 4:22	To shape metal, often with heat and hammering	<i>“Tubal-cain is described as a forger of bronze and iron instruments.”</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. Someone who is clever in a tricky way is _____. (Gen 3:1)

- A) careful
- B) worried
- ✓ C) crafty
- D) helpful

Why: Genesis 3 describes the serpent as crafty.

2. An 'offering' is something presented as a gift in worship or honor. (Gen 4:3–4)

✓ Answer: TRUE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 4:4)

Word choices: *flock · keeper · forge · crafty*

Abel brings firstborn animals from his **flock**.

4. A person who watches over or cares for someone or something is a _____. (Gen 4:2, 9)

- A) wanderer
- B) forger
- ✓ C) keeper
- D) farmer

Why: In the ESV, Abel is a keeper of sheep, and Cain later asks whether he is his brother's keeper.

5. A 'wanderer' stays in one settled home. (Gen 4:12)

✓ Answer: FALSE

6. In Genesis 4:7, 'sin' is pictured as something crouching at the door, ready to attack. (Gen 4:7)

✓ Answer: TRUE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 4:22)

Word choices: *forge · offering · keeper · wanderer*

To shape metal with skilled work is to **forge** it.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · What the Offering Scene Does Not Say [Close Reading · Observation and Restraint]

Close Reading · Observation and Restraint The offerings in Genesis 4 need close reading. Cain brings an offering from the fruit of the ground. Abel brings from the firstborn of his flock, including fat portions. The chapter says the LORD regards Abel and his offering but does not regard Cain and his offering. It does not directly say that shepherding is better than farming, and it does not give one short sentence explaining the different response. Before Cain attacks Abel, God questions Cain and warns him about sin. A careful reader reports what the passage says and leaves an unstated reason marked as unknown.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What do the man and woman make after they eat the fruit? (Gen 3:7)

✓ **A) coverings from fig leaves**

- B) a shelter from branches
- C) a basket for the fruit
- D) tools for the garden

Why: Genesis 3 says they sew fig leaves together to make coverings.

2. What work does the man do after he leaves Eden? (Gen 3:23)

- A) he builds a boat
- ✓ **B) he works the ground**
- C) he watches a flock
- D) he makes metal tools

Why: God sends him out of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken.

3. How are Cain and Abel introduced by their work? (Gen 4:2)

- ✓ **A) Cain farms; Abel keeps sheep**
- B) Cain herds; Abel builds a city
- C) Cain forges; Abel makes music
- D) Cain travels; Abel farms

Why: Cain is a worker of the ground, and Abel is a keeper of sheep.

4. What do the brothers bring as offerings? (Gen 4:3–4)

- A) bread and jars of water
- B) tools and woven cloth
- C) wood and shaped stones
- ✓ **D) produce and firstborn animals**

Why: Cain brings produce from the ground, and Abel brings firstborn animals from his flock.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 3–4. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 3–4)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) The serpent questions God's command in the garden. 2) The man and woman are sent out of Eden. 3) Eve gives birth to Cain and then Abel. 4) Cain works the ground, and Abel keeps sheep. 5) The brothers bring offerings connected with their work.

6. God warns Cain about sin before the next scene in the field. (Gen 4:6–8)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. Genesis 4 says that shepherding is better than farming. (Gen 4:2–5)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · Questions Across Two Family Stories [Literary Craft · Questions and Dialogue]

Literary Craft · Questions and Dialogue Questions shape both chapters. After the man and woman hide, God asks where the man is, who told him he was naked, and whether he ate from the tree. God then asks the woman what she has done. In Genesis 4, God asks Cain why he is angry, where Abel is, and what he has done. The narrative places each question before an answer, a warning, or a consequence. Repeated questions can slow the action and draw attention to what each person says. This pattern helps readers compare the two family stories and think about dialogue, repetition, and responsibility.

Term	What it means
Contrast	A difference placed side by side. Genesis 4 places a worker of the ground beside a keeper of sheep without saying that either job is better.
Dialogue	Words spoken by characters. Questions and answers carry much of the action in Genesis 3 and 4.
Genealogy	A record that traces a family line. The later part of Genesis 4 follows children and descendants across several generations.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is a contrast? (Gen 3–4)

- A) a list of family names
- B) a speech between characters
- C) a pattern of repeated words

✓ D) a difference shown side by side

Why: A contrast helps readers notice how two people, places, or actions differ.

2. Fill in each blank with the correct word. (Gen 3–4)

Word choices: *dialogue · contrast · genealogy · offering*

Words spoken by characters are called dialogue. A difference placed side by side is a contrast.

3. Which feature appears in both Genesis 3 and Genesis 4? (Gen 3–4)

✓ A) questions followed by answers

- B) a long list of kings
- C) a journey across the sea
- D) instructions for an ark

Why: God asks questions in both chapters, and the characters answer.

4. A genealogy traces people in a family line. (Gen 4:17–26)

✓ Answer: TRUE

5. A genealogy is a list of farming tools. (Gen 4:17–26)

✓ Answer: FALSE

6. Fill in each blank with the correct word. (Gen 4)

Word choices: *genealogy* · *dialogue* · *flock* · *wanderer*

The family record near the end of Genesis 4 is a **genealogy**. God's questions and Cain's replies are **dialogue**.

7. What does the family record add near the end of Genesis 4? (Gen 4:17–26)

✓ A) new generations and kinds of work

B) a second description of Eden

C) directions for building an ark

D) a list of plants in a garden

Why: The record follows later generations and names tents, livestock, music, and metalwork.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · Farmers and Shepherds in the Same Region *[Daily Life · Farming and Shepherding]*

Daily Life · Farming and Shepherding Genesis 4 places a farmer and a shepherd in the same family. Archaeology shows that crop cultivation and herd management both appeared early in Southwest Asia, though the evidence does not date Cain and Abel. Early farming involved cultivating plants, while herding involved managing animals such as sheep and goats. At some ancient sites, evidence of both occurs together. This shows that farming and herding could be part of the same community. This background helps us picture the brothers' occupations, but it does not explain why God responded differently to their offerings. The chapter does not call either occupation superior.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 4 connects family generations with different kinds of work.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

- ☐ God asks Cain where Abel is.
- ☐ Cain names a city after Enoch.
- ☐ Eve gives birth to Cain.

✓ **Cain works the ground.**

✓ **Tubal-cain forges instruments of bronze and iron.**

✓ **Abel keeps sheep.**

- ☐ Cain settles in the land of Nod.

Why: The three selected details name farming, shepherding, and metalwork. The other statements may be true, but they do not supply three different kinds of work.

2. Stated in Genesis 3–4, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 3–4] Cain is a worker of the ground.**

✓ **[Not stated there] The forbidden fruit is an apple.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Shepherding is better than farming.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 3–4] Abel is a keeper of sheep.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 3–4] Both brothers bring offerings.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Archaeology proves the date of Cain's life.**

Why: The left column reports the passage. The right column adds details or conclusions that Genesis 3–4 does not state.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

The man after Eden → **E) Works the ground from which he was taken**

Cain → **D) Works the ground**

Abel → **C) Keeps sheep**

Jabal → **B) Is linked with tents and livestock**

Tubal-cain → **A) Forges instruments of bronze and iron**

Why: Each match comes from work or a way of life stated or associated with that person in Genesis 3–4.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis 4 introduces Cain as a worker of the ground and Abel as a keeper of sheep **[B]**, which shows that **[E]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. after listing Noah's family

B. before describing their offerings

C. while giving directions for an ark

D. the chapter says farming is the lesser job

E. the brothers bring different gifts connected with different work

F. archaeology supplies the reason for God's response

Why: The first blank follows the chapter's order. The second states only what the occupations and offerings support, without ranking the jobs or inventing a reason.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

Farming and Herding in Southwest Asia

Genesis 4 introduces Cain and Abel by the work they do. Cain works the ground, while Abel keeps sheep. Archaeologists studying Southwest Asia find evidence that crop cultivation and herd management both appeared early in the region, sometimes in the same communities. Plant remains and animal bones help researchers identify these activities. This background helps readers picture a farmer tending crops and a shepherd caring for a flock, but it does not tell us when Cain and Abel lived or prove the story's location. In the chapter, each brother brings an offering connected with his work: Cain brings produce from the ground, and Abel brings firstborn animals from his flock. The text says God regards Abel and his offering but not Cain and his offering. It does not say that shepherding itself is better than farming. Good background knowledge adds a clearer picture while careful reading keeps it separate from what the passage directly states.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) why one brother chose to leave home
- B) how ancient metalworkers shaped tools
- C) why shepherds traveled farther than farmers

✓ D) how background helps without proving details

Why: The passage uses archaeology to picture two kinds of work while carefully limiting what that evidence can prove.

2. What evidence helps researchers identify ancient work? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) written diaries and road maps
- B) royal crowns and family lists

✓ C) plant remains and animal bones

- D) city gates and sailing ships

Why: The passage names plant remains and animal bones.

3. In this passage, “background” means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) a place behind a building

✓ B) helpful context

- C) a picture under the words
- D) a sound heard from far away

Why: The archaeological information gives helpful context for picturing the occupations.

4. How is each brother's offering connected with his work? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

A) Both bring tools used in their jobs.

✓ B) Each brings a gift tied to his work.

C) Both bring food grown from the soil.

D) Each brings an animal from the flock.

Why: Cain brings produce from the ground, while Abel brings firstborn animals from his flock.

5. Why does the passage say this archaeological background does not date Cain and Abel?

(SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

A) to show that ancient work left no evidence

B) to claim that farming began somewhere else

C) to prove that the brothers lived in one city

✓ D) to separate background from unstated details

Why: Archaeology supplies regional background, not a date or location for the narrative.

6. Which statement is supported by the reading passage? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

A) Every ancient family kept sheep and cattle.

B) Only shepherds brought offerings in the region.

✓ C) Some communities combined farming and herding.

D) Farmers never lived near people with flocks.

Why: The passage says crop cultivation and herd management sometimes appeared in the same communities.

7. Which rule for careful reading does the passage model? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

A) Let archaeology decide every unstated question.

✓ B) Use background to picture the text without claiming proof.

C) Assume different jobs must compete with one another.

D) Treat a later custom as the cause of an earlier event.

Why: Reliable background can illuminate a scene without proving details that the text and evidence do not establish.

Part 3

Noah Builds the Ark · Genesis 5–7

Overview

What Happens in Part 3

Genesis 5 traces a family line from Adam to Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. A repeated pattern records each generation, and Enoch's notice breaks that pattern. In Genesis 6, God sees that human wickedness has become great and that the earth is corrupt and full of violence. Noah finds favor with God. God tells Noah that judgment is coming and gives detailed instructions for an ark. It is to have rooms, three levels, a side door, and pitch inside and outside. God tells Noah to bring his family, animals, and stored food into the ark. Noah does what God commands. In Genesis 7, Noah enters with his wife, his three sons, and their wives. Clean animals and birds come in greater numbers than animals that are not clean. Rain falls for forty days and forty nights. The waters rise, lift the ark, and cover the land described in the account. The chapter closes while the waters are still prevailing.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for family lines, measurement, promises, animals, and rising waters: righteous, ark, pitch, cubit, covenant, clean, prevail
Bible Study	How repeated patterns, precise details, and careful sequence help readers follow Genesis 5–7
Scripture Discovery	Ancient measuring units, waterproof boat coatings, flood traditions, and the passage's animal groups

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
5	A Family Line Reaches Noah — A genealogy follows Adam's family through many generations. Most entries repeat a pattern of life, children, years, and death, while Enoch's notice is different. Lamech names his son Noah and speaks of hoped-for relief. Noah later becomes the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
6	God Gives Instructions for the Ark — The account describes human wickedness, corruption, and violence, but Noah finds favor with God. God announces judgment and tells Noah to make an ark. He gives its dimensions and features, promises to establish a covenant with Noah, and tells him to

preserve his family, animals, and food. Noah does what God commands.

