

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

### The Hip-Hop Houdini

When David Blaine was growing up in the 1970s, not a lot of kids aspired to become magicians. From the moment he acquired his first magic trick, however, Blaine knew that he wanted to amaze people for a living. As a child, he became a magic addict, devoting all his spare time to learning and practicing tricks.

Shortly after high school, Blaine moved to New York City. He worked as a waiter during the day, and at night, he performed magic at private parties. Blaine's specialty was close-up magic. He would use simple props like playing cards and cigarettes to astound party guests.

From the beginning, Blaine's style was different from many conjurers. Most magicians at the time had a mirthful approach to their craft. They told goofy jokes and aimed their shows at families. Blaine was a firebrand who wanted to bring a sense of danger back to magic; he filled his tricks with a sense of gravity. He took his tricks seriously, and had a magnetic personality that made people like him. Because of his youth and fashionable appearance, he became known as "the hip-hop Houdini."

His unique style soon caught the eye of Hollywood. In 1997, ABC aired a TV special called *David Blaine: Street Magic*, which showed Blaine performing tricks for people on the street. The special was a huge success, and made Blaine a household name.

Since then, Blaine has become probably the world's most talented magician. In 1999, he lived in a tiny glass coffin for seven days. A few years later, he lived inside a box over the river Thames in London for 44 days. In 2008 he broke a world record by holding his breath for 17 minutes and 4.4 seconds. As incredible as it may seem, none of these feats were tricks. They were real stunts that Blaine performed to test the limits of the human body.

Not everyone loves David Blaine. Some people are wary of his stunts, thinking he just wants attention. No matter what you might think about Blaine's stunts, however, there's no doubt he's made a tremendous impact on the world of magic.

**1. Based on information in the passage, you can tell that Blaine**

- (A) Does not do magic anymore
- (B) Works hard at his craft
- (C) Was born in Manhattan
- (D) Has only had one TV special

**2. Read this sentence from the passage:**

"His unique style soon caught the eye of Hollywood."

The author means that Blaine

- (A) Moved to Hollywood
- (B) Made people in Hollywood angry
- (C) Drew the attention of people in Hollywood
- (D) Influenced fashion in Hollywood

**3. Which of these sentences from the passage is an opinion?**

- (A) Shortly after high school, Blaine moved to New York City.
- (B) In 1997, ABC aired a TV special called *David Blaine: Street Magic*.
- (C) Since then, Blaine has become probably the world's most talented magician.
- (D) In 2008 he broke a world record by holding his breath for 17 minutes and 4.4 seconds.

**4. What is one thing that makes Blaine different from many other magicians?**

- (A) He does not tell silly jokes.
- (B) He became interested in magic as a child.
- (C) He performs close-up magic tricks.
- (D) He has performed at private parties.

**5. According to the passage, when did Blaine become famous?**

- (A) In the 1970s
- (B) 1997
- (C) 1999
- (D) 2008

## 2E Pick the Winner

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the word that best fits into the sentence. Then write a sentence below that uses the word you didn't pick in a meaningful way.

- I returned your call quickly because my mother told me it was **(urgent OR subtle)**.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- The runner **(quenched OR conjured)** his thirst with a giant glass of water.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Michelle is sometimes labeled a(n) **(firebrand OR addict)** because of her wicked sense of humor, but in reality, she's very well-behaved.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- I wouldn't eat that leftover Chinese food if I were you; it's been sitting in the refrigerator so long it's probably become **(magnetic OR toxic)**.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Young children should learn to be **(wary OR sullen)** of strangers.
- \_\_\_\_\_

## 2F Draw the Relationships

In each grouping of eight words below, draw straight lines between the synonyms (words that mean similar things), and draw wiggly lines between any antonyms (words that mean nearly opposite things). Every word should have at least one line connected to it. Some may have more.

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|----------|---------|--------|--------|
| desire   | obvious | summon | urgent |
| critical |         |        | subtle |
|          | conjure | aspire |        |

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- |         |         |          |            |
|---------|---------|----------|------------|
| wary    | satisfy | quench   | acquire    |
| gravity |         |          | importance |
|         | lose    | trusting |            |

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- |        |         |         |           |
|--------|---------|---------|-----------|
| choir  | gravity | chorus  | silliness |
| addict |         |         | harmless  |
|        | toxic   | fanatic |           |

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- |           |       |           |          |
|-----------|-------|-----------|----------|
| repellent | mirth | happiness | magnetic |
| firebrand |       |           | cheerful |