

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

Mystery at Dad’s Office

- 1 Nathan stood at the vending machine in the break room of his father’s office building. It was early Saturday evening, and he and his little brother Alex had come to hang out at the office while their dad worked. Alex crossed his arms. “I didn’t want mint gum!”
- 2 Nathan shrugged his shoulders. “Dad and I both voted for it, so that makes it fair,” he said.
- 3 The boys stepped into the dark hall as Alex complained, “Next time I get to choose. You didn’t even ask—aaaaahhh!”
- 4 Alex suddenly jumped back into the break room, crashing into Nathan. “Watch out!” Nathan yelled.
- 5 Flattened against the wall, Alex asked quietly, “Didn’t Dad say we were the only people here?”
- 6 “No one else is here, Alex,” his brother scolded. “Why are you whispering?”
- 7 Alex shut his eyes tightly and said, “There was someone standing at the end of the hall staring at us. I think he’s watching us!”
- 8 Nathan sighed. His little brother could be a real pain sometimes, especially when his imagination ran wild. But Nathan decided that he would agree with Alex just to try to calm him. Nathan found a pencil and notepad. “Why don’t you sit down and tell me what this guy looked like,” he suggested.
- 9 “He was huge and dressed all in red! And he was really mean looking, with beady eyes that sort of glowed—like they were on fire!” Alex exclaimed.



- 10 Something Alex said made Nathan a little suspicious. "Let me take a look," he said.
- 11 The brothers tiptoed toward the doorway. Finally Nathan leaned around the corner just the tiniest bit. When he saw a movement at the far end of the hall, he didn't even stop to see what the person looked like.
- 12 "Run, Alex!" Nathan yelled, dropping the gum. He grabbed his brother's hand and raced down the hallway.
- 13 The light from Dad's office was like a nightlight offering comfort from a bad dream. The brothers tried to get through the doorway at the same time and ended up in a tangled heap on the floor.
- 14 "What's going on, boys?" Dad demanded to know.
- 15 Nathan and Alex started talking at the same time. Both boys were breathless, but they told Dad about the stranger down the hall. By the time Nathan got to the description of the red shirt,

Alex was calling it “a scarlet cape.” Dad lifted his chin and arched his eyebrows.

16 “And you said this stranger was really huge?” Dad asked. Alex nodded. “Well then, let’s go take a look,” Dad said.

17 Even with their father along, the boys didn’t want to return to the scary creature. “Come on, boys, it will be fine,” Dad assured them. “I promise I won’t let anything bad happen to you.” He led them back to where they had last seen the mysterious stranger. Just before they got to the hallway that led to the break room, Dad turned on a light switch. Then he looked around the corner to the end of the hall. The boys heard him chuckle. “Okay,” he said to Alex, “your turn.”

18 Slowly Alex leaned around the corner and looked. Then he leaned a little farther. Finally he stepped all the way into the hallway. There, down the hall, was his own reflection looking back at him. It was almost as if his reflection were teasing him. It was bad enough to have an older brother who sometimes made fun of him. Now he could see himself doing the same thing.

19 Dad smiled. “I guess neither of you noticed the new mirror at the end of the hall.”

20 Nathan’s mouth formed a grin, and then Alex started to laugh. Their mysterious stranger was no stranger after all! Even Nathan hadn’t examined the situation closely enough to notice that Alex was wearing his bright red soccer jersey.

21 “Hey, where’s that gum I wanted?” Dad asked.

22 Nathan’s cheeks began to feel hot. He was thankful that Dad hadn’t seen the gum on the break-room floor. “I’ll go get it,” he said quickly.

23 “By the way,” Alex said, “that stranger told me he doesn’t like mint. So next time, he and I vote for strawberry.”

11 Which word from paragraph 17 helps the reader understand the meaning of the word assured?

- A** *return*
- B** *looked*
- C** *led*
- D** *promise*

12 When Alex first tells Nathan that someone is watching them, Nathan —

- F** believes that Alex saw an office worker
- G** wants Alex to find their father
- H** thinks Alex is worrying for no reason
- J** wishes their father would try to calm Alex

13 What identifies this story as realistic fiction?

- A** The events that take place could happen.
- B** The author includes an illustration in the story.
- C** The author asks a question at the end of the story.
- D** The characters are people who are well known.

14 In paragraph 13, “a nightlight offering comfort from a bad dream” means that the light makes the boys feel —

- F** upset
- G** safe
- H** tired
- J** selfish

15 Why is it important to the story that Nathan and Alex go to the break room for gum?

- A** The boys see something frightening in the hallway.
- B** The boys are able to sit and talk to each other.
- C** The boys argue about what flavor they should select.
- D** The boys are able to let their father finish his work in his office.

16 What is paragraph 18 mainly about?

- F** Why Alex must lean so far into the hallway
- G** How Alex's reflection reminds him of his brother
- H** What Alex discovers in the hallway
- J** How Alex feels about his brother's teasing

17 What is the best summary of the story?

- A** One Saturday evening two brothers are at their father's office building. The younger brother thinks he sees a stranger. He sits at the table and tells his older brother what the stranger looks like. Later the brothers share the story with their father. The three of them go down the hallway to take a look.
- B** Two brothers come to their father's office building and go to the break room to use the vending machine. They become scared when they see a stranger in the hallway. They run to their father and describe to him what the stranger looks like.
- C** Two brothers go with their father to his office building. While in the hallway, the younger brother becomes scared when he thinks he sees a stranger. At first the older brother does not believe the story, but when he also becomes afraid, Dad helps them discover who the stranger really is.
- D** One Saturday two brothers go to buy some gum in the break room near their father's office. When they see a stranger in the hallway, the older brother drops the gum on the floor. Once they are no longer afraid, the younger brother tells which flavor of gum he would like.

18 Which sentence shows how the brothers feel when their father explains what they really saw in the hallway?

- F** *The brothers tried to get through the doorway at the same time and ended up in a tangled heap on the floor.*
- G** *Nathan and Alex started talking at the same time.*
- H** *It was bad enough to have an older brother who sometimes made fun of him.*
- J** *Nathan's mouth formed a grin, and then Alex started to laugh.*