

Directions: *In this section, you are going to read a passage with ten statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter. Answer the questions by marking the corresponding letter on **Answer Sheet 2**.*

The History of the Lunch Box

- A) It was made of shiny, bright pink plastic with a Little Mermaid sticker on the front, and I carried it with me nearly every single day. My lunch box was one of my first prized possessions, a proud statement to everyone in my kindergarten: "I love Mermaid-Ariel on my lunch box."
- B) That bulky container served me well through my first and second grades, until the live-action version of 101 Dalmatians hit theaters, and I needed the newest red plastic box with characters like Pongo and Perdita on the front. I know I'm not alone here—I bet you loved your first lunchbox, too.
- C) Lunch boxes have been connecting kids to cartoons and TV shows and super-heroes for decades. But it wasn't always that way. Once upon a time, they weren't even boxes. As schools have changed in the past century, the midday meal container has evolved right along with them.
- D) Let's start back at the beginning of the 20th century—the beginning of the lunch box story, really. While there were neighborhood schools in cities and suburbs, one-room schoolhouses were common in rural areas. As grandparents have been saying for generations, kids would travel miles to school in the countryside (often on foot).
- E) "You had kids in rural areas who couldn't go home from school for lunch, so bringing your lunch wrapped in a cloth, in oiled paper, in a little wooden box or something like that was a very long-standing rural tradition," says Paula Johnson, head of food history section at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.
- F) City kids, on the other hand, went home for lunch and came back. Since they rarely carried a meal, the few metal lunch buckets on the market were mainly for tradesmen and factory workers.
- G) After World War II, a bunch of changes reshaped schools—and lunches. More women joined the workforce. Small schools consolidated into larger ones, meaning more students were farther away from home. And the National School Lunch Act in 1946 made cafeterias much more common. Still, there wasn't much of a market for lunch containers—yet. Students who carried their lunch often did so in a re-purposed bucket or tin of some kind.
- H) And then everything changed in the year of 1950. You might as well call it the Year of the Lunch Box, thanks in large part to a genius move by a Nashville-based manufacturer, Aladdin Industries. The company already made square metal meal containers, the kind workers carried, and some had started to show up in the hands of school kids.
- I) But these containers were really durable, lasting years on end. That was great for the consumer, not so much for the manufacturer. So executives at Aladdin hit on an idea that would harness the newfound popularity of television. They covered lunch boxes with striking red paint and added a picture of TV and radio cowboy Hopalong Cassidy on the front.

- J) The company sold 600,000 units the first year. It was a major "Ah-ha!" moment, and a wave of other manufacturers jumped on board to capitalize on new TV shows and movies. "The Partridge Family, the Addams Family, the Six Million Dollar Man, the Bionic Woman—everything that was on television ended up on a lunch box," says Allen Woodall. He's the founder of the Lunch Box Museum in Columbus, Georgia. "It was a great marketing tool because kids were taking that TV show to school with them, and then when they got home they had them captured back on TV," he says.
- K) And yes, you read that right: There is a lunch box museum, right near the Chattahoochee River. Woodall has more than 2,000 items on display. His favorite? The Green Hornet lunch box, because he used to listen to the radio show back in the 1940s.
- L) The new trend was also a great example of planned obsolescence, that is, to design a product so that it will soon become unfashionable or impossible to use and will need replacing. Kids would beg for a new lunch box every year to keep up with the newest characters, even if their old lunchbox was perfectly usable.
- M) The metal lunch box craze lasted until the mid-1980s, when plastic took over. Two theories exist as to why. The first—and most likely—is that plastic had simply become cheaper. The second theory—possibly an urban myth—is that concerned parents in several states proposed bans on metal lunch boxes, claiming kids were using them as "weapons" to hit one another. There's a lot on the internet about a state-wide ban in Florida, but a few days worth of digging by a historian at the Florida State Historical Society found no such legislation. Either way, the metal lunch box was out.
- N) The last few decades have brought a new lunch box revolution, of sorts. Plastic boxes changed to lined cloth sacks, and eventually, globalism brought tiffin containers from India and bento boxes from Japan. Even the old metal lunch boxes have regained popularity. "I don't think the heyday(鼎盛时期) has passed," says D.J. Jayasekara, owner and founder of lunchbox.com, a retailer in Pasadena, California. "I think it has evolved. The days of the ready-made, 'you stick it in a lunchbox and carry it to school' are kind of done."
- O) The introduction of backpacks changed the lunch box scene a bit, he adds. Once kids started carrying book bags, that bulky traditional lunch box was hard to fit inside. "But you can't just throw a sandwich in a backpack," Jayasekara says. "It still has to go into a container." That is, in part, why smaller and softer containers have taken off—they fit into backpacks.
- P) And don't worry—whether it's a plastic bento box or a cloth bag, lunch containers can still easily be covered with popular culture. "We keep pace with the movie industries so we can predict which characters are going to be popular for the coming months," Jayasekara says. "You know, kids are kids."

36. Lunch containers were not necessary for school kids in cities.

37. Putting TV characters on lunch boxes proved an effective marketing strategy.

38. Smaller lunch boxes are preferred because they fit easily into backpacks.

39. Lunch boxes have evolved along with the transformation of schools.

40. Around the beginning of the nineteen fifties, some school kids started to use metal meal containers.

41. School kids are eager to get a new lunch box every year to stay in fashion.

42. Rural kids used to walk a long way to school in the old days.

43. The author was proud of using a lunch box in her childhood.
44. The most probable reason for the popularity of plastic lunch boxes is that they are less expensive.
45. The durability of metal meal containers benefited consumers.