7

Noah Enters and the Waters Rise — Noah's family and the animals enter the ark. The chapter distinguishes clean animals and birds from animals that are not clean. Rain falls for forty days and nights, and rising waters lift the ark so that it floats. The waters continue to prevail for 150 days.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · Measuring the Ark in Cubits [Word Study · Ancient Measurement]

Word Study · Ancient Measurement Genesis gives the ark's length, width, and height in cubits. A cubit was an ancient unit based on the forearm, but its exact length could vary across times and places. Surviving measuring rods show that ancient builders used standard units. The biblical dimensions are 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high. Those numbers give clear proportions: the length is six times the width and ten times the height. They do not supply one certain conversion into modern feet or meters. We can compare the ark's dimensions with care while keeping an exact modern size approximate.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
righteous	adj. · Gen 6:9	Living in a way that pleases God; doing what is right	<i>"The passage describes Noah as righteous and blameless in his generation."</i>
ark	n. · Gen 6:14	The large vessel Noah is told to build	<i>"Noah builds the ark according to God's instructions."</i>
pitch	n. · Gen 6:14	A material used to seal a surface against water	<i>"Noah is told to coat the ark with pitch inside and outside."</i>
cubit	n. · Gen 6:15	An ancient unit of length based on the forearm	<i>"The ark's dimensions are given in cubits."</i>
covenant	n. · Gen 6:18	A solemn promise or agreement that establishes a commitment	<i>"God promises to establish a covenant with Noah."</i>
clean	adj. · Gen 7:2–3	Belonging to a biblical category named in the passage	<i>"Clean animals and birds enter in greater numbers."</i>
prevail	v. · Gen 7:24	To continue strongly or become powerful	<i>"The waters prevail on the earth for 150 days."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. Someone who lives in a way that pleases God is described as _____. (Gen 6:9)

- A) wealthy
- B) famous
- C) clever

✓ **D) righteous**

Why: Genesis 6 describes Noah as righteous and blameless in his generation.

2. In Genesis 6, an 'ark' is the large vessel Noah is told to build. (Gen 6:14)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 6:14)

Word choices: *pitch · cubit · clean · prevail*

Noah is told to coat the ark with **pitch** inside and outside.

4. Which word names an ancient unit based on the forearm? (Gen 6:15)

- A) covenant
- B) generation

✓ **C) cubit**

D) pitch

Why: A cubit is an ancient unit of length based on the forearm.

5. A 'covenant' is a solemn promise or agreement that establishes a commitment. (Gen 6:18)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

6. In Genesis 7, 'clean' simply means freshly washed. (Gen 7:2–3)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 7:24)

Word choices: *prevail · righteous · ark · covenant*

To continue strongly or become powerful is to **prevail**.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · Count the Animals Carefully *[Close Reading · General and Specific Instructions]*

Close Reading · General and Specific Instructions Genesis 6 first gives a general instruction: two of every sort of living creature are to be kept alive. Genesis 7 adds a more specific distinction. Clean animals and birds come in greater numbers than animals that are not clean. The chapter names these groups but does not explain the later biblical rules for them. It also uses broad creature groups and the phrase “according to their kinds,” not modern scientific species. Saying “exactly two of every animal” would flatten the two instructions into one. A careful reader keeps the general statement beside the added detail and reads both carefully.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What does Genesis 5 trace from Adam to Noah? (Gen 5)

- A) a list of cities
- B) a set of laws
- C) a sailing route

✓ **D) a family line**

Why: Genesis 5 traces a family line through many generations to Noah and his sons.

2. What does the account say about Noah before the ark instructions? (Gen 6:8–9)

- A) He rules over a city.

✓ **B) He finds favor with God.**

- C) He invents metal tools.
- D) He sails to a new land.

Why: Noah finds favor and is described as righteous and blameless in his generation.

3. What conditions does Genesis 6 connect with the announced judgment? (Gen 6:11–13)

- A) wealth and safety
- B) music and feasting

✓ **C) violence and corruption**

- D) roads and towers

Why: Genesis 6 connects the announced judgment with corruption and violence.

4. Which detail is included in God's ark instructions? (Gen 6:14–16)

- A) a sail made of cloth
- B) a rudder at the back
- C) oars along both sides

✓ **D) pitch inside and outside**

Why: The ark is to be coated with pitch inside and outside.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 5–7. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 5–7)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) A family line reaches Noah and his sons. 2) The earth is described as corrupt and violent. 3) God gives Noah instructions for the ark. 4) Noah's family and the animals enter the ark. 5) Rain falls, and the waters lift the ark.

6. Noah does what God commands him to do. (Gen 6:22; 7:5)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. Genesis 6–7 says that every animal group enters in exactly the same number. (Gen 6:19–20; 7:2–3)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · A Refrain and an Exception *[Literary Craft · Repetition and Contrast]*

Literary Craft · Repetition and Contrast Genesis 5 is a genealogy, a record that traces a family line. Many entries follow a repeated pattern: a person's age is given, a son is named, other children are mentioned, the full lifespan is counted, and the person dies. The closing notice acts like a refrain. Enoch's entry is an exception. Instead of the usual ending, the account says that he walks with God and that God takes him. Repetition can train readers to expect what comes next. When the pattern changes, the difference receives special attention. The repeated ending and Enoch's different ending create a clear contrast.

Term	What it means
Genealogy	A record that traces people in a family line. Genesis 5 follows generations from Adam to Noah and his sons.
Refrain	A line or pattern that returns several times. Many Genesis 5 entries close by reporting the person's death.
Exception	A case that does not follow the usual pattern. Enoch's notice ends differently from the entries around it.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is a genealogy? (Gen 5)

- A) a plan for a large vessel
- ✓ B) a record of a family line
- C) a list of animal groups
- D) a measure of water depth

Why: A genealogy traces people through a family line.

2. Fill in each blank with the correct word. (Gen 5)

Word choices: *genealogy · refrain · exception · cubit*

A repeated line or pattern is a **refrain**. A case that breaks the usual pattern is an **exception**.

3. Which notice returns at the end of many Genesis 5 entries? (Gen 5:5–31)

- A) the person builds a city
- B) the person leaves the land
- C) the person enters an ark

✓ D) the person dies

Why: Many entries end by reporting that the person dies.

4. Enoch's notice follows the same ending as every entry around it. (Gen 5:21–24)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

5. A repeated pattern can make a changed ending easier to notice. (Gen 5)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

6. Fill in each blank with the correct word. (Gen 5)

Word choices: *genealogy* · *refrain* · *pitch* · *covenant*

Genesis 5 is a **genealogy** that traces a family line. Its repeated closing notice acts like a **refrain**.

7. How does Genesis 5 prepare for the chapters that follow? (Gen 5:28–32)

A) It explains every kind of animal.

✓ **B) It traces the family to Noah and his sons.**

C) It gives the full design of the ark.

D) It describes the rising flood waters.

Why: The genealogy reaches Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth before the ark account begins.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · Ancient Boats and Waterproof Coatings *[Archaeology · Material Evidence]*

Archaeology · Material Evidence Genesis calls Noah's vessel an ark and says it is coated with pitch inside and outside. The account gives rooms, three levels, and a side door, but it mentions no sail, oars, or rudder. Archaeologists have found ancient Near Eastern boat remains and models with bitumen, a dark material used to help keep water out. One ancient boat found near Uruk preserved impressions of plant material beneath its coating. Such finds show that waterproof coatings were part of ancient boatbuilding. They help readers picture a material detail in Genesis, but they do not prove the ark's date, place, shape, or construction. Background must stay separate from the passage's direct statements.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 6–7 presents Noah obeying instructions that preserve life.” — choose the three details that best support it. *(Claim & Evidence)*

- ☐ The waters lift the ark above the earth.
- ✓ **Noah makes the ark as God commands.**
- ✓ **Noah enters the ark with his household and the animals.**
- ✓ **Noah gathers food for his household and the animals.**
- ☐ Noah is six hundred years old when the flood waters come.
- ☐ The waters prevail for 150 days.
- ☐ Rain falls for forty days and forty nights.

Why: The three selected details show Noah carrying out instructions connected with preserving his household and living creatures. The other statements belong to the account but do not show an instruction Noah obeys.

2. Stated in Genesis 5–7, or Not stated there? *(Sort into two)*

- ✓ **[Stated in Genesis 5–7] The ark has three levels.**
- ✓ **[Not stated there] Gopher wood is certainly cypress.**
- ✓ **[Not stated there] A crowd mocks Noah while he builds.**
- ✓ **[Not stated there] The entire flood ends after forty days.**
- ✓ **[Stated in Genesis 5–7] Noah enters with his wife, sons, and sons' wives.**
- ✓ **[Stated in Genesis 5–7] Rain falls for forty days and nights.**

Why: The left column reports details in Genesis 5–7. The right column supplies details the passage does not state or conclusions it does not support.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Genesis 5 → **E) Traces a family line to Noah**

Cubit → **D) Measures the ark's dimensions**

Pitch → **A) Coats the ark inside and outside**

Clean animals and birds → **B) Enter in greater numbers**

Rain → **C) Falls for forty days and nights**

Why: Each match connects a chapter feature, term, or group with what Genesis 5–7 states about it.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis gives the ark's length, width, and height in cubits, so readers can **[A]**, which shows that **[F]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. compare the stated proportions

B. identify the exact wood species

C. add a sail to the design

D. the wood species and hull shape are both certain

E. the ark must have used sails to steer

F. the proportions are clear even if an exact modern size is approximate

Why: The dimensions support comparison of length, width, and height. A modern conversion needs a stated cubit assumption, so an exact modern size remains approximate.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

A Flood Story on a Clay Tablet

At the British Museum, a clay tablet from seventh-century BCE Nineveh preserves part of the Epic of Gilgamesh. Its cuneiform writing uses wedge-shaped signs pressed into clay. The story on this tablet includes a flood survivor who reports a warning and the building of a boat. It also mentions family members, animals, birds, and a sacrifice. These details create real similarities with the Genesis flood account, while other details differ, including the gods, the reason for the flood, and the boat's design. The object's date tells when this surviving copy was made, not when the flood it describes occurred. Its existence alone cannot prove that Genesis borrowed from it or that either account happened exactly as described. The tablet is evidence that a flood story was written in ancient Mesopotamia. A careful comparison states that evidence, examines both similarities and differences, and leaves larger conclusions qualified.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

✓ A) how one tablet informs a careful comparison

- B) why all flood stories describe one event
- C) how builders tested boats on major rivers
- D) why clay replaced every other writing material

Why: The passage uses one ancient tablet to model evidence-based comparison without making unsupported claims.

2. What material and writing system does the passage name? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

✓ A) clay with cuneiform signs

- B) stone with painted symbols
- C) papyrus with inked letters
- D) wood with carved pictures

Why: The tablet is clay, and its writing uses cuneiform signs.

3. In this passage, “preserves” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) hides so no one can read
- B) changes into a new story
- ✓ C) keeps so it can survive
- D) translates into another language

Why: The clay tablet keeps part of the ancient story available to readers.

4. What does the tablet's seventh-century BCE date establish? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

A) when the flood itself occurred

✓ B) when this tablet copy was made

C) when Genesis was first written

D) when all flood stories began

Why: The date belongs to the surviving museum object, not automatically to the event or every text it describes.

5. Why does the passage mention both similarities and differences? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Author's Method)

✓ A) to compare without calling the stories identical

B) to show all ancient boats had one design

C) to prove the tablet records Genesis directly

D) to decide which museum owns older clay

Why: A responsible comparison notices shared features and important differences.

6. Which statement is supported by the passage? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

A) The tablet records Noah's own spoken words.

B) The boat design matches Genesis in every detail.

✓ C) A Mesopotamian tablet contains a flood story.

D) The artifact was written during the flood.

Why: The artifact shows that a flood story was preserved in ancient Mesopotamia.

7. Which method does the final sentence recommend? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

✓ A) State what the object shows and qualify further claims.

B) Treat every similarity as proof of direct copying.

C) Ignore differences between the ancient accounts.

D) Use a later copy to date the event it describes.

Why: Careful study reports the evidence and marks conclusions that go beyond it as qualified.

