

READING COMPREHENSION

Oprah Winfrey—Building a Life Filled with Happiness

Television personality Oprah Winfrey is one of the most influential women in the United States. *Time* magazine named her one of the 100 most important people of the twentieth century. Through her talk show, she makes daily visits into millions of homes. (1) Her warmth and ability to connect with others have *endeared* her to people around the world.



Oprah was born in Mississippi, the daughter of poor parents. She lived on a farm with her grandmother, who taught her to read and perform. At the age of six, she went to live with her mother.

(2) Some might describe Oprah's time with her mother as *wretched*. (3) While living there, she was *dismayed* by some extremely difficult situations and tried to run away. (4) In *exasperation*, her mother tried to place her in a home for troubled youths. Because there was no room there, she was sent to live with her father instead.

(5) Concerned that she might become a *sullen* teenager, her father imposed strict rules and discipline. (6) Though being shuffled among adults may have made some children *forlorn*, Oprah rose from the sadness. Under her father's guidance, she began to

develop into the adult she is today. Her father required that she read a book each week and write a report on it. She also started college at Tennessee State University.

Oprah's career began with a job as a reporter in Nashville. (7) She must have been *ecstatic* when she became the first African-American woman to land a job as a news anchor at a local station. From there, she moved through several talk shows until she started the *Oprah Winfrey Show*. However, her career interests extend far beyond being a talk-show host. She has acted in films about the African-American experience, including *The Color Purple* and *Beloved*. She created a production company that makes feature films, TV specials, and videos. She publishes a magazine called *O*. She has focused public attention on reading through her book clubs. (8) Her enormous charitable foundation demonstrates her *compassion* for those in need.

What is it about Oprah that makes her so appealing? Perhaps it's her philosophy of life. She believes that whatever your circumstances, you have the power to make yourself happy. (9) Even though your life may not be *blissful*, you can take the things that are positive and build on them. (10) You can choose to remain hopeful and optimistic, rather than let a *somber* mood overwhelm you. This kind of happiness comes from having a loving heart and leading a life of compassion and generosity.

Oprah is a living model of her philosophy. On her show, she talks openly about her personal struggles and what she has done to triumph over them. She shares her wealth with those less fortunate. Her example inspires others to find what is right and real in their own lives, and use it as the foundation of happiness.

Each sentence below refers to a numbered sentence in the passage. Write the letter of the choice that gives the sentence a meaning that is closest to the original sentence.

- _____ 1. Her warmth and ability to connect with others have _____ people.
a. forced her to like b. abandoned her to c. been enjoyed by d. made her loved by
- _____ 2. Some might describe Oprah's time with her mother as _____.
a. contented b. miserable c. happy d. discouraging
- _____ 3. She was _____ by some extremely difficult situations and tried to run away.
a. upset b. delighted c. inspired d. abandoned
- _____ 4. In _____, her mother tried to place her in a home for troubled youths.
a. inspiration b. disappointment c. aggravation d. happiness

- _____ 5. Concerned she might become a _____ teenager, her father imposed strict rules.
a. never satisfied b. very irritating c. bad-tempered d. cheerful
- _____ 6. Being shuffled among adults may have made some children _____.
a. lonely b. rebellious c. annoying d. joyful
- _____ 7. She must have been _____ when she became the first African-American woman to land a job as a news anchor.
a. irritated b. delighted c. annoyed d. content
- _____ 8. Her enormous charitable foundation demonstrates her _____ for those in need.
a. inspiration b. lack of concern c. discouragement d. shared feelings
- _____ 9. Even though your life may not be _____, you can take the things that are positive and build on them.
a. full of joy b. full of hope c. full of work d. full of events
- _____ 10. You can choose to remain hopeful and optimistic, rather than let a _____ mood overwhelm you.
a. loving b. hateful c. gloomy d. sympathetic

Indicate whether the statements below are TRUE or FALSE according to the passage.

- _____ 1. Oprah Winfrey began her career as an English teacher.
- _____ 2. Oprah Winfrey's philosophy centers on maintaining a positive attitude.
- _____ 3. Oprah Winfrey lives her life in a manner consistent with her beliefs.

WRITE THE DERIVATIVE

Complete the sentence by writing the correct form of the word shown in parentheses. You may not need to change the form that is given.

- _____ 1. The _____ condition of the homeless people was a sight that tugged at my heart. (*wretched*)
- _____ 2. The early days of a school vacation are often a _____ time. (*bliss*)
- _____ 3. José's willingness to do any type of work _____ him to the student dance committee. (*endear*)
- _____ 4. The abandoned puppy looked _____ and hungry. (*forlorn*)
- _____ 5. We were _____ to see our boat slowly filling with water. (*dismay*)
- _____ 6. The doctor seemed _____ because she listened attentively to each patient and responded kindly with advice. (*compassion*)
- _____ 7. Though he sat quite still and made no sound, the _____ expression betrayed Rasheed's bad mood. (*sullen*)
- _____ 8. Do you think animals ever feel overwhelming joy, or _____? (*ecstatic*)
- _____ 9. The dark blues and grays of the scenery added to the _____ of the play's mood. (*somber*)
- _____ 10. In _____ over the rudeness of the audience, the speaker walked off stage. (*exasperate*)