The Mighty Mississippi
by Kate Paixão

The Mississippi River is one of the longest rivers in the world. It flows from north to south through the United States.

The Mississippi begins in the northern U.S. state of Minnesota. The river then goes south for more than two thousand miles to the state of Louisiana. There, the mighty Mississippi empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

Native Americans depended on the Mississippi for thousands of years. They were the first people in North America. Someone who is native was born in
a place. Native Americans traveled the river by canoe and ate fish that lived in the water. They called the river *Misi-zibi*, which means "big river." That is where the river got its name.

Today, boats bring important items up and down the river daily. But it is more than just a highway for boats. The Mississippi is home to all kinds of animals. More than 250 types of fish and at least 50 kinds of mammals live along the river. The Mississippi also supports millions of people. At least fifty cities rely on the river for their daily water supply.

The big river is a very important river!
1. Where does the Mississippi River flow?
   A. through the United States
   B. through only Louisiana
   C. through all of North America

2. What does the second paragraph of the article describe?
   A. the way people today use the Mississippi River
   B. the path of the Mississippi River
   C. the way Native Americans used the Mississippi River

3. Read this sentence from the text.
   "Native Americans depended on the Mississippi for thousands of years."
   What evidence from the text supports this statement?
   A. "They were the first people in North America."
   B. "They called the river Misi-zibi, which means 'big river.'"
   C. "Native Americans traveled the river by canoe and ate fish that lived in the water."

4. Based on the article, what do Native Americans and the people who live near the Mississippi River today have in common?
   A. use of the Mississippi River to get fish for eating
   B. dependence on the Mississippi River in more than one way
   C. building of large cities around the Mississippi River

5. What is the main idea of this article?
   A. Native Americans depended on the Mississippi River for thousands of years.
   B. The Mississippi River has been a very important river for a long time, and still is today.
   C. The Mississippi River is mostly important because it begins in the state of Minnesota.
6. Read these sentences from the text.

"The Mississippi also supports millions of people. At least fifty cities rely on the river for their daily water supply."

What does the sentence "The Mississippi also supports millions of people" mean?

A. The Mississippi is not important to millions of people.
B. The Mississippi helps millions of people live.
C. The Mississippi causes trouble for millions of people.

7. Choose the answer that best completes this sentence.

Native American used the Mississippi River to get food _______ cities used the Mississippi River to get drinking water.

A. when
B. after
C. before

8. How does the Mississippi River help people who want to move important items from place to place?

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9. How do some cities today depend on the Mississippi River?

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10. How might people today be affected if the Mississippi River suddenly dried up?