Part 4

Rainbow Covenant & the Tower of Babel · Genesis 8–11

Overview

What Happens in Part 4

Genesis 8 follows Noah as he waits for the flood waters to go down. He sends out a raven, then a dove three separate times, watching closely what each flight shows him. Once the earth is finally dry, God tells Noah to bring his family and every animal out of the ark. Noah's first act outside the ark is to build an altar and offer a sacrifice to the LORD. In Genesis 9, God blesses Noah's family, tells them to be fruitful and multiply, and promises never again to destroy every living thing with a flood. He gives the bow in the clouds as a lasting sign of that promise. Genesis 10 then traces the many descendants of Noah's three sons and connects them with the different nations, peoples, and languages spread across the ancient world. Genesis 11 zooms in on one group who share a single language. They settle in the land of Shinar and decide to build a city and a tower out of brick and bitumen, hoping to make a name for themselves. God confuses their language, they are dispersed across the earth, and the place is named Babel.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for waiting, worship, promises, and city-building: sacrifice, altar, sign, Shinar, mortar, dispersed, confuse
Bible Study	How to track what changes across a repeated text, and how to notice a symbol and a stated motive
Scripture Discovery	Ancient building materials, real ziggurats, and the many languages once spoken across ancient Mesopotamia

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
8	The Waters Go Down — Noah sends out a raven, then a dove three separate times, watching what each flight shows about the flood. Once the earth is dry, God tells Noah to bring his family and every animal out of the ark. Noah builds an altar and offers a sacrifice to the LORD.
9	A Promise and a Sign — God blesses Noah and his sons, tells them to be fruitful and multiply, and gives them permission to eat animals for food. God then promises never again to destroy every

	living thing with a flood, and gives the bow in the clouds as the sign of that lasting promise.
10	Many Nations — A long family record traces the descendants of Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, connecting different family lines with different nations, peoples, and languages spread across the ancient world.
11	One Language, One City — People who share one language settle in the land of Shinar and decide to build a city and a tower, so that they will make a name for themselves and not be dispersed. God confuses their language, and the people are dispersed across the earth after all; the place is named Babel.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · Bricks Instead of Stone *[Word Study · Ancient Building Materials]*

Word Study · Ancient Building Materials Genesis 11 says the builders had brick for stone and bitumen for mortar. That detail matches real ancient Mesopotamia. Unlike Egypt or Canaan, the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers had very little natural stone. Builders instead shaped wet river clay into bricks and dried or baked them hard. Bitumen, a sticky, tar-like substance that seeps naturally from the ground in parts of the ancient Near East, could be used the way mortar holds stones together today. Archaeologists have excavated brick walls and bitumen-sealed structures across the region, from house foundations to city walls. The passage's building materials fit the world it describes.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
sacrifice	n. · Gen 8:20	Something given up and offered to God, often on an altar	<i>"Noah offers a sacrifice to the LORD once he leaves the ark."</i>
altar	n. · Gen 8:20	A raised structure used for offering a sacrifice	<i>"Noah builds an altar and offers a sacrifice to the LORD."</i>
sign	n. · Gen 9:12	A visible mark that stands for something else	<i>"The bow in the clouds is given as a sign of God's promise."</i>
Shinar	n. · Gen 11:2	The land where the people settle and build a city	<i>"The people find a plain in the land of Shinar and settle there."</i>
mortar	n. · Gen 11:3	A material used to hold building blocks together	<i>"The builders use bitumen for mortar instead of stone."</i>
dispersed	v. · Gen 11:4, 9	Spread out or scattered in different directions	<i>"The people build a tower so that they will not be dispersed."</i>
confuse	v. · Gen 11:7	To make something unclear or hard to understand	<i>"God chooses to confuse the language of the people at Babel."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. Something given up and offered to God, often on an altar, is called a _____. (Gen 8:20)

✓ **A) sacrifice**

B) prayer

C) festival

D) harvest

Why: Noah builds an altar and offers a sacrifice to the LORD once he leaves the ark.

2. In Genesis 8, an 'altar' is a place Noah builds for offering a sacrifice to the LORD. (Gen 8:20)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 9:12)

Word choices: *sign · altar · mortar · dispersed*

The bow in the clouds is called a sign of God's promise never to flood the whole earth again.

4. Which word names the land where the people settle and decide to build a city and a tower?

(Gen 11:2)

A) Ararat

B) Canaan

C) Eden

✓ **D) Shinar**

Why: Genesis 11 names Shinar as the land where the people settle.

5. In Genesis 11, the builders use bitumen the way mortar is used to hold stones together. (Gen 11:3)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

6. In Genesis 11, the people build a city and a tower so that they will be dispersed across the earth. (Gen 11:4)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 11:7)

Word choices: *confuse · sacrifice · Shinar · mortar*

God is described as choosing to confuse the language of the people so they can no longer understand each other.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · Reading a Repeated Test *[Close Reading · Repetition with a Change]*

Close Reading · Repetition with a Change Genesis 8 describes Noah testing the flood waters three separate times. First he sends out a raven. Then he sends a dove, which finds no place to land and comes back. A week later he sends the dove again, and it returns carrying a freshly plucked olive leaf. A week after that, he sends the dove a third time, and it does not return at all. Each attempt repeats the same basic action — sending a bird — but the result changes every time. A careful reader tracks what stays the same and what changes across a repeated test, since the changes are exactly how the passage shows the waters slowly going down.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What does Noah do first to test whether the flood waters have gone down? (Gen 8:6–7)

- A) He sends out a dove.
- B) He climbs onto the roof of the ark.
- C) He opens a window and looks himself.

✓ **D) He sends out a raven.**

Why: Genesis 8 says Noah sends out a raven before he ever sends the dove.

2. What happens the first time Noah sends out the dove? (Gen 8:8–9)

- A) It brings back an olive leaf.
- ✓ **B) It finds no place to land and comes back.**
- C) It does not return at all.
- D) It builds a nest on the mountains of Ararat.

Why: On its first flight the dove finds nowhere to land, so it returns to Noah.

3. What does the dove bring back on its second flight? (Gen 8:10–11)

- A) A handful of dry soil
- B) A small twig from a cedar tree

✓ **C) A freshly plucked olive leaf**

- D) A grain of wheat

Why: The dove returns the second time with a freshly plucked olive leaf.

4. What does Noah do once he and his family leave the ark? (Gen 8:18–20)

- A) He plants a vineyard right away.
- ✓ **B) He builds an altar to the LORD.**
- C) He builds a city in Shinar.
- D) He divides the land among his sons.

Why: Genesis 8 says Noah builds an altar to the LORD once he leaves the ark.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 8–11. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 8–11)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Noah sends out a raven from the ark. 2) God gives the bow as a sign of his promise. 3) The people settle in the land of Shinar. 4) The people decide to build a city and a tower. 5) God confuses their language, and they are dispersed.

6. God tells Noah to bring his family and every kind of animal out of the ark together. (Gen 8:15–19)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. Genesis 9 says God's promise applies only to Noah, not to his descendants or any future generation. (Gen 9:12)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · A Sign Is More Than a Decoration [Literary Craft · Symbol]

Literary Craft · Symbol In Genesis 9, God calls the bow in the clouds a sign — the word appears again and again in just a few verses. A sign is different from a plain fact. It is something you can see that stands for a promise you cannot see. The bow itself is light and water in the sky, but the passage gives it a job: every time it appears, it points back to God's promise never to flood the whole earth again. Writers use a symbol this way on purpose, choosing one visible thing to carry a much bigger meaning. Once you know a symbol's meaning, noticing it again feels different than noticing it for the first time.

Term	What it means
Symbol	A visible thing that stands for a bigger meaning beyond itself. The bow becomes a symbol of God's promise never to flood the whole earth again.
Repetition	A word or idea repeated on purpose. The word 'sign' appears again and again in Genesis 9 to mark how important the promise is.
Motive	A stated reason for what a character wants or decides to do. The people in Shinar give their own reason for building: to make a name for themselves and avoid being dispersed.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is a symbol? (Gen 9)

✓ A) A visible thing with a meaning beyond itself

B) A rule for how thick a city wall must be

C) A full list of one family's descendants

D) A city renamed after its own founder

Why: A symbol is something visible chosen to carry a bigger meaning.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 9)

Word choices: *symbol · repetition · motive · mortar*

The bow becomes a **symbol** of God's promise once it is given that meaning in Genesis 9.

3. Why does the word 'sign' appear so many times in Genesis 9:12–17? (Gen 9:12–17)

- A) Because repeating words is always a mistake
- B) To describe a new promise every time
- C) Because the author forgot other words

✓ D) To mark how important the promise is

Why: Genesis 9 repeats 'sign' on purpose, to keep the promise's importance in view.

4. The people in Shinar give their own stated reason for building the city and tower. (Gen 11:4)

✓ Answer: TRUE

5. A repeated word in a Bible passage is always an accident and never done on purpose. (Gen 9)

✓ Answer: FALSE

6. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 11:4)

Word choices: *motive · symbol · repetition · dispersed*

A stated reason for what a character wants is called a motive.

7. What does noticing the people's stated motive in Genesis 11 help a reader do? (Gen 11:4)

- A) Prove exactly how every ancient language began

✓ B) Understand why they build instead of guessing

- C) Decide where the real city of Babel stood today
- D) Replace the passage's own reason with a new one

Why: Reading their stated motive lets you understand their reason without guessing or replacing it with your own.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · Ziggurats: Ancient Mesopotamia's Tallest Towers [Archaeology · Material Evidence]

Archaeology · Material Evidence Ancient Mesopotamia built its temples upward, not outward. A ziggurat was a massive stepped tower of sun-dried and baked mudbrick, with a shrine at the top. The best-known example, the Great Ziggurat of Ur, was begun around 2100 BC by King Ur-Nammu and probably finished under his son. Archaeologist Leonard Woolley's team excavated it in the 1920s and 1930s; only its massive base and staircases have survived to be measured directly, since the shrine at the top is long gone. Ziggurats were not houses or forts; each belonged to a city and its god. Genesis 11 never uses the word ziggurat, but it describes people in the same region building upward with the same brick-and-bitumen construction archaeologists have found.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 8–9 shows Noah responding carefully to the flood's end, and God making a lasting promise afterward.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

☐ The ark comes to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

✓ **Noah builds an altar and offers a sacrifice once he leaves the ark.**

☐ Noah is six hundred and one years old when the earth finally dries.

☐ God permits Noah's family to eat meat for the first time.

✓ **Noah sends out a raven, then a dove three separate times, before leaving the ark.**

☐ God tells Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

✓ **God gives the bow as a sign of a promise never to flood the whole earth again.**

Why: The three selected details show Noah acting deliberately once the flood ends and God's promise being marked with a lasting sign. The other statements are true but describe a different part of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 8–9, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Not stated there] The bow is named after a Mesopotamian god.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 8–9] Noah sends a raven out first.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 8–9] The dove returns with a freshly plucked olive leaf.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Noah built the altar out of bitumen and brick.**

✓ **[Not stated there] The dove speaks to Noah when it returns.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 8–9] The bow is called a sign of the covenant.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 8–9 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Raven → **C) Sent out first, before the dove**

Olive leaf → **A) Brought back by the dove on its second flight**

The bow → **B) Called a sign of God's promise**

Shinar → **D) The land where the people settle and build**

Bitumen → **E) Used for mortar instead of stone**

Why: Each match connects a bird, object, place, or material with what Genesis 8–11 states about it.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

The people in Shinar choose brick instead of stone and bitumen instead of mortar-stone because **[A]**, which shows that **[E]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. the region had little natural stone

B. stone was considered too heavy to lift

C. brick was thought more beautiful than stone

D. it proves the region had no working stone tools at all

E. it matches real building materials found across ancient Mesopotamia

F. every ancient city used exactly this same method

Why: Mesopotamia's builders really did rely on mudbrick and bitumen because the region lacked plentiful stone, so the passage's building materials fit the world archaeologists have uncovered.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

Many Languages in One Ancient Land

Ancient Mesopotamia was home to more than one language. Sumerian and Akkadian were both written with the same wedge-shaped cuneiform signs, but they were separate languages with their own grammar. Scribes in training even aligned word lists that matched a Sumerian word beside its Akkadian meaning, almost like a two-language dictionary carved in clay. These bilingual word lists were copied and studied for roughly two thousand years, long after Sumerian stopped being anyone's everyday spoken language. Trade routes and city life constantly brought speakers of different languages into contact with each other. Mesopotamia sat along paths used by travelers, traders, and messengers moving between distant regions. Thousands of these clay tablets have survived in the region's dry soil, and scholars have spent well over a century learning to read them again after the skill had been lost for centuries. A single word list cannot show exactly how every language in the world began, but it does show that ancient Mesopotamia's cities were places where more than one language could be heard in the same street.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) Instructions for baking clay tablets correctly
- B) A full translation of the Sumerian language
- ✓ C) Evidence for more than one Mesopotamian language
- D) A complete timeline of every Mesopotamian king

Why: The passage uses surviving word lists as evidence for more than one language in the region.

2. Which two languages does the passage name? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- ✓ A) Sumerian and Akkadian
- B) Hebrew and Aramaic
- C) Egyptian and Greek
- D) Latin and Phoenician

Why: The passage names Sumerian and Akkadian as the two languages behind the word lists.

3. In this passage, “aligned” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) translated into a new language
- B) buried deep underground
- ✓ C) lined up and matched together
- D) erased on purpose

Why: Scribes aligned, or lined up, a Sumerian word beside its Akkadian meaning.

