



Spring2020 8th Grade ELA #1

Subject: English Language Arts

State: Ohio

Student Name: _____

Teacher Name: _____

School Name: _____

Read the passage. Then, answer the questions.

Chew on This

by Eric Schlosser and Charles Wilson

¹ As a child in the 1950s, Alice Waters was a picky eater. She didn't like foods with thick sauces. She didn't like stews, creamy spinach, or overcooked meat. She liked simple things, like the fruits and vegetables her father grew in the backyard garden of their little house in Chatham, New Jersey. Her family didn't have a lot of money, so they didn't go to restaurants frequently. They ate meals at the dining room table. Alice didn't like the food at school, and in those days kids were allowed to eat in the cafeteria or go home for lunch. Most days Alice went home. She was picky but still enjoyed eating certain junk foods every now and then: potato chips, orange soda, jelly doughnuts, chili cheeseburgers.

² Alice moved to Berkeley, California, for college. The University of California at Berkeley was known for its radical thinking, for students who liked to make waves and challenge conventional wisdom. During the 1960s, Berkeley students campaigned for racial equality, for women's rights, for an end to the war in Vietnam. Alice fit in well at Berkeley; there was nothing ordinary about her. At the age of nineteen she took a year off and lived in France. The experience changed her forever. She fell in love with the food there. She felt like she'd never eaten before. The people she met in France cared intensely about food, about how it was bought and sold and prepared and served at the table. Meals were more than a way to fill your belly. They were a way to enjoy conversation, family, and friendship. They weren't something rushed and soon forgotten. They were meant to bring people together.

³ Alice returned home determined to learn how to cook. She wanted to introduce the United States to a whole new outlook on food. She studied French cookbooks and started making meals for friends. And then, in 1971, she opened a restaurant in Berkeley and gave it a French name: Chez Panisse. At the restaurant she offered food that was simple and fresh, food that mainly got its taste not from fancy sauces and seasonings but from the quality of the basic ingredients. Alice always sought out the best-tasting tomatoes, the best peaches, the best plums. When she couldn't buy them at the market, she found people to grow them for her. She formed close ties with local farmers and ranchers, refusing to buy food that was out of season or that had been transported thousands of miles. The food she bought had to be organic, locally produced, and delicious.

⁴ Chez Panisse was soon considered one of the finest restaurants in the United States, and Alice Waters was hailed as one of the nation's greatest chefs. She was a true radical—not the kind who wants to destroy things or tear them down, but the kind who looks past the surface to the fundamental nature of things. During the same years that fast-food chains were turning restaurant kitchens into little factories and live-stock into industrial commodities, Alice championed an old-fashioned view of food. It stood for a different set of American values: honest, integrity, wholesomeness, and, most of all, community.

⁵ Every day, while driving to Chez Panisse in the morning and driving home late at night, Alice passed Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School. It seemed like a sad place, with graffiti on the windows and burned-out grass on the lawn. Although students still attended classes there, the school looked neglected. Alice wondered how the people of Berkeley, who considered themselves so high-minded and aware, could allow a public school to

fall apart this way. She made this point during a newspaper interview, and not long afterward got a call from Neil Smith, the school's principal. He invited her to Marlin Luther King Jr. Middle School and asked her to help beautify the place.

⁶ During a visit to the school, Alice became less concerned about how the place looked—and much more concerned about what the kids were being fed there. Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School had been built in the 1920s to educate five hundred children. Now it had about twice that many students. The cafeteria was too small to feed so many kids. It had been shut down for years and was being used to store old tables and chairs. There was still nasty old leftover food in the ovens. Lunch was served at a snack bar on the edge of the playground. Alice watched kids standing around eating reheated frozen hamburgers, chicken nuggets, and fries. She was appalled. The sight of the abandoned cafeteria and the cheap fast food made her realize that something had to be done right away to change the way these kids thought about food. And she decided to do it.

⁷ Twelve years after Alice's first visit to Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, it has the most innovative and remarkable food program in the United States. Called the Edible Schoolyard, it doesn't just provide healthy, nutritious meals. It gives kids a firsthand education in the role that food plays in society. It teaches skills they can use for the rest of their lives. After raising money through her Chez Panisse Foundation, Alice supervised the planting of an enormous garden at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School. An acre of asphalt was torn up, topsoil was hauled in, and all sorts of plants, flowers, fruit trees, and vines were planted. Today this school garden produces strawberries, potatoes, tomatoes, lettuce, herbs, beans, corn, pumpkins, asparagus, broccoli, beets, carrots, garlic, cucumbers, peppers, cabbage, and Brussels sprouts, among other things. There's a chicken coop where hens can wander freely and lay eggs. There's a wood-burning outdoor oven for cooking pizza and baking bread. The place looks like a small farm in the heart of a lovely town.

