READ THE PASSAGE   Read slowly. Reread any section you do not understand.

Camera in the Sky

Professional photographers often have to take calculated risks to get the perfect shot. But few photographers are willing to "take the plunge" like Tom Sanders. His enthusiasm and daring have made him one of the world's most legendary skydiving photographers.

From Fearful to Fearless

If you watched Sanders leaping out of a plane today, weighed down with heavy camera equipment, you would never guess that he was once terrified of heights. But that fear is what launched his remarkable career. "I was doing a course in building self-confidence," says Sanders, "and one of the assignments had to involve something you were scared of doing. I was petrified of heights, so my assignment was to jump out of a plane." After about 50 jumps, Sanders did more than conquer his fear; he began to enjoy the thrill of parachuting. Today, Sanders never lets fear prevent him from trying something new. He says he wakes up every morning and asks himself, "How am I going to enjoy the most out of this life?"

Falling Feats

These days, Sanders is comfortable enough to shoot astonishing photographs while dropping thousands of feet in freefall. For one advertisement, he snapped photos of stunt riders driving motorcycles out of an airplane door. For another ad campaign, he photographed a sofa as it plummeted to the ground. He has also recorded enormous group dives in which hundreds of skydivers join hands to create beautiful flower-like formations.

STRATEGY PRACTICE   Was there any part of the passage that you found confusing? How did you figure it out?

_____

_____

SKILL PRACTICE   Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. What is the main idea of the section "From Fearful to Fearless"?
   - Ⓐ Professional photographers are fearless.
   - Ⓑ Skydiving is extremely dangerous.
   - Ⓒ Photographic equipment is very heavy.
   - Ⓓ Skydiving helped a man overcome his fear.

2. According to the passage, Sanders will most likely _____.
   - Ⓐ keep taking risks to get great photos
   - Ⓑ become afraid of heights again in the future
   - Ⓒ fly in an airplane to another state
   - Ⓓ try to start a new career

3. Sanders first jumped out of an airplane to _____.
   - Ⓐ photograph a falling sofa
   - Ⓑ show his enthusiasm
   - Ⓒ create a flower-like formation
   - Ⓓ build his self-confidence

4. What do the headings tell?
   - Ⓐ important information about skydiving
   - Ⓑ how Sanders became a photographer
   - Ⓒ the topic of each section
   - Ⓓ the advertising campaigns Sanders photographed

READ THE PASSAGE As you read, look for clues that help you understand what is happening in the story.

The New House

When Kim's mother pulled into the driveway of the spookiest house on the block, Kim shrank in her seat, horrified.

"Mom!" she hissed. "This can't be our new house."

The house was tall and narrow and looked like the creepiest, crawliest, most haunted house in the world. Kim could not imagine anyone wanting to live in this house. She wondered what kind of people lived here before—and why they left. But then again, maybe she didn't want to know the reason.

"The outside needs some work," Mom admitted. "But wait until you see your room."

"Does that mean it has the most spiders, or the fewest?" Kim asked. Still, she had to admit that she was a little curious about her new room. She hopped out of the car and walked quickly to the front door. It was a deep red, and the door handle was made from black wrought iron in the shape of a twisted tree. When Kim touched the handle to open the door, a bright blue spark of electricity zapped her hand.

"Ouch!" Kim shrieked. She kicked the door open the rest of way, and her jaw dropped open. She was looking at the ocean! Instead of a dusty old living room, there was a wide window with a view of an endless stretch of beach, the shimmering blue ocean, and the sun shining brightly. It was beautiful, and Kim felt the thrill of a new adventure.

"Nice, isn't it?" Mom asked, moving past Kim with a box of dishes. "Your swimsuit is in the white suitcase. I'll call you when it's time for dinner."

STRATEGY PRACTICE List one part of the passage that you did not understand right away. What did you do to better understand that part?

_____

_____

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. Kim was afraid of the new house because it _____.

   Ⓐ had a bedroom for her

   Ⓑ was full of spiders

   Ⓒ looked like it was haunted

   Ⓓ was smaller than their last house

2. Which of these will Kim most likely do next?

   Ⓐ go back to her old home

   Ⓑ unpack the box of dishes

   Ⓒ get ready for dinner

   Ⓓ go swimming in the ocean

3. What caused Kim to change her mind about the new house?

   Ⓐ She liked her new bedroom.

   Ⓑ She found out it was near the beach.

   Ⓒ She got a shock from the doorknob.

   Ⓓ She realized there were no spiders inside.

4. Which of these will Kim probably do in the future?

   Ⓐ discover more surprising things about the house

   Ⓑ become friends with the previous owners

   Ⓒ decide the house is too creepy

   Ⓓ argue with her mom about her room

READ THE PASSAGE   Underline or make notes about words or concepts you do not understand.

The Truth About Lichens

Many lichens look like patches of moldy lettuce stuck to rocks and trees. They can be green, gray, yellow, or even black. They can live in deserts, in tundras, on tops of mountains, and along rocky coastlines. But perhaps the most amazing thing about a lichen is that it is not a single organism but two!

A Lichen Liker

During the 1800s, a Swiss scientist named Dr. Simon Schwendener was interested in how the shapes of plant parts helped the plant thrive. He studied plants in Germany and Switzerland. In 1867, Dr. Schwendener published his idea that lichens were not single organisms but two organisms—fungi and algae—living together. At the time, scientists thought Dr