4. What evidence shows scribes worked with two languages at once? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

✓ **A) Word lists that pair Sumerian and Akkadian words**

- B) A single tablet written in one language only
- C) A drawing that shows two scribes arguing
- D) A list of kings ruling two different cities

Why: The word lists pairing Sumerian and Akkadian are the passage's main piece of evidence.

5. Why might Mesopotamia's cities have had speakers of different languages nearby each other?

(SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

- A) Every city agreed to use only one shared language
- B) Clay tablets were too heavy to carry between cities

✓ **C) Trade routes connected speakers of different languages**

- D) Scribes were forbidden from learning a second language

Why: The passage connects trade routes and travel with speakers of different languages meeting.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

- A) A single scholar's personal opinion

✓ **B) Clay tablets recovered from the ground**

- C) A modern survey of living languages
- D) A legend with no physical evidence at all

Why: The passage points to actual surviving clay tablets as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what can and cannot a single word list show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

- A) It proves exactly how every human language began
- B) It cannot show anything reliable about Mesopotamia
- C) It shows the exact date every tablet was written

✓ **D) It shows two languages in use, not how language began**

Why: The passage is careful: a word list shows real evidence of two languages, without proving how every language in the world began.

Part 5

Abram Leaves Home · Genesis 12–14

Overview

What Happens in Part 5

Genesis 12 opens with the LORD calling Abram to leave his country, his relatives, and his father's household, and go to a land the LORD will show him. God promises to bless Abram and make him into a great nation. Abram, his wife Sarai, and his nephew Lot leave Haran and travel to Canaan, where Abram builds an altar. A famine then sends the family down to Egypt for a time, and they return to Canaan once it passes. In Genesis 13, Abram is now wealthy in livestock, silver, and gold. His herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen begin quarreling because the land cannot support both households at once, so Abram lets Lot choose land first. Lot picks the well-watered plain near Sodom, and Abram stays in Canaan, where God repeats his promise of land and descendants. Genesis 14 describes a war between two groups of kings; the losing side's goods and people, including Lot, are carried off. Abram arms the trained men of his household, pursues the raiders, and rescues Lot along with the captured people and goods. On his way back, Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High, blesses Abram and brings out bread and wine, and Abram gives him a tenth of everything.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for family, food, worship, and rescue: descendants, famine, possessions, priest, tithe, captive, rescue
Bible Study	How to track a promise as it is repeated across a passage, and how a writer uses contrast between two characters
Scripture Discovery	The real city of Ur, ancient nomadic travel, and how families like Abram's actually moved and lived

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
12	The Call and the Journey — The LORD calls Abram to leave his country and promises to bless him and make him a great nation. Abram, Sarai, and Lot travel from Haran to Canaan, where Abram builds an altar. A famine sends the family to Egypt for a time before they return to Canaan.
13	Abram and Lot Separate — Back in Canaan, Abram and Lot's herdsmen quarrel over grazing land. Abram lets Lot choose first; Lot picks the well-watered plain near Sodom, and Abram stays in

	Canaan, where God repeats his promise of land and descendants.
14	The Rescue of Lot — A coalition of eastern kings defeats the kings of the plain and carries off goods and people, including Lot. Abram arms his trained men, pursues, and rescues Lot. Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High, blesses Abram, and Abram gives him a tenth of everything.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · Ur: A Royal City Dug from the Sand [Word Study · Archaeology]

Word Study · Archaeology Genesis says Abram's family came from Ur. Most scholars think that means the great Sumerian city in southern Iraq, though a few argue for a different Ur farther north. Archaeologist Leonard Woolley excavated the southern city between 1922 and 1934, working for the British Museum and the University of Pennsylvania. His team uncovered a large cemetery, including sixteen tombs so richly furnished with gold, jewelry, and fine objects that Woolley called them royal. Woolley filled more than twenty thousand catalogue cards, one for every object he numbered, and newspapers around the world printed stories about the dig for years. Ur turns out to have been a real, wealthy, well-organized city.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
descendants	<i>n. · Gen 12:7</i>	People who come after someone in their family line	<i>"The LORD promises Abram's descendants the land of Canaan."</i>
famine	<i>n. · Gen 12:10</i>	A time when there is not enough food	<i>"A famine in the land sends Abram's family down to Egypt."</i>
possessions	<i>n. · Gen 13:2</i>	Things a person owns	<i>"Abram returns to Canaan with many possessions, including livestock and silver."</i>
priest	<i>n. · Gen 14:18</i>	Someone who serves God and leads others in worship	<i>"Melchizedek is described as a priest of God Most High."</i>
tithe	<i>n. · Gen 14:20</i>	A tenth part given as an offering	<i>"Abram gives Melchizedek a tithe of everything he has recovered."</i>
captive	<i>n. · Gen 14:14</i>	Someone taken and held by force during a conflict	<i>"Abram sets out to rescue Lot, who has become a captive."</i>
rescue	<i>v. · Gen 14:16</i>	To save someone from danger	<i>"Abram and his men rescue Lot and bring back the people and goods."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. People who come after someone in their family line are called their _____. (Gen 12:7)

A) neighbors

B) servants

✓ C) descendants

D) ancestors

Why: The LORD promises to give the land of Canaan to Abram's descendants.

2. In Genesis 12, a 'famine' is a time when there is too much food to store. (Gen 12:10)

✓ Answer: FALSE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 14:18)

Word choices: *priest · captive · famine · descendants*

Melchizedek is described as a priest of God Most High as well as a king.

4. A tenth part given as an offering is called a _____. (Gen 14:20)

A) tax

B) wage

C) loan

✓ D) tithe

Why: Abram gives Melchizedek a tithe, a tenth of everything he has recovered.

5. In Genesis 14, Lot becomes a captive when the eastern kings carry off the goods and people of Sodom. (Gen 14:12)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 14, Abram refuses to rescue Lot because the two men are no longer on good terms.

(Gen 14:14–16)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 14:16)

Word choices: *rescue · tithe · priest · possessions*

Abram and his men rescue Lot, bringing back the captured people and goods.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · Tracking a Promise Across a Passage [Close Reading · Repeated Detail]

Close Reading · Repeated Detail The LORD's promise to Abram is not stated just once. In Genesis 12, God tells Abram he will make him a great nation and bless him. In Genesis 13, after Abram lets Lot choose land first, God tells Abram to look in every direction, since all the land he can see will belong to his descendants, who will be as many as the dust of the earth. A careful reader notices when a passage restates something already said, because the second time usually adds a new detail — here, the size and shape of the promise grows clearer each time it returns. Watching for a repeated promise is one way to find what a passage cares about most.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What does the LORD tell Abram to do at the start of Genesis 12? (Gen 12:1)

✓ A) **Leave his country and go to a land God will show him.**

B) Build a tower to reach the sky.

C) Travel first to Egypt to escape a war.

D) Stay in Haran and wait for further instructions.

Why: Genesis 12 opens with the LORD telling Abram to leave his country for a land God will show him.

2. Why do Abram and Lot's herdsmen begin quarreling in Genesis 13? (Gen 13:6–7)

✓ A) **Their herds are too large for the land.**

B) Lot decides to move back to Haran.

C) Abram refuses to share his silver.

D) A famine has just begun in Canaan.

Why: Genesis 13 says the land could not support them both, since their possessions were so great.

3. Which land does Lot choose when Abram lets him pick first? (Gen 13:10–11)

A) The dry hill country of Canaan

B) The desert land south of Egypt

✓ C) **The well-watered plain near Sodom**

D) The coastal land by the sea

Why: Lot looks at the plain of the Jordan, sees that it is well-watered, and chooses it.

4. What does Abram do once he hears that Lot has been carried off? (Gen 14:14)

A) He asks the king of Sodom to send an army instead.

B) He waits in Canaan for Lot to return on his own.

✓ C) **He arms the trained men of his household and pursues.**

D) He travels to Egypt to ask Pharaoh for help.

Why: Genesis 14 says Abram hears that Lot has been taken captive and leads his own trained men to pursue.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 12–14. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 12–14)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) The LORD calls Abram to leave Haran for Canaan. 2) A famine sends Abram's family to Egypt for a time. 3) Abram lets Lot choose land first, and Lot picks the plain near Sodom. 4) Eastern kings defeat the kings of the plain and carry off Lot. 5) Abram rescues Lot, and Melchizedek blesses Abram.

6. God repeats his promise of land and descendants to Abram after Lot chooses to live near Sodom. (Gen 13:14–17)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. Melchizedek is described only as a king, with no mention of any role in worship. (Gen 14:18)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · Same Story, Different Choices *[Literary Craft · Contrast]*

Literary Craft · Contrast Genesis 13 places two choices side by side. The land cannot support both Abram's and Lot's herds, so Abram offers Lot the first pick. Lot looks at the land and chooses the well-watered plain for himself. Abram, who could have taken the better land since he is the elder, instead lets Lot go first and settles for what remains. Writers often place two characters' choices next to each other on purpose, so a reader can compare them without being told directly what to think. This is called contrast — showing two things side by side so the difference between them stands out on its own.

Term	What it means
Contrast	Placing two things side by side so a reader can see how they differ. Abram lets Lot choose land first; Lot picks the better-watered plain for himself, a contrast in what each man chooses.
Setting	The time and place of a story. Genesis 12–13 moves Abram's setting from Haran to Canaan to Egypt and back to Canaan, tracing his journey through changing places.
Repetition	A word or idea repeated on purpose. God repeats his promise of land and descendants to Abram more than once across Genesis 12–13, keeping the promise in view.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is contrast? (Gen 13)

- A) Repeating one word many times in a row
- ✓ B) Showing two things to reveal a difference
- C) Describing only one character at length
- D) Listing events in the order they happened

Why: Contrast places two things side by side so a reader can see how they differ.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 13)

Word choices: *contrast · setting · repetition · famine*

Placing Abram's and Lot's choices side by side is an example of contrast.

3. How does Genesis 12–13 use setting? (Gen 12–13)

- A) It stays fixed in Haran for both chapters.
- B) It never names any specific location at all.
- C) It only describes Egypt in detail.

✓ **D) It traces Abram's journey through changing places.**

Why: The passage's setting moves from Haran to Canaan to Egypt and back to Canaan, tracing Abram's journey.

4. Abram lets Lot choose land first even though Abram could have chosen for himself. (Gen 13:9)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

5. A repeated promise in a passage is always a copying mistake by the writer. (Gen 12–13)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

6. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 12–13)

Word choices: *setting · contrast · repetition · tithe*

The time and place of a story is called its **setting**.

7. What does noticing contrast between Abram and Lot help a reader do? (Gen 13)

- A) Prove which man was taller in life
- B) Replace the account with a new one
- C) Decide the exact date it happened

✓ **D) See what each man's choice reveals**

Why: Contrast lets a reader see what each man's choice reveals about him, without the passage stating it directly.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · Life on the Move in the Ancient Near East *[Archaeology · Daily Life]*

Archaeology · Daily Life Families like Abram's, moving between cities with herds of sheep and goats, were part of a real, well-documented way of life. Thousands of clay tablets recovered from the ancient city of Mari, written mostly in Akkadian, record letters between kings and local officials about herding groups moving with their flocks between settled cities. These groups kept close ties to city life — trading, making agreements, and sometimes settling down — while also living seasonally in tents beyond the city walls. The Mari letters show this back-and-forth movement was normal across the region in roughly Abram's era, not a rare or unusual lifestyle.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 12–14 shows Abram responding to God's call and acting generously and courageously along the way.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

✓ **Abram leaves Haran for Canaan when the LORD calls him.**

- ☐ A famine in Canaan sends Abram's family down to Egypt.
- ☐ Melchizedek brings out bread and wine and blesses Abram.

✓ **Abram lets Lot choose land first instead of choosing for himself.**

- ☐ Sarai is taken into Pharaoh's household while the family is in Egypt.

✓ **Abram arms his trained men and pursues the kings who captured Lot.**

- ☐ Lot chooses to live near the city of Sodom.

