

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.



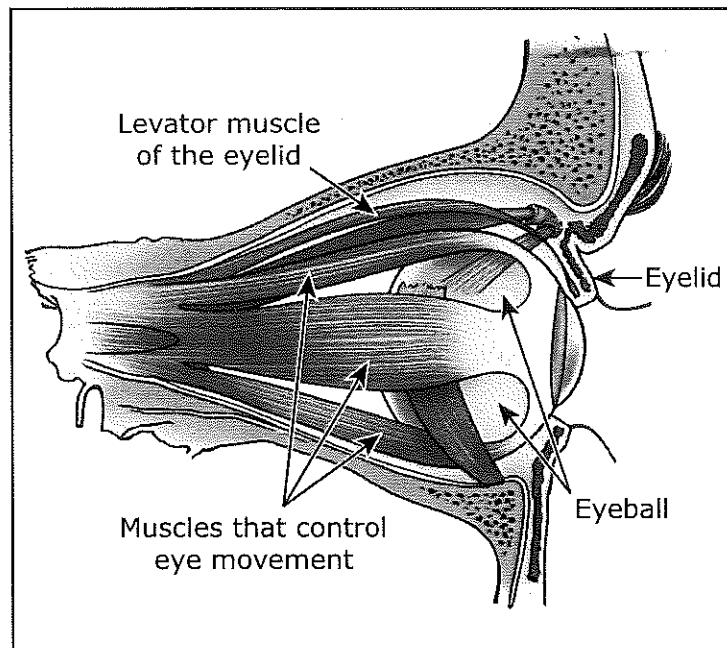
In the Blink of an Eye

- 1 Have you ever played the blinking game with friends? It's fun to see who can last the longest without blinking. After 30 seconds you probably struggle to resist closing and then reopening your eyes. In fact, most people blink every three to seven seconds. However, you rarely think about it. Blinking usually occurs automatically, like your heartbeat.

Miniature Windshield Wipers

- 2 What happens when you blink? Each time you blink, muscles around your eyes contract to close your eyelids. Then two different muscles contract, raising your eyelids back up.

Diagram of an Eye



- 3 Your eyelids act like tiny windshield wipers. In the blink of an eye, they sweep dust and debris away. Eyelids also spread moisture. Glands in the eyelids lubricate the surface of the eyes. Without this repeated lubrication, your eyeballs begin to dry, and your eyelids feel sticky.

Quick as a Blink

- 4 People can blink on purpose. However, most blinking occurs involuntarily. You rarely notice this type of blink, which is incredibly fast. Your brain actually ignores the flash of darkness caused by a blink, giving you the impression of uninterrupted sight.
- 5 Each time you blink, your eye closes for about three-tenths of a second. With around 15,000 blinks per day, you can end up with your eyes shut from blinking for up to one hour and fifteen minutes a day! Yet you probably aren't aware that your vision is interrupted for that amount of time each day.

Think Before You Blink

- 6 According to scientific research, the average eye blink rate in people varies greatly, ranging from 2 to 50 blinks a minute. Many factors affect the blink rate.
- 7 One factor is age. Newborn babies rarely blink. The reasons for this aren't entirely clear, but one theory is that babies work hard to observe the world around them because their ability to see is not fully developed. Blink rates increase in childhood. From there, rates increase steadily until adulthood. Then blink rates decrease as people move into older adulthood. That's when the muscles that control eyelids eventually lose some of their tone and ability to move.
- 8 Your blink rate also varies with the task being performed. You'll blink less when you're concentrating on something. For example, have you ever noticed that when you search the Internet on your computer, your eyes sting, burn, or feel scratchy? Your eyes dry out because your blink rate decreases by half while you are concentrating on looking at something. If you're absorbed in reading, your blink rate will decrease. And you'll blink less if you're watching a scary movie, since the threat of danger causes people to be more observant.
- 9 When you're thinking but not actually looking at something, your blink rate will also decrease. In school, when your teacher asks you a question, you'll barely blink as you consider the answer. Once you start to reply, your blink rate will increase. Talking returns you to a standard blink rate. What happens if you think aloud while pondering the answer to a question? Your blink rate will return to its standard rate since you're speaking.
- 10 Some activities, such as telling a lie, require a great deal of concentration. As people think about their lie, their blink rate is very low. Police use this knowledge to gain information from suspects when interrogating them. So the next time you think about telling a fib, you might keep in mind that your blinking eyes always tell the truth.

