



*Laying the Foundation*<sup>®</sup>  
English Diagnostic Activity—Style Analysis  
Grade 9

TEST CODE:  
004022

**MULTIPLE CHOICE—“A New England Nun”**

Read the following excerpt from “A New England Nun,” written by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman. Identify the letter of the choice that best completes the statement or answers the question.

... Among her forebodings of disturbance, not the least was with regard to Caesar. Caesar was a veritable hermit of a dog. For the greater part of his life he had dwelt in his secluded hut, shut out from the society of his kind and all innocent canine joys. Never had Caesar since his early youth watched at a woodchuck’s hole; never had he known the delights of a stray bone at a neighbor’s kitchen door. And it was all on account of a sin committed when hardly out of his puppyhood. No one knew the possible depth of remorse of which this mild-visaged, altogether innocent-looking old dog might be capable; but whether or not he had encountered remorse, he had encountered a full measure of righteous retribution. Old Caesar seldom lifted up his voice in a growl or a bark; he was fat and sleepy; there were yellow rings which looked like spectacles around his dim old eyes; but there was a neighbor who bore on his hand the imprint of several of Caesar’s sharp white youthful teeth, and for that he had lived at the end of a chain, all alone in a little hut, for fourteen years. The neighbor, who was choleric and smarting with the pain of his wound, had demanded either Caesar’s death or complete ostracism. So Louisa’s brother, to whom the dog had belonged, had built him his little kennel and tied him up. It was now fourteen years since, in a flood of youthful spirits, he had inflicted that memorable bite, and with the exception of short excursions, always at the end of the chain, under the strict guardianship of his master Louisa, the old dog had remained a close prisoner. It is doubtful if, with his limited ambition, he took much pride in the fact, but it is certain that he was possessed of considerable cheap fame. He was regarded by all the children in the village and by many adults as a very monster of ferocity. St. George’s dragon could hardly have surpassed in evil repute Louisa Ellis’s old yellow dog. Mothers charged their children with solemn emphasis not to go too near him, and the children listened and believed greedily, with a fascinated appetite for terror, and ran by Louisa’s house stealthily, with many sidelong and backward glances at the terrible dog. If perchance he sounded a hoarse bark, there was panic. Wayfarers chancing into Louisa’s yard eyed him with respect, and inquired if the chain were stout. Caesar at large might have seemed a very ordinary dog, and excited no comment whatever; chained, his reputation overshadowed him, so that he lost his own proper outlines, and looked darkly vague and enormous. Joe Dagget, however, with his good-humored sense and shrewdness, saw him as he was. He strode valiantly up to him and patted him on the head, in spite of Louisa’s soft clamor of warning, and even attempted to set him loose. Louisa grew so alarmed that he desisted, but kept

announcing his opinion in the matter quite forcibly at intervals. “There ain’t a better-natured dog in town,” he would say, “and it’s downright cruel to keep him tied up there. Some day I’m going to take him out.”

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1. **The primary purpose of this passage is**
  - (A) didactic
  - (B) narrative
  - (C) persuasive
  - (D) expository
  - (E) comparative
2. **In lines 5-8 ("Never had Caesar...neighbor's kitchen door"), the author emphasizes Caesar's joyless youth by employing**
  - (A) polysyndeton
  - (B) epistrophe
  - (C) anadiplosis
  - (D) anaphora
  - (E) ellipsis
3. **The diction in lines 8 and 13 creates a pattern of**
  - (A) animal imagery
  - (B) religious overtones
  - (C) childlike innocence
  - (D) severe punishment
  - (E) heightened suspense
4. **In the context of the passage, the word "choleric" (line 20) means**
  - (A) subdued
  - (B) angry
  - (C) feisty
  - (D) jumpy
  - (E) bossy
5. **The sentence "He was regarded...monster of ferocity" (lines 32-33) is related to the four sentences that follow it in that it is**
  - (A) an analytical comment followed by elaboration
  - (B) a philosophical truth followed by illustrations of that truth
  - (C) a specific statement followed by a generalization
  - (D) a general assertion followed by supporting evidence
  - (E) an analytical comment followed by logical appeals
6. **The sentence "Caesar at large...vague and enormous" (lines 43-46) asserts a central**
  - (A) antithetical statement
  - (B) abstract analogy
  - (C) metaphor
  - (D) allusion
  - (E) irony
7. **The incident with Joe Dagget (lines 47-55) MOST CLEARLY reveals**
  - (A) the depths of Dagget's feelings for Louisa
  - (B) a new character to the reader
  - (C) a contrast between the townspeople's attitude and Joe's
  - (D) a man who wants to take control
  - (E) a humorous contrast to Caesar's living conditions
8. **With the words "St. George's dragon could hardly have surpassed in evil repute Louisa Ellis's old yellow dog" (lines 33-35), the author employs**
  - (A) a pun
  - (B) an allusion
  - (C) a metaphor
  - (D) an epiphany
  - (E) a paradox
9. **That people are both intrigued and repulsed by Caesar is evident in the words**
  - (A) "listened and believed greedily" (line 37)
  - (B) "with a fascinated appetite for terror" (lines 37-38)
  - (C) "many sidelong and backward glances" (line 39)
  - (D) "eyed him with respect" (lines 41-42)
  - (E) "inquired if the chain were stout" (line 42)
10. **The author characterizes Caesar CHIEFLY through the use of**
  - (A) euphemism and detail
  - (B) paradox and parallelism
  - (C) antithesis and imagery
  - (D) personification and irony
  - (E) connotative diction and generalization



11. **The tone of this passage is**

- (A) giddy and slightly ridiculous
- (B) serious and quietly meditative
- (C) humorous and gently mocking
- (D) critical and firmly authoritative
- (E) ponderous and ominously solemn