Why: The three selected details show Abram responding to God's call, choosing generosity over advantage, and acting with courage to rescue Lot. The other statements are true but describe a different part of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 12–14, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 12–14] Abram is seventy-five years old when he leaves Haran.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Melchizedek is named as having ruled for forty years.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 12–14] Abram builds an altar after arriving in Canaan.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Lot's flocks are described as larger than Abram's.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 12–14] Melchizedek brings out bread and wine.**

✓ **[Not stated there] The eastern kings are named as the ancestors of Babylon.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 12–14 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Sarai → **E) Taken into Pharaoh's household while in Egypt**

Lot → **B) Chooses the well-watered plain near Sodom**

Abram's trained men → **A) Armed to pursue and rescue Lot**

Melchizedek → **C) King of Salem and priest of God Most High**

The king of Sodom → **D) Offers Abram the goods, but Abram refuses**

Why: Each match connects a person or group with what Genesis 12–14 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Abram lets Lot choose land first instead of taking the better land for himself because **[C]**, which shows that **[F]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. the LORD commands him to give Lot first choice

B. Lot is older than Abram and has seniority

C. he wants to avoid ongoing conflict between their herdsmen

D. he no longer trusts God's promise

E. he regrets bringing Lot on the journey

F. he values peace more than the better land

Why: Genesis 13 gives the quarreling herdsmen as the reason for separating, and Abram's offer to let Lot choose first shows he values peace over claiming the best land.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

Herders on the Move

Thousands of clay tablets were recovered from the ancient city of Mari, on the Euphrates River. Most of them are letters written in the Akkadian language between roughly 1900 and 1800 BC. Many were written by or to officials tracking groups who moved seasonally with herds of sheep and goats between settled cities. These herding groups were not cut off from city life. The tablets show them trading, making agreements, and staying in close contact with kings and local officials, even while living in tents for part of the year. A single ruler could govern both city dwellers and herding groups at once, since the two ways of life overlapped constantly rather than staying separate. Scribes recorded these letters in cuneiform, pressing wedge-shaped signs into soft clay before it dried hard in the sun or an oven. That hardened clay is exactly why so many tablets survived for thousands of years in the region's dry soil. The Mari letters cannot describe every family who moved this way across the ancient Near East, but they do show that this kind of seasonal, herd-based travel between cities was a normal, well-documented part of life in the region.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

✓ **A) Evidence for seasonal herding near cities**

- B) Instructions for reading cuneiform writing
- C) A full biography of one Mesopotamian king
- D) A description of one clay tablet's shape

Why: The passage uses the Mari letters as evidence for seasonal herding life connected to city life.

2. Where were the Mari tablets found? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) A cave near the Dead Sea
- B) A tomb somewhere in Egypt
- C) A mountain in Anatolia

✓ **D) A city on the Euphrates River**

Why: The passage names Mari, on the Euphrates River, as the source of the tablets.

3. In this passage, “govern” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

✓ **A) to rule over**

- B) to travel through quickly
- C) to write down in a letter
- D) to sell or trade goods

Why: A ruler who could govern both groups had authority over and managed both of them.

4. What evidence shows herding groups stayed in contact with city officials? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) A single tablet with no letters at all
- ✓ B) Letters about trade and agreements
- C) A drawing of a herding camp
- D) A list of cities with no other details

Why: The passage points to letters recording trade and agreements as its evidence.

5. Why might a ruler have governed both city dwellers and herding groups at once? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

- A) Because herding groups never entered any city
- ✓ B) Because the two ways of life overlapped constantly
- C) Because city dwellers never owned any herds
- D) Because only city dwellers paid any taxes

Why: The passage says the two ways of life overlapped constantly rather than staying separate.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

- A) A single scholar's personal guess
- B) A modern survey of living herders
- ✓ C) Clay tablets recovered from an ancient city
- D) A legend with no physical evidence at all

Why: The passage points to actual surviving clay tablets from Mari as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what can and cannot the Mari letters show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

- A) They prove exactly how every ancient family lived
- ✓ B) They show a documented pattern, not every story
- C) They cannot show anything reliable about the region
- D) They show the exact date every family traveled

Why: The passage is careful: the letters show a documented pattern of life, without claiming to describe every family who lived it.

Part 6

God's Covenant with Abraham · Genesis 15–17

Overview

What Happens in Part 6

Genesis 15 begins with the LORD telling Abram not to be afraid, promising that Abram's own offspring — not a servant — will be his heir, and that his descendants will be as many as the stars. Abram believes the LORD, and it is counted to him as righteousness. The LORD then confirms this promise with a formal covenant ceremony: Abram cuts several animals in half, and after dark, a smoking fire pot and a blazing torch pass between the pieces. The LORD also tells Abram that his descendants will live as sojourners in a foreign land for four hundred years before coming out with great possessions, and describes the borders of the promised land. Genesis 16 tells how Sarai, still childless, gives her servant Hagar to Abram, and Hagar bears a son named Ishmael. In Genesis 17, when Abram is ninety-nine, God appears again, establishes his covenant, changes Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah, and promises that Sarah herself will bear a son within the year. God gives circumcision as the sign of this covenant for every male in Abraham's household, and Abraham circumcises himself and every male of his household that same day.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for promises, waiting, and belonging: righteous, offspring, heir, sojourner, covenant, establish, circumcision
Bible Study	How to notice when a character receives a new name, and what that name change marks in the story
Scripture Discovery	Real ancient covenant ceremonies and the archaeological evidence for circumcision in the ancient world

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
15	A Promise Confirmed — The LORD promises Abram an heir of his own and descendants as many as the stars. Abram believes the LORD, and it is counted to him as righteousness. The LORD then confirms the covenant through a formal ceremony with animals cut in half, and describes four hundred years of sojourning ahead.

16

Hagar and Ishmael — Sarai, still childless, gives her servant Hagar to Abram, and Hagar bears a son named Ishmael. An angel of the LORD meets Hagar in the wilderness and tells her to return, promising to greatly multiply her offspring as well.

17

New Names, a New Sign — God establishes his covenant with Abram, renaming him Abraham and Sarai Sarah, and promises Sarah will bear a son within the year. God gives circumcision as the sign of the covenant, and Abraham circumcises himself and every male of his household that day.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · Cutting a Covenant, For Real [Word Study · Ancient Ceremony]

Word Study · Ancient Ceremony Genesis 15 describes Abram cutting animals in half so a smoking fire pot and torch can pass between the pieces. Sealing a promise by killing an animal is documented across the ancient Near East. A letter from Mari, about 1770 BC, reports a donkey foal killed to make peace between two rulers, and a text from Alalakh records a king cutting a sheep's neck as he swore an oath. Centuries later, a treaty carved in stone at Sefire spells out what the cutting meant: the animal's fate showed what should happen to whoever broke the agreement. Hebrew uses the same verb for cutting an animal and for making an agreement, which is why scholars call this pattern covenant -cutting — a documented ancient practice.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
righteous	<i>adj. · Gen 15:6</i>	Right or good, especially in God's sight	<i>"Abram believes the LORD, and the LORD counts him as righteous."</i>
offspring	<i>n. · Gen 15:5</i>	A person's children and their children's children	<i>"The LORD tells Abram his offspring will be as many as the stars."</i>
heir	<i>n. · Gen 15:4</i>	The person who will receive what belongs to someone else	<i>"The LORD promises Abram that his own son will be his heir."</i>
sojourner	<i>n. · Gen 15:13</i>	Someone living for a time in a land that is not their own	<i>"Abram's descendants will be sojourners in a foreign land."</i>
covenant	<i>n. · Gen 17:2</i>	A solemn promise or agreement, especially one made with God	<i>"God establishes his covenant with Abraham and his descendants."</i>
establish	<i>v. · Gen 17:7</i>	To set up or make something lasting	<i>"God will establish his covenant as everlasting, for the generations to come."</i>
circumcision	<i>n. · Gen 17:11</i>	A mark made in the body, given as the sign of God's covenant with Abraham's household	<i>"God gives circumcision as the sign of the covenant."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. Someone who is right or good in God's sight is called _____. (Gen 15:6)

A) wealthy

B) ancient

✓ C) righteous

D) distant

Why: Because Abram believes the LORD, the LORD counts him as righteous.

2. In Genesis 15, 'offspring' means a person's children and their children's children. (Gen 15:5)

✓ Answer: TRUE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 15:4)

Word choices: *heir · sojourner · covenant · offspring*

The LORD promises Abram that his own son, not a servant, will be his heir.

4. Someone living for a time in a land that is not their own is called a _____. (Gen 15:13)

A) ruler

B) priest

✓ C) sojourner

D) elder

Why: The LORD tells Abram his descendants will be sojourners in a foreign land.

5. In Genesis 17, God gives circumcision as the sign of his covenant with Abraham. (Gen 17:11)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 17, God promises to establish his covenant only for Abraham's own lifetime. (Gen 17:7)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 17:2)

Word choices: *covenant · heir · sojourner · righteous*

God tells Abram he will establish his covenant between them and their descendants.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · Reading a Promise Made Twice [Close Reading · Comparing Two Scenes]

Close Reading · Comparing Two Scenes Genesis 15 and Genesis 17 both record God making a covenant with Abram, but the two chapters are not identical. In Genesis 15, God confirms the promise with a ceremony involving animals cut in half. In Genesis 17, God adds something new: a sign carried in the body of every male in Abraham's household, and new names for Abram and Sarai. A careful reader lines up two similar passages side by side and asks what is the same in both and what is genuinely new the second time. Here, the promise of descendants stays the same across both chapters, but Genesis 17 adds the covenant sign and the renaming, showing the promise growing more specific.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What does the LORD promise Abram at the start of Genesis 15? (Gen 15:1–5)

- A) That he will return to Ur within the year.
- B) That Lot will inherit everything Abram owns.
- C) That his flocks will double before the next harvest.

✓ **D) That his own offspring, not a servant, will be his heir.**

Why: Genesis 15 opens with the LORD promising that Abram's own offspring will be his heir.

2. What happens after Abram cuts the animals in half? (Gen 15:17)

- A) Abram falls asleep and does not wake until morning.
- B) Lot arrives and joins the ceremony.

✓ **C) A smoking fire pot and torch pass between the pieces.**

- D) The animals are given to the poor of the land.

Why: After dark, a smoking fire pot and a blazing torch pass between the pieces.

3. Who does Sarai give to Abram in Genesis 16? (Gen 16:1–3)

- A) Her sister
- B) A servant named Eliezer
- C) A distant cousin

✓ **D) Her servant Hagar**

Why: Sarai gives her servant Hagar to Abram, since Sarai herself remains childless.

4. What does God do to Abram's and Sarai's names in Genesis 17? (Gen 17:5–15)

- A) He removes their names from the record entirely.

✓ **B) He changes them to Abraham and Sarah.**

- C) He gives them titles instead of new names.
- D) He renames only Abram, leaving Sarai unchanged.

Why: Genesis 17 records God changing Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 15–17. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 15–17)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) The LORD promises Abram that his own offspring will be his heir. 2) A smoking fire pot and torch pass between the cut animals. 3) Sarai gives Hagar to Abram, and Hagar bears Ishmael. 4) God changes Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's to Sarah. 5) Abraham circumcises himself and every male of his household.

6. The LORD tells Abram his descendants will live in a land not their own, and speaks of four hundred years. (Gen 15:13)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. In Genesis 17, God promises that Sarah herself, not only Hagar, will bear a son. (Gen 17:16–19)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · A New Name for a New Chapter *[Literary Craft · Significant Naming]*

Literary Craft · Significant Naming In Genesis 17, God changes Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah. Names in Genesis are rarely just labels; a changed name usually marks a real turning point in a character's story. The text itself explains part of the change: Abraham's new name connects to being father of many nations, matching the promise God has just made. A writer who marks a turning point with a new name is using what's sometimes called significant naming — the name itself carries meaning a reader is meant to notice, not just a new sound to get used to. Watching for a name change is one clear signal that a story wants you to see a character differently going forward.

Term	What it means
Significant naming	When a name change marks a real turning point in a character's story and carries meaning tied to it. Abram becomes Abraham as part of God's covenant promise.
Ceremony	A formal, repeated set of actions that marks something binding or important. The animals cut in half in Genesis 15 form a ceremony that confirms the covenant.
Parallel scene	Two passages that describe a similar event so a reader can compare what stays the same and what is new. Genesis 15 and 17 both record God making a covenant with Abram.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is significant naming? (Gen 17)

A) Any name a character happens to have

✓ B) A name change marking a real turning point

C) A list of every name in a chapter

D) A name used only once in a passage

Why: Significant naming is when a name change marks a real turning point and carries meaning.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 17)

Word choices: *naming · ceremony · parallel · covenant*

A name change that marks a turning point is called significant **naming**.

3. What makes the animals-cut-in-half scene in Genesis 15 a ceremony? (Gen 15:9–17)

- A) It happens only once and is never repeated in any ancient text.
- B) It involves no formal actions at all, only spoken words.
- C) It is described as an ordinary, everyday household task.

✓ **D) It is a formal, repeated pattern that confirms something binding.**

Why: A ceremony is a formal pattern of actions that confirms something binding, which matches this scene.

4. Genesis 15 and Genesis 17 both record a covenant scene between God and Abram. (Gen 15–17)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

5. A parallel scene is useful because it shows a reader two completely unrelated stories. (Gen 15–17)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

6. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 15–17)

Word choices: *parallel · naming · ceremony · sojourner*

Two passages describing a similar event are called a **parallel** scene.

7. What does comparing Genesis 15 and Genesis 17 as a parallel scene help a reader notice? (Gen 15–17)

✓ **A) What stays the same and what becomes more specific**

- B) That the two chapters completely contradict each other
- C) That only one of the two chapters is worth reading
- D) That no promise is ever repeated in the Bible

Why: Comparing the two chapters helps a reader see the promise of descendants stay constant while new details are added.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · A Sign Carved in Stone, Long Before Genesis 17 *[Archaeology · Material Evidence]*

Archaeology · Material Evidence Circumcision itself was not invented in Genesis 17. The oldest surviving picture of it is a stone carving — a relief — at Saqqara, Egypt, from roughly 2350 BC, centuries before the events of Genesis 17. It shows the rite being carried out on young men by an attendant holding a blade, and Egyptian writings connect it with becoming a man of standing. Circumcision is documented among more than one ancient people; Egypt simply gives us the earliest surviving picture of it, not its only ancient practice. Genesis 17 does not claim the physical act was new to the world; the text gives it new meaning, as the sign of a specific covenant between God and Abraham's household.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 15–17 shows God confirming his promise to Abram through repeated, formal covenant scenes.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

✓ **The LORD promises Abram that his own offspring will be his heir.**

- ☐ Sarai gives her servant Hagar to Abram.
- ☐ Abram is ninety-nine years old when God appears again.
- ☐ Abram is eighty-six years old when Ishmael is born.

✓ **A smoking fire pot and torch pass between the cut animals.**

✓ **God gives circumcision as the sign of the covenant.**

- ☐ Hagar bears a son, and he is named Ishmael.

Why: The three selected details show God's promise being confirmed through Abram's heir, the covenant ceremony, and the covenant sign. The other statements are true but describe a different part of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 15–17, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Not stated there] Sarai is described as younger than Hagar.**

✓ **[Not stated there] The covenant ceremony takes place at noon.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 15–17] Abram believes the LORD, and it is counted to him as righteous.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Ishmael is described as older than Isaac at the time of Genesis 17.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 15–17] God changes Abram's name to Abraham.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 15–17] Abraham circumcises every male of his household the same day.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 15–17 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Abram → **C) Believes the LORD, and it is counted to him as righteous**

Hagar → **B) Bears a son named Ishmael**

Abraham → **A) Abram's new name, given in Genesis 17**

Sarah → **E) Sarai's new name, given in Genesis 17**

Circumcision → **D) Given as the sign of the covenant**

Why: Each match connects a person or term with what Genesis 15–17 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis 15's covenant ceremony, with animals cut in half, would have looked familiar to people living in Abram's world because **[A]**, which shows that **[D]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. ancient Near Eastern promises were often sealed by cutting an animal

B. no one in the ancient world ever made formal promises

C. Abram invented the practice on the spot

D. Genesis 15 reflects real customs of its own time and place

E. Genesis 15 was written long after these customs disappeared

F. ancient peoples never sealed any agreement formally

Why: Documents from Mari, Alalakh, and Sefire show that sealing a serious promise by cutting an animal was a documented practice across the ancient Near East, so Genesis 15's ceremony reflects the world it describes.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

Sealed with a Ceremony

Long before written law codes, agreements in the ancient Near East were often sealed by killing an animal rather than signing a document. A letter from the ancient city of Mari, written about 1770 BC, describes a donkey foal killed to make peace between two rulers. Another text, from the city of Alalakh, records a king cutting a sheep's neck as he swore an oath. Centuries later, a treaty carved in stone at the site of Sefire spells out exactly what the killing meant: the animal's fate showed what should happen to whoever broke the agreement. Ancient Hebrew uses the same verb for cutting an animal and for making a covenant, a small detail that hints at how closely the two ideas were linked in that world. Scholars studying these documents note that sealing a promise this way was not limited to any one kingdom; versions of it turn up at sites across the region and across many centuries. A single set of documents cannot prove exactly how every ancient promise was sealed, but it does show that a real, physical act, not just spoken words, stood behind a serious agreement in the ancient Near East.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) A full list of every Hittite king
- B) Instructions for writing a modern contract
- C) A description of one clay figurine's shape

✓ D) Evidence for a real ancient covenant ceremony

Why: The passage uses treaty texts as evidence for a real ancient covenant ceremony.

2. Which ancient sites does the passage name as sources of evidence? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

✓ A) Mari, Alalakh, and Sefire

- B) Athens, Sparta, and Rome
- C) Nineveh, Babylon, and Ur
- D) Memphis, Thebes, and Giza

Why: The passage names Mari, Alalakh, and Sefire as the sites its evidence comes from.

3. In this passage, “closely” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) in a distant or separate way

✓ B) in a near or tightly connected way

- C) in a loud or public way
- D) in a hidden or secret way

Why: The verb overlap shows the two ideas were tightly connected, or closely linked.

4. What detail from Hebrew does the passage use as a clue? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Hebrew has no word at all for agreement
- B) Hebrew borrowed the word covenant from Egyptian
- ✓ C) One verb covers both cutting and covenant-making
- D) Hebrew uses ten different words for cutting

Why: The passage points to Hebrew using the same verb for cutting an animal and for making a covenant.

5. Why might a ceremony have felt more binding than spoken words alone? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

- A) Spoken words were considered meaningless everywhere
- ✓ B) A physical ritual acted out a real warning to both sides
- C) Ceremonies were always shorter than any conversation
- D) Only kings were legally permitted to speak aloud

Why: The passage says the ceremony acted out a warning about what should happen to a party who broke the agreement.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

- ✓ A) Surviving treaty texts from named ancient sites
- B) A single scholar's personal opinion only
- C) A modern retelling with no ancient sources
- D) A legend with no physical evidence at all

Why: The passage points to actual surviving ancient documents from Mari, Alalakh, and Sefire as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what can and cannot these treaty texts show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

- ✓ A) They show a real pattern, not every ancient promise
- B) They prove exactly how every promise was ever sealed
- C) They cannot show anything reliable about the region
- D) They show the exact date every treaty was signed

Why: The passage is careful: the texts show a real, documented pattern without claiming to cover every ancient promise.

Part 7

Visitors, Sodom & the Cities of the Plain · Genesis 18–20

Overview

What Happens in Part 7

Genesis 18 opens with three visitors arriving at Abraham's tent near Mamre. Abraham runs to greet them, offers water to wash their feet, and has a meal quickly prepared. The visitors tell Abraham that Sarah will have a son within the year; Sarah, listening at the tent, laughs to herself since she is old. The visitors then set out toward Sodom, and the LORD tells Abraham that the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great. Abraham bargains with the LORD, asking whether the city would be spared if fifty righteous people were found there, then talking the number down step by step to ten. Genesis 19 follows two of the visitors to Sodom, where Lot meets them at the city gate and urges them to stay at his house. That evening, the men of the city surround Lot's house and threaten the visitors; the visitors strike the men with blindness and warn Lot to gather his family and leave, since the city is about to be destroyed. Lot, his wife, and his two daughters are led out of the city; they are told not to look back, but Lot's wife looks back and becomes a pillar of salt. The city is destroyed, and Lot's family reaches safety. Genesis 20 tells how Abraham travels to Gerar and again says Sarah is his sister; King Abimelech takes Sarah, but God warns him in a dream before any harm is done, and Abimelech returns Sarah to Abraham along with gifts.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for kindness, warning, and speaking for God: favor, outcry, judge, escape, remembered, prophet, healed
Bible Study	How to follow a back-and-forth bargaining pattern, and how a stated warning connects to what happens next
Scripture Discovery	Real ancient hospitality customs and the natural salt-pillar formations of the Dead Sea region

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
18	Three Visitors and a Bargain — Three visitors come to Abraham at Mamre; he welcomes them warmly, and they tell him Sarah will have a son within the year. The LORD tells Abraham of the outcry against Sodom, and Abraham bargains the number of righteous people needed to spare

	the city down from fifty to ten.
19	Rescue from Sodom — Two visitors reach Sodom, where Lot welcomes them. The men of the city threaten the visitors, who strike them with blindness and warn Lot to flee. Lot's family is led out of the city; Lot's wife looks back and becomes a pillar of salt, and the city is destroyed as the family reaches safety.
20	Abraham and Abimelech — In Gerar, Abraham again says Sarah is his sister. King Abimelech takes Sarah, but God warns him in a dream before any harm is done. Abimelech returns Sarah to Abraham along with gifts.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · A Sacred Duty: Welcoming a Stranger [Word Study · Ancient Custom]

Word Study · Ancient Custom Abraham's welcome of the three visitors — running to greet them, washing their feet, preparing a meal at once — matches a real and long-lasting custom of the region. Hospitality toward travelers has long been treated as a serious duty across Near Eastern desert cultures, since survival in a harsh landscape often depended on strangers sharing food, water, and shelter along the way. A host greeting a guest, offering water, and preparing a shared meal is described across many centuries of writing about the region, not invented for this one passage. Reading Genesis 18 alongside this wider custom helps explain why Abraham's fast, generous welcome would have struck an ancient reader as exactly right.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
favor	n. · Gen 18:3	Kindness or good will shown toward someone	<i>“Abraham asks the visitors to stay if he has found favor in their sight.”</i>
outcry	n. · Gen 18:20	A loud cry, especially one protesting something wrong	<i>“The LORD tells Abraham the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great.”</i>
judge	n. · Gen 18:25	Someone who decides what is right and fair	<i>“Abraham asks whether the Judge of all the earth will do what is just.”</i>
escape	v. · Gen 19:17	To get away from danger	<i>“The visitors tell Lot to escape to the hills and not look back.”</i>
remembered	v. · Gen 19:29	Kept in mind and acted on behalf of	<i>“God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the city to safety.”</i>
prophet	n. · Gen 20:7	Someone who speaks for God	<i>“Abimelech is told that Abraham is a prophet who will pray for him.”</i>
healed	v. · Gen 20:17	Made well again	<i>“Abraham prays, and God healed Abimelech and his household.”</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. Kindness or good will shown toward someone is called _____. (Gen 18:3)

- A) outcry
- B) escape
- C) judgment

✓ D) favor

Why: Abraham asks the visitors to stay if he has found favor in their sight.

2. In Genesis 18, an 'outcry' is a quiet whisper heard by only one person. (Gen 18:20)

✓ Answer: FALSE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 18:25)

Word choices: judge · prophet · favor · escape

Abraham asks whether the judge of all the earth will do what is just.

4. To get away from danger is to _____. (Gen 19:17)

- A) remember
- B) welcome

✓ C) escape

- D) bargain

Why: The visitors tell Lot to escape to the hills and not look back.

5. In Genesis 19, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the city to safety. (Gen 19:29)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 20, Abimelech is told that Abraham is a prophet who will pray for him. (Gen 20:7)

✓ Answer: TRUE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 20:17)

Word choices: healed · judge · outcry · remembered

Abraham prays, and God healed Abimelech and his household.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · A Bargain, One Step at a Time *[Close Reading · A Repeated Pattern with Small Changes]*

Close Reading · A Repeated Pattern with Small Changes In Genesis 18, Abraham asks the LORD the same basic question six times in a row: would the city be spared if a certain number of righteous people were found there? Each time, only one detail changes — the number, stepping down from fifty to forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, and finally ten. A careful reader tracks a pattern like this by asking what stays exactly the same and what single detail moves each time, since that one changing detail is usually the whole point. Here, watching the number fall shows a reader exactly how far the bargaining goes before it stops.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What does Abraham do as soon as he sees the three visitors? (Gen 18:2–7)

A) He hides inside his tent until they leave.

✓ B) He runs to greet them and prepares a meal.

C) He sends a servant to turn them away.

D) He asks them to wait outside the camp.

Why: Genesis 18 says Abraham runs to greet the visitors and quickly has a meal prepared.

2. What number does Abraham's bargaining with the LORD end on? (Gen 18:32)

A) Fifty righteous people

B) One righteous person

C) One hundred righteous people

✓ D) Ten righteous people

Why: Abraham's bargaining steps down from fifty and ends at ten righteous people.

3. What do the visitors do to the men who surround Lot's house? (Gen 19:11)

✓ A) They strike the men with blindness.

B) They invite the men inside for a meal.

C) They argue with the men until sunrise.

D) They leave the house through a side door.

Why: The visitors strike the threatening men with blindness.

4. What happens to Lot's wife as the family flees? (Gen 19:26)

A) She stops to gather her belongings first.

