DOING NOTHING IS SOMETHING

Selection Test A

Comprehension
Read each of the following questions. Then choose the letter of the best answer. (6 points each)

1. What is one reason that downtime is important?
   A. Summer can be boring.
   B. Children may use Palm handhelds.
   C. Quiet time fuels creativity.
   D. Parents must schedule time with kids.

2. Which statement is a fact?
   A. Scheduling may stunt creativity.
   B. Adults are too distrustful of children.
   C. There is a free-time movement.
   D. Enrichment benefits only parents.

3. Children lack downtime mainly because of
   A. their parents
   B. their schools
   C. the workplace
   D. the children themselves

4. Which statement is an opinion?
   A. The looseleaf is ragged at the edges.
   B. On Family Night, there is no homework.
   C. Kids have lost four unstructured hours a week.
   D. Searching for split ends is enormously satisfying.

5. What does the author suggest parents do with their television sets?
   A. Throw them away.
   B. Unhook the cable box.
   C. Watch with their children.
   D. Sell them at a yard sale
Vocabulary
Choose the answer that best explains the meaning of each underlined word. (6 points each)

6. A laudable action is
   A. noisy
   B. fearsome
   C. funny
   D. praiseworthy

7. Contemptuous means
   A. shameful
   B. scornful
   C. joyful
   D. playful

8. A deficit in your bank account is a
   A. raise
   B. shortfall
   C. deposit
   D. credit

9. Prestigious means
   A. respected
   B. magical
   C. legal
   D. valuable

10. What does hiatus mean?
    A. a storm
    B. an illness
    C. a break
    D. a weekend

Written Response

Short Response  Answer the following questions based on your knowledge of the story. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper. (10 points each)

11. Name two activities the author remembers fondly from summers past.

12. Name one fact that the author uses to support her opinion that children are overscheduled.

Extended Response  Answer the following question based on your knowledge of the story. Write one or two paragraphs on a separate sheet of paper. (20 points)

13. What evidence in the story shows that people today are starting to react against the overscheduling of their children? Give at least two examples and explain the effect each one might have.
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Selection Test B/C

Comprehension
Read each of the following questions. Then choose the letter of the best answer. (6 points each)

1. Which evidence does Anna Quindlen give to support her claim that downtime encourages creativity?
   A. a study showing that children have lost four unstructured hours a week
   B. her description of the global Right to Play movement
   C. a reference to psychological research on doing nothing and thinking
   D. the fact that parents in Omaha lobbied for additional recess

2. Which of the following statements is a fact?
   A. Maybe that kind of summer is gone for good.
   B. Most adults do not really want to stand in line for Space Mountain.
   C. There is even a free-time movement and Web site.
   D. A week or two of enforced boredom is really a gift.

3. Which phrase contains an opinion?
   A. the culture of cutthroat and unquestioning competition
   B. sit in traffic to get to a shore house
   C. stare into the middle distance
   D. drawing in the dirt with a stick

4. The kind of summer Anna Quindlen fears is gone for good is the kind that is
   A. productive
   B. joyless
   C. enriching
   D. unstructured

5. Anna Quindlen thinks summer enrichment activities for children are really
   A. lacking in enriching qualities
   B. for the convenience of their parents
   C. meaningless and wasteful
   D. more important than school

Name ________________________ Date ________________________
Vocabulary
Choose the answer that best explains the meaning of each underlined word. (6 points each)

6. What does contemptuous mean?
   A. insulting
   B. scornful
   C. proud
   D. boastful

7. A deficit is
   A. a bank account
   B. an illness
   C. a deposit
   D. a shortfall

8. What does laudable mean?
   A. energetic and noisy
   B. worthy of high praise
   C. foolishly positive
   D. somewhat unbelievable

9. To be on hiatus is to
   A. work well
   B. be brief
   C. take a break
   D. sleep or nap

10. Something prestigious is
    A. highly respected
    B. extremely difficult
    C. little known
    D. barely visible

Written Response

Short Response  Answer the following questions based on your knowledge of the story. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper. (10 points each)

11. What is Quindlen’s answer to those who say that children who stay at home and do nothing will only watch TV or play on the computer?

12. According to Anna Quindlen, how does the “culture of competition” affect children’s summers today?

Extended Response  Answer the following question based on your knowledge of the story. Write one or two paragraphs on a separate sheet of paper. (20 points)

13. Why does Quindlen think children will benefit from spending a week or two “exploring the inside of their own heads”? What are some specific results that may be expected from such exploration?

14. Challenge  Anna Quindlen made headlines when she left her job as a columnist at the New York Times to be a stay-at-home mom. How does that move fit with her opinions about families today?