1 Why aren't people bothered by the interruptions to vision caused by blinking?

- A The brain is designed to ignore very brief moments of darkness.
 - B Blinking relaxes people's eyes.
 - C Blinking removes dust that lands on the eyes.
 - D The brain can process information even when people's eyes are closed.
-

2 The section "Think Before You Blink" is organized in a way that shows —

- F how blinking is affected by the use of different electronic devices
 - G the various factors associated with blinking rates
 - H the different benefits babies and adults get from blinking
 - J which parts of the eye are responsible for blinking
-

3 Based on the labels in the diagram of the human eye, the reader can conclude that —

- A more muscles are used to move the eye than to blink
- B eye muscles are stronger than any other muscles in the body
- C blinking provides several benefits to the eyeball
- D blinking happens in a way that does not affect a person's vision

4 Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

Blinking usually occurs automatically, like your heartbeat.

Which statement from the article supports the idea in this sentence?

- F *That's when the muscles that control eyelids eventually lose some of their tone and ability to move.*
 - G *You rarely notice this type of blink, which is incredibly fast.*
 - H *Without this repeated lubrication, your eyeballs begin to dry, and your eyelids feel sticky.*
 - J *Each time you blink, your eye closes for about three-tenths of a second.*
-

5 Which sentence from the article helps explain why staring at a computer screen affects blink rates?

- A *Then blink rates decrease as people move into older adulthood.*
- B *After 30 seconds you probably struggle to resist closing and then reopening your eyes.*
- C *You'll blink less when you're concentrating on something.*
- D *When you're thinking but not actually looking at something, your blink rate will also decrease.*

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.
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Bartholomew Blue

by Emma Walton Hamilton

Bartholomew Blue was a gentleman who
Could never decide what he wanted to do.
Mornings began in a terrible way,
As he'd try to decide what to wear for the day.
5 Which trousers? What shirt? And which socks, and what shoes?
Bartholomew just wasn't able to choose.

Completely confounded, he'd settle once more
On what he had chosen the morning before.
He'd go down to breakfast (a little bit smelly),
10 And try to decide what to put in his belly.
Two fried eggs and bacon? Some cinnamon bread?
He'd end up with yesterday's oatmeal instead.

Each hour would bring yet another decision . . .
What program to watch on today's television?
15 What method of transport to travel to work?
Bartholomew worried he might go berserk!
And still he would choose what he'd chosen before,
Until life started seeming a terrible bore.

As time trickled by him, things didn't improve.
20 For the less he would try things, the less he would move.
His suit became smellier day after day
His shoelaces frayed and his socks turned to gray.
He longed for excitement—a fresh point of view.
But habit prevailed, and he chose what he knew.

25 Soon cobwebs began to appear here and there.
And one day, a bird built a nest in his hair.
Before poor Bartholomew knew what to do,
Another bird parked on his head, and then two!
Cardinals, blue jays, and sparrows galore—
30 Followed by chickadees, finches, and more.

6. Which of these lines from the poem helps the reader know what the word confounded means in line 7?

- A Bartholomew just wasn't able to choose.
- B He'd go down to breakfast (a little bit smelly),
- C He'd end up with yesterday's oatmeal instead.
- D Each hour would bring yet another decision . . .

7. Read these lines from the poem.

His suit became smellier day after day
His shoelaces frayed and his socks turned to gray.

The imagery used in these lines allows the reader to know that —

- F Bartholomew's routine has been repeated for a long time
- G Bartholomew does not realize his clothes are getting old
- H Bartholomew's clothes have been damaged by birds
- J Bartholomew works in a dirty environment

10. The organization of the poem helps show that Bartholomew's actions —

- A are a benefit to others
- B help him discover new ideas
- C create worse effects as time goes by
- D cannot be controlled

11. Read these lines from the poem.

He sprouted with branches and leaves, and he *bloomed!*
Bartholomew Blue is a tree to this day . . .
But at least now he gives off a fragrant bouquet.

What is the poet most likely suggesting in these lines?

- F Bartholomew enjoys the scent of trees.
- G Bartholomew likes to spend time with nature.
- H Bartholomew has decided to wear a tree costume.
- J Bartholomew has finally become useful as a tree.