⁸ The sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders at Martin Luther King Jr. come from a wide variety of backgrounds. About twenty different languages are spoken at students' homes. Roughly one third of the kids are African American, one third are white, and the rest are mainly Asian or Latino. All of them have to work in the garden, planting, tending, and harvesting food. And all of them have to work: in the school's new kitchen, learning how to prepare food, how to serve it, and how to clean up after everybody's eaten it. Esther Cook, the chef-teacher at the Edible Schoolyard, has thought up many ingenious ways to combine cooking and gardening with learning. In the classroom, food-related subjects are used to help teach science, history, and ecology. A science project might involve earthworms in the garden; a history project might unfold in the kitchen, with samples of what European serfs ate during the Middle Ages. Teachers work with their students in the garden and the kitchen. At Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, food isn't something you scarf down quickly and then forget about. It's an integral part of daily life.

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1 Part A

Which idea is introduced in paragraph 1 of the passage?

- (A) Alice was given very unusual foods to eat as a child
- (B) Alice liked different kinds of foods than kids do today.
- (C) Alice's childhood helped shape her attitudes about food.
- (D) Alice's attitudes about cafeteria food changed over time.

2 Part B

Which quotation from paragraph 1 **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- (A) "As a child in the 1950s, Alice Waters was a picky eater."
- (B) "She liked simple things, like the fruits and vegetables her father grew in the backyard garden...."
- (C) "They ate meals at the dining room table."
- (D) "Alice didn't like the food at school...."

3 In **paragraph 3**, rewrite the sentence that best represents a central idea of the passage.

4 **Part A**

What is the meaning of the word **radical** as it is used in paragraph 4 of the passage?

- (A) a person who is very smart
- (B) a person who admires beauty
- (C) a person who values education
- (D) a person who wants great change

5 Part B

Which phrase from the passage **best** helps the reader to understand the meaning of the word **radical** as it is used in paragraph 4?

- (A) “.... challenge conventional wisdom...” (paragraph 2)
- (B) “...meant to bring people together...” (paragraph 2)
- (C) “...asked her to help beautify...” (paragraph 5)
- (D) “...teaches skills they can use....” (paragraph 7)

6 Part A

How do the authors support the claim that food is an essential part of life?

- (A) by explaining how fresh foods can be grown on school land
- (B) by describing some of the foods that the students have grown
- (C) by describing what students can learn about the world from food
- (D) by explaining how a school decided to start growing its own food

7 Part B

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- (A) "Lunch was served at a snack bar on the edge of the playground." (paragraph 6)
- (B) "Called the Edible Schoolyard, it doesn't just provide healthy, nutritious meals." (paragraph 7)
- (C) "An acre of asphalt was torn up, topsoil was hauled in, and all sorts of plants, flowers, fruit trees, and vines were planted." (paragraph 7)
- (D) "A science project might involve earthworms in the garden; a history project might unfold in the kitchen, with samples of what European serfs ate during the Middle Ages" (paragraph 8)

8 Part A

Which part of Alice's life **most** inspired her to create the Edible Schoolyard?

- (A) her picky eating
- (B) her family garden
- (C) her trip to France
- (D) her move to Berkeley

9 Part B

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- (A) "Her family didn't have a lot of money, so they didn't go to restaurants frequently." (paragraph 1)
- (B) "She was picky but still enjoyed eating certain junk foods every now and then: potato chips, orange soda, jelly doughnuts, chili cheeseburgers." (paragraph 1)
- (C) "Alice fit in well at Berkeley; there was nothing ordinary about her." (paragraph 2)
- (D) "The people she met in France cared intensely about food, about how it was bought and sold and prepared and served at the table." (paragraph 2)

10 Part A

In paragraph 6 of the passage, what is the meaning of the word **appalled**?

- (A) worried
- (B) angered
- (C) horrified
- (D) confused

11 Part B

Which phrase from paragraph 6 **best** explains why Waters was **appalled**?

- (A) "...less concerned..."
- (B) "...twice that many students..."
- (C) "...nasty old leftover food..."
- (D) "...had to be done right away..."