

Read the passage. Then answer Numbers 8 through 15.

# The Top Ten of Everything

by Marty Deal

Some kids draw cartoons for a hobby, some write poems. Some kids make lists of cards they want to include in their game decks. Me? Give me a pencil, a scrap of paper, and a little free time, and you'll find me writing a Top-Ten list: Top Ten Favorite Spicy Foods, Top Ten Best Pieces of Sports Equipment, Top Ten Things to Do on a Saturday. You get the idea.

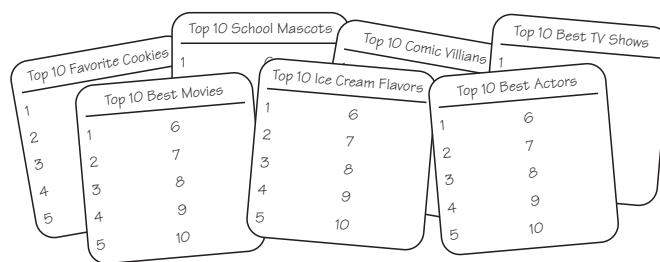
My friend Luis thinks my hobby is really strange.

One time at lunch, Luis started reading over my shoulder without asking me, while I was writing my Top Ten Strangest Sandwiches list. "Pickles and maple syrup with cream cheese?" he read. Then, pretending to be a robot, he said in a monotone, "That is weird, and you are weird."

Luis is one of those people who plays card games with a network of other kids. And he writes lists of the names of cards to include in different decks to improve his attacks on opponents. So I fired back, "What are you talking about? You're all caught up with rectangles that you think are fighting other rectangles. How weird is that?" Don't get me wrong. Luis is one of my better friends. We just talk back and forth like that.

"Strange person," Luis said to Marco, who was sitting across from us. Luis laughed, and I laughed, too. Then I looked under the table at the huge, tattered old boots Marco wears on his feet and thought of a new one: Top Ten Ugliest Sneakers.

Sure, I do normal lists like Top Ten Best Basketball Players, Best Movies, and Favorite Ice Cream Flavors, but I prefer the challenge of coming up with odd ones: Top



Ten Least-Useful School Supplies, Top Ten Things to Do on a Rainy Day During Summer Vacation, Top Ten Most Interesting Thumbtack Shapes.

Looking back at my old lists is like looking back inside my brain at what I used to think about. I carry my notebook of lists to school and take it out at lunch. Today, my mind was wandering during math class, so I placed my list notebook on top of my math worksheet and started writing Top Ten Types of Sour Candy.

I was staring off into space, trying to remember the right name for those sour apple-flavored candy shoelaces. That is why I didn't notice Mrs. Pleasant standing right behind me. I nearly jumped out of my seat when she leaned over my desk and said, "Hmmm, this gives me an idea. Thank you, Tony. Meanwhile, I think you had better get back to problem six in your math book."

A few minutes later she announced, "It amazes me how much I learn each day from my students. Here is an extra homework assignment for everyone. It is due Monday, courtesy of Tony. Mrs. Pleasant's Top Ten Math Word Problems."

The class groaned. "Tony," she said to me, "come on up to the board and help me write these out." She handed me the list.

8 Read the sentence from the passage.

*Then, pretending to be a robot, he said in a monotone,  
“That is weird, and you are weird.”*

What is the meaning of the word *monotone* as it is used in the last sentence of paragraph 3?

- F musical chant
- G foreign accent
- H overly dramatic whisper
- J one-note expressionless voice

9 The answer to which question would best help a reader more fully understand the events in the passage?

- A Why does Marco wear such ugly sneakers?
- B For how many years has Mrs. Pleasant been a teacher?
- C Does the class realize why they were given extra homework?
- D What are the names of the people with whom Luis plays card games?

10 The events in the passage are told from the point of view of

- F Luis
- G Tony
- H Mrs. Pleasant
- J a narrator outside of the story

11 In what way is the passage like most short stories and novels?

- A It has characters, a plot, and a setting.
- B It is about things students do at school.
- C It tells about actual events that really happened.
- D It uses a lot of figurative language to describe things.

- 12 Which are two methods the author uses to help readers understand what Tony is like?
- F things he says about himself and things he does
  - G things a narrator says about him and things he worries about
  - H indicating his grades in school and his hopes for the future
  - J describing his appearance and including remarks others make about him

- 13 In the passage, *Tony* is to *making lists* as *Luis* is to
- A acting strangely
  - B wearing old clothes
  - C playing card games
  - D solving math problems

- 14 Read the sentence from the passage.

*Then I looked under the table at the huge, tattered old boots Marco wears on his feet and thought of a new one: Top Ten Ugliest Sneakers.*

Which form of figurative language is being used in the sentence?

- F a simile
- G a metaphor
- H hyperbole
- J personification

- 15 Why did Mrs. Pleasant assign extra homework? Explain your answer using details from the passage.

---

---

---

---