B) She returns to warn her neighbors.

C) She reaches safety ahead of the rest of the family.

✓ D) She looks back and becomes a pillar of salt.

Why: Genesis 19 says Lot's wife looks back and becomes a pillar of salt.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 18–20. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 18–20)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Three visitors arrive at Abraham's tent near Mamre. 2) Abraham bargains the number of righteous people down to ten. 3) The visitors strike the men surrounding Lot's house with blindness. 4) Lot's wife looks back and becomes a pillar of salt. 5) God warns Abimelech in a dream not to harm Sarah.

6. The visitors tell Abraham that Sarah will have a son within the year. (Gen 18:10)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. In Genesis 20, Abimelech already knows Sarah is Abraham's wife before he takes her. (Gen 20:3–5)

✓ **Answer: FALSE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · A Number That Falls, On Purpose [Literary Craft · Stepped Bargaining]

Literary Craft · Stepped Bargaining Abraham's exchange with the LORD in Genesis 18 is built from one repeated question asked six times, with a single number changing each time. A writer who repeats a question this way, changing only one small detail with each repeat, is using a pattern that lets a reader feel the tension build without spelling it out directly. Every step down — fifty, forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, ten — asks the same underlying question again, so the small change carries all the weight. This stepped repeating structure is a craft choice, not an accident, and it lets a reader watch Abraham's request grow more specific right up to the final number.

Term	What it means
Stepped repetition	A question or action repeated several times with one small detail changing each time. Abraham's bargaining in Genesis 18 repeats the same question with the number falling each time.
Warning	A stated caution given before a consequence follows. The visitors warn Lot's family not to look back before Lot's wife looks back.
Consequence	A result the passage directly connects to an action that came before it. Genesis 19 directly connects Lot's wife looking back with her becoming a pillar of salt.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is stepped repetition? (Gen 18)

- A) A question asked only once in a passage
- ✓ B) A question repeated with one changing detail
- C) A list of names with no action at all
- D) An event described in a single sentence

Why: Stepped repetition repeats a question several times with one small detail changing each time.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 18)

Word choices: *repetition · warning · consequence · favor*

A question repeated with a falling number each time is called stepped **repetition**.

3. What is a warning, as a literary device? (Gen 19)

- A) A description with no connection to later events
- B) A question with no clear answer given

✓ C) A stated caution given before a consequence follows

- D) A list of characters in a single scene

Why: A warning is a stated caution given before a consequence follows it in the story.

4. Genesis 19 directly connects Lot's wife looking back with her becoming a pillar of salt. (Gen 19:26)

✓ Answer: TRUE

5. A consequence in a passage is only valid if the passage never states any connection at all. (Gen 19)

✓ Answer: FALSE

6. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 19)

Word choices: *consequence · repetition · warning · outcry*

A caution given before a result follows is called a warning.

7. What does noticing the stepped repetition in Genesis 18 help a reader see? (Gen 18)

✓ A) How far Abraham's request moves before it stops

- B) That Abraham never asks more than one question
- C) That the LORD never answers any of the questions
- D) That the passage repeats itself by accident

Why: Watching the number fall six times shows a reader exactly how far Abraham's bargaining goes before it stops.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · A Region That Really Grows Pillars of Salt *[Geology · Material Evidence]*

Geology · Material Evidence The region near the Dead Sea has a real geological feature worth knowing. Mount Sodom, a ridge along the sea's southwestern shore, is roughly eighty percent solid salt, pushed up from deep underground over hundreds of thousands of years. Rain slowly dissolves tunnels and caves through the salt, and when a cave's wall collapses, it can leave behind a freestanding salt column. One such column near the base of the ridge is nicknamed “Lot's Wife” by visitors today. This does not prove which exact spot Genesis 19 describes, but it shows that this specific region really does form tall salt pillars through ordinary, observable erosion.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 18–20 shows Abraham acting as a generous host and a bold advocate for others.” — choose the three details that best support it. *(Claim & Evidence)*

✓ **Abraham prays for Abimelech's household, and God heals them.**

☐ The men of Sodom surround Lot's house and threaten the visitors.

☐ Lot's wife looks back and becomes a pillar of salt.

✓ **Abraham bargains with the LORD, asking him to spare Sodom for the sake of the righteous.**

✓ **Abraham runs to greet the three visitors and prepares a meal for them.**

☐ Sarah laughs to herself when she hears she will have a son.

☐ Abimelech returns Sarah to Abraham along with gifts.

Why: The three selected details show Abraham welcoming strangers, pleading on behalf of others, and praying for Abimelech's healing. The other statements are true but describe a different part of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 18–20, or Not stated there? *(Sort into two)*

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 18–20] Abraham offers the visitors water to wash their feet.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 18–20] Abraham's bargaining ends at ten righteous people.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Lot is described as the mayor of Sodom.**

✓ **[Not stated there] The visitors are named individually by Abraham.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 18–20] God warns Abimelech about Sarah in a dream.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Abimelech is punished even after returning Sarah.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 18–20 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Abraham → **A) Bargains with the LORD over the fate of Sodom**

Sarah → **B) Laughs to herself at the news she will have a son**

Lot → **E) Welcomes the two visitors at the gate of Sodom**

Lot's wife → **C) Looks back and becomes a pillar of salt**

Abimelech → **D) Warned in a dream not to harm Sarah**

Why: Each match connects a person with what Genesis 18–20 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

The visitors strike the men surrounding Lot's house with blindness instead of arguing with them because **[C]**, which shows that **[E]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. the visitors are forbidden to speak to anyone in Sodom

B. Lot asks the visitors to punish his neighbors

C. the men refuse to stop threatening the household

D. the visitors have no real power over the situation

E. the visitors act to protect Lot's household from immediate danger

F. the men of the city welcome the visitors warmly

Why: Genesis 19 states that the men threaten the household right up until the visitors act, so the blinding directly protects Lot's family from the danger already described.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

A Duty Older Than the Story

Across many centuries of writing from the ancient Near East, one custom appears again and again: welcoming a traveler was treated as a serious duty, not a casual choice. In a hot, dry landscape with long distances between settlements, a traveler without food, water, or shelter for the night could be in real danger. A host was expected to offer water for washing, a place to rest, and a shared meal. Often this welcome came before the host even asked a guest's name or business. Later writers described this duty using the phrase "sacred hospitality," since breaching it was treated as a serious wrong, not a minor rudeness. This custom was not limited to any single family or city. Travelers' accounts from across the wider region describe a similar pattern of welcome for centuries, long after any one story was first written down. Some writers even record hosts offering their best food to a stranger while eating more simply themselves. A single account cannot describe every host in every era, but the pattern itself is documented widely enough that a sudden, generous welcome to strangers would not have surprised an ancient reader at all.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

- A) A full history of one ancient family
- ✓ B) Evidence for a widespread hospitality custom
- C) Instructions for planning a modern trip
- D) A description of a single traveler's map

Why: The passage uses centuries of writing as evidence for a widespread ancient hospitality custom.

2. What could happen to a traveler without help along the way? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Nothing at all, since travel was always safe
- B) Only mild inconvenience, never real danger
- ✓ C) Real danger, due to heat and long distances
- D) Arrest by local officials in every city

Why: The passage says a traveler without food, water, or shelter could be in real danger.

3. In this passage, "breaching" most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) celebrating in public
- B) writing down carefully
- C) traveling far away from
- ✓ D) failing to keep or honor

Why: Breaching hospitality means failing to keep or honor the expected duty.

4. What phrase does the passage say later writers used for this custom? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

✓ **A) Sacred hospitality**

B) Royal duty

C) Common courtesy

D) Traveler's law

Why: The passage names the phrase "sacred hospitality" used by later writers.

5. Why might a host have offered water and rest before asking a guest's name? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

✓ **A) The duty to help came before any other question**

B) Guests were legally required to stay silent

C) Names were considered too private to share

D) Hosts were forbidden from speaking first

Why: The passage says a host was expected to help before even asking a guest's name or business.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

A) A single scholar's personal opinion

✓ **B) Travelers' accounts recorded across the region**

C) A modern survey with no historical sources

D) A legend with no documented evidence

Why: The passage points to travelers' accounts recorded across the region as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what can and cannot this evidence show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

A) It proves exactly how every host behaved always

B) It cannot show anything reliable about the region

✓ **C) It shows a wide pattern, not every single host's story**

D) It shows the exact date the custom began

Why: The passage is careful: the evidence shows a documented, wide pattern without claiming to describe every host.

Part 8

Isaac: The Promised Son · Genesis 21–23

Overview

What Happens in Part 8

Genesis 21 opens with Isaac's birth, exactly as God had promised, and Abraham circumcises him at eight days old. Sarah later asks Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael away; Abraham is distressed, but God tells him to listen to Sarah, promising to make a nation of Ishmael as well. In the wilderness, Hagar's water runs out, but God hears the boy crying and shows Hagar a well. Abraham and Abimelech then settle a dispute over a well at Beersheba and make a treaty there. Genesis 22 tells how God tests Abraham, telling him to offer Isaac as an offering on a mountain in the region of Moriah. Abraham obeys, and as he travels with Isaac, Isaac asks where the offering is; Abraham answers that God will provide it. At the mountain, Abraham builds an altar and binds Isaac, but the angel of the LORD stops him before he can go through with it, and Abraham finds a ram caught nearby to offer instead. Abraham names the place "The LORD Will Provide." Genesis 23 then describes Sarah's death at Kiriath-arba. Abraham mourns her and negotiates with Ephron the Hittite at the city gate, insisting on paying the full price for the cave of Machpelah rather than accepting it as a gift, and buries Sarah there.

What We Will Learn

Section	What you will practice
Word Study	Words for joy, trust, and loss: laughter, provide, obeyed, offering, mourn, purchase, tomb
Bible Study	How a spoken exchange between characters reveals what matters most, and how a place gets its name
Scripture Discovery	Real ancient wells and boundary treaties, and how land was legally bought at a city gate

Chapter Summary

Ch.	What happens
21	Isaac Is Born — Isaac is born to Sarah as promised, and Abraham circumcises him at eight days old. Hagar and Ishmael are sent away; God hears Ishmael crying in the wilderness and shows Hagar a well. Abraham and Abimelech settle a well dispute and make a treaty at Beersheba.

22

God Tests Abraham — God tells Abraham to offer Isaac on a mountain in Moriah. Abraham obeys and travels there with Isaac; at the last moment, the angel of the LORD stops him, and a ram is provided instead. Abraham names the place “The LORD Will Provide.”

23

Sarah's Death and Burial — Sarah dies at Kiriath-arba. Abraham mourns her and negotiates with Ephron the Hittite at the city gate, insisting on paying the full price for the cave of Machpelah, where he buries Sarah.

Word Study

Treasure Wisdom · Beersheba: A Well Worth a Treaty [Word Study · Archaeology]

Word Study · Archaeology Genesis 21 turns on a dispute over a well at Beersheba, and archaeologists have dug at that site. Tel Aviv University teams excavated Tel Be'er Sheva from 1969 to 1976, uncovering a walled town, a water system, and a deep well just outside the gate. Here is the honest part: everything they found dates to the Iron Age, hundreds of years after Abraham — no remains from Abraham's own time have turned up there, so the dig cannot show us Abraham's well. What it does show is real and useful: in the dry northern Negev, a town was built around getting to water, valuable enough to be worth fighting and bargaining over — exactly the kind of thing a treaty gets made about in a dry region.

Word	Part of Speech · Ref	Definition	Example
laughter	n. · Gen 21:6	The sound or act of laughing, especially from joy	<i>"Sarah says God has made laughter for her at Isaac's birth."</i>
provide	v. · Gen 22:8	To give what is needed	<i>"Abraham tells Isaac that God will provide the offering."</i>
obeyed	v. · Gen 22:18	Did what one was told to do	<i>"Abraham is blessed because he obeyed the LORD's voice."</i>
offering	n. · Gen 22:13	Something given up and presented to God	<i>"Abraham offers the ram as an offering instead of Isaac."</i>
mourn	v. · Gen 23:2	To grieve, especially over a death	<i>"Abraham comes to mourn Sarah and weep for her."</i>
purchase	n. · Gen 23:18	Something bought for an agreed price	<i>"The field and cave become Abraham's purchase from Ephron."</i>
tomb	n. · Gen 23:6	A place where a dead body is buried	<i>"The Hittites offer Abraham the choicest of their tombs for Sarah."</i>

Word Study Questions & Answers

1. The sound or act of laughing, especially from joy, is called _____. (Gen 21:6)

A) mourning

✓ B) laughter

C) offering

D) purchase

Why: Sarah says God has made laughter for her at the birth of Isaac.

2. In Genesis 22, Abraham tells Isaac that God will provide the offering. (Gen 22:8)

✓ Answer: TRUE

3. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 22:18)

Word choices: *obeyed · purchased · mourned · provided*

Abraham is blessed because he obeyed the LORD's voice.

4. What do we call something given up and presented to God? (Gen 22:13)

✓ A) offering

B) purchase

C) tomb

D) treaty

Why: Abraham offers the ram as an offering in place of Isaac.

5. In Genesis 23, Abraham comes to mourn Sarah and weep for her. (Gen 23:2)

✓ Answer: TRUE

6. In Genesis 23, Abraham accepts the cave of Machpelah as a free gift from Ephron. (Gen 23:12–16)

✓ Answer: FALSE

7. Write your answer in the blank, then click Check. (Gen 23:6)

Word choices: *tomb · laughter · offering · obeyed*

The Hittites offer Abraham the choicest of their tombs for burying Sarah.

Understanding

Treasure Wisdom · One Question That Carries the Whole Scene *[Close Reading · A Meaningful Exchange]*

Close Reading · A Meaningful Exchange As Abraham and Isaac walk together toward the mountain, Isaac asks a short, direct question: where is the offering? Abraham gives a short, direct answer: God will provide it. Genesis does not describe either person's face or feelings here at all — it lets the plain exchange of words carry the whole moment. A careful reader slows down at a passage's shortest lines of dialogue, since a writer who chooses not to explain a character's feelings directly is often trusting the reader to sit with the question rather than rushing past a brief spoken exchange.

Understanding Questions & Answers

1. What happens exactly as God had promised in Genesis 21? (Gen 21:1–2)

- A) Ishmael is born to Sarah.
- ✓ B) Isaac is born to Sarah.
- C) Abraham returns to Ur.
- D) Lot rejoins Abraham's household.

Why: Genesis 21 opens with Isaac's birth to Sarah, exactly as God had promised.

2. What does God tell Abraham to do on the mountain in Moriah? (Gen 22:2)

- A) Build a well for the household.
- B) Meet with Abimelech to make peace.
- C) Bury Sarah in a family tomb.
- ✓ D) Offer Isaac as an offering.

Why: God tells Abraham to offer Isaac as an offering on a mountain in Moriah.

3. What does Abraham find near the altar once the angel stops him? (Gen 22:13)

- A) A second altar already built
- B) A servant waiting with water
- C) A tent left behind by travelers
- ✓ D) A ram caught in a thicket

Why: Abraham looks up and sees a ram caught in a thicket, which he offers instead.

4. What does Abraham insist on doing when Ephron offers him the cave? (Gen 23:12–16)

- A) Refusing the cave and searching elsewhere.
- B) Sharing the cave equally with Ephron's family.
- ✓ C) Paying the full price rather than accepting a gift.
- D) Waiting a full year before deciding.

Why: Abraham insists on paying the full price for the cave rather than accepting it as a gift.

5. Write the numbers 1–5 in the boxes to show the correct order across Genesis 21–23. Number 1 = what happens first. (Gen 21–23)

✓ **Correct order:** 1) Isaac is born to Sarah, and Abraham circumcises him. 2) Abraham and Abimelech make a treaty at Beersheba. 3) God tells Abraham to offer Isaac on a mountain in Moriah. 4) An angel stops Abraham, and a ram is provided instead. 5) Sarah dies, and Abraham purchases the cave of Machpelah.

6. God hears Ishmael crying in the wilderness and shows Hagar a well. (Gen 21:17–19)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

7. Isaac asks Abraham where the offering is as they travel to the mountain together. (Gen 22:7)

✓ **Answer: TRUE**

Literary Craft

Treasure Wisdom · A Place Renamed for What Happened There *[Literary Craft · Place Naming]*

Literary Craft · Place Naming Abraham names the mountain in Moriah “The LORD Will Provide,” turning the location itself into a lasting record of what happened there. This is a pattern that appears more than once in Genesis: a place is given a name that explains or commemorates an event, so that anyone hearing the name afterward is reminded of the story behind it. A named place works almost like a permanent marker in the landscape, doing some of the same work a written record does. Watching for a place-name like this is a way of noticing where the passage itself is telling you what it wants remembered.

Term	What it means
Dialogue	A spoken exchange between characters that reveals something important. Isaac's question and Abraham's answer on the way to the mountain carry the whole scene in just a few words.
Place naming	A place given a name that explains or commemorates an event that happened there. Abraham names the mountain “The LORD Will Provide.”
Courteous bargaining	A polite back-and-forth exchange where an offer is declined as a formality before being accepted. Ephron offers the cave as a gift before Abraham insists on paying.

Literary Craft Questions & Answers

1. What is dialogue, as a literary term? (Gen 22)

- A) A long description with no characters speaking
- B) A list of places visited in one chapter
- ✓ C) A spoken exchange that reveals something important
- D) A single character's private, unspoken thought

Why: Dialogue is a spoken exchange between characters that reveals something important.

2. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 22)

Word choices: *dialogue · naming · bargaining · offering*

A spoken exchange between characters is called dialogue.

3. What does place naming do in a passage like Genesis 22? (Gen 22:14)

A) It removes all meaning from where an event happened.

✓ B) It turns a location into a lasting record of an event.

C) It replaces the need for any spoken dialogue.

D) It only matters for very large, famous cities.

Why: Place naming turns a location into a lasting record of the event connected to it.

4. Abraham names the mountain in Moriah after himself. (Gen 22:14)

✓ Answer: FALSE

5. Courteous bargaining always means the first offer made is the one finally accepted. (Gen 23)

✓ Answer: FALSE

6. Fill in the blank with the correct word. (Gen 23)

Word choices: *bargaining · dialogue · naming · purchase*

A polite back-and-forth exchange before a deal is settled is called courteous bargaining.

7. What does Abraham's short exchange with Isaac in Genesis 22 let a reader do? (Gen 22:7–8)

✓ A) Sit with the question rather than rush past it

B) Skip the scene entirely without missing anything

C) Learn exactly how both characters felt in detail

D) Assume the exchange has no importance at all

Why: Because the passage does not explain either character's feelings directly, a reader is left to sit with the brief exchange itself.

Wisdom

Treasure Wisdom · Closing a Deal at the City Gate *[Archaeology · Ancient Law]*

Archaeology · Ancient Law Genesis 23 describes Abraham bargaining for the cave of Machpelah at the city gate, in front of everyone entering it. The city gate really was the ancient world's courthouse: excavated gates at cities including Tel Dan, Megiddo, Gezer, and Lachish have stone benches built in, where elders likely sat for daily business. The Bible shows this same custom elsewhere — in the book of Ruth, Boaz closes a land deal at the city gate in front of ten witnesses, so no one could dispute it later. Genesis 23 also shows a polite pattern: Ephron first offers the cave as a gift, and only after Abraham declines the gift does a real price get named. Genesis 23 lets you watch a serious deal get closed in the open.

Wisdom Questions & Answers

1. Claim: “Genesis 21–23 shows God keeping his promises and Abraham responding with obedience and trust.” — choose the three details that best support it. (Claim & Evidence)

☐ Hagar and Ishmael are sent away from Abraham's household.

☐ Ephron the Hittite owns the field where the cave is.

✓ **Isaac is born to Sarah exactly as God had promised.**

☐ Sarah dies at Kiriath-arba at the age of one hundred twenty-seven.

☐ Abraham and Abimelech make a treaty at Beersheba.

✓ **Abraham insists on paying the full price for the cave rather than accepting a gift.**

✓ **Abraham obeys God's instruction to travel to the mountain in Moriah.**

Why: The three selected details show God's promise being kept in Isaac's birth and Abraham's obedience and integrity in response. The other statements are true but describe a different part of the account.

2. Stated in Genesis 21–23, or Not stated there? (Sort into two)

✓ **[Not stated there] Isaac is described as afraid throughout the journey.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 21–23] God hears Ishmael crying in the wilderness.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Ephron is named as the ruler of the whole region.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 21–23] Abraham finds a ram caught in a thicket.**

✓ **[Stated in Genesis 21–23] Abraham insists on paying the full price for the cave.**

✓ **[Not stated there] Sarah is buried in Egypt rather than Canaan.**

Why: The left column reports details Genesis 21–23 actually states. The right column supplies details the passage does not say.

3. Match each first detail with the detail paired with it. (Match the Pairs)

Isaac → **A) Born to Sarah exactly as God had promised**

Hagar → **E) Shown a well after her water runs out**

Abraham → **C) Insists on paying the full price for the cave**

Ephron → **D) Offers the cave as a gift before naming a price**

Sarah → **B) Dies at Kiriath-arba and is buried at Machpelah**

Why: Each match connects a person with what Genesis 21–23 states about them.

4. Fill both blanks to complete the reasoning. (Build the Argument)

Genesis 23 shows Abraham paying the full price for the cave in public, at the city gate, and sales were done this way in that world because **[B]**, which shows that **[D]**.

Write the letter of the correct choice in each blank. Choices:

A. gates were the only place anyone was allowed to talk

B. a public sale gave witnesses who could confirm it later

C. sellers were forbidden from ever refusing a gift

D. Genesis 23 reflects a real, documented ancient custom

E. Genesis 23 invented this custom for its own story

F. ancient sales were never made in front of witnesses

Why: Excavated city gates with witness benches, and the parallel land sale in Ruth 4, show that closing a sale in public before witnesses was a real, recognized ancient Near Eastern custom, exactly what Genesis 23 depicts.

Standardized Test Practice (SAT/TOEFL)

Reading Passage

A Deal Made in Public

Long before courthouses and written deeds as we know them today, land sales in the ancient Near East were often settled in a very public place: the city gate. Archaeologists have found stone benches built into the gates of several excavated cities, including Tel Dan, Megiddo, Gezer, and Lachish — seats where elders likely sat to witness daily business. A sale agreed there had built-in witnesses who could later confirm exactly what had been agreed. The Bible itself preserves another example of this same custom: in the book of Ruth, Boaz settles his purchase of a field at the city gate, in front of ten witnesses. The custom made a sale binding. Genesis 23 shows a polite pattern too: a seller first offers his property as a gift, and the buyer often declines the gift before a real price is agreed. A single set of gates and one other account cannot describe every land deal ever made, but together they show that a public sale before witnesses was a real, recognizable way to close a serious deal.

Standardized Test Questions & Answers

1. What is the passage mostly about? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Main Idea)

✓ **A) Evidence for a public, patterned land-sale custom**

- B) A full biography of one Hittite king
- C) Instructions for building a modern courthouse
- D) A description of a single city gate's shape

Why: The passage uses excavated city gates and a biblical example as evidence for a public, patterned land-sale custom.

2. Where were many ancient land sales settled? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) Inside a private home
- B) Beside a river crossing
- ✓ **C) At the city gate**
- D) Inside a royal palace

Why: The passage names the city gate as the public place where sales were often settled.

3. In this passage, “decline” most nearly means _____. (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Vocabulary in Context)

- A) to shout loudly in anger
- ✓ **B) to politely refuse at first**
- C) to write a formal letter
- D) to travel to a new city

Why: A seller who declines payment at first is politely refusing it before a real price is set.

4. What evidence does the passage use for this land-sale pattern? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Detail)

- A) A single modern photograph
- B) A story with no historical source at all
- C) A list of city names with no other detail

✓ **D) Excavated city gates and a biblical example**

Why: The passage points to excavated city gates and the account in Ruth as its evidence for the pattern.

5. Why might a seller have offered the land as a gift before naming a price? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Inference)

- A) It was required by a law banning all sales
- B) It meant the sale would never actually happen
- C) It showed the seller had no interest in payment

✓ **D) It was an expected step before real bargaining**

Why: The passage says this polite refusal was expected before serious bargaining began, not a sign the sale would fail.

6. What kind of evidence does the passage rely on to make its point? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Evidence)

✓ **A) Excavated gates and a biblical parallel account**

- B) A single scholar's personal guess
- C) A modern retelling with no ancient sources
- D) A legend with no physical evidence at all

Why: The passage points to excavated city gates and the parallel account in Ruth as its evidence.

7. According to the passage, what can and cannot this evidence show? (SAT/TOEFL Reading · Synthesis)

- A) It proves exactly how every deal in history was made
- B) It cannot show anything reliable about the region

✓ **C) It shows a documented pattern, not every deal made**

- D) It shows the exact price of every land sale ever

Why: The passage is careful: the evidence shows a documented pattern without claiming to describe every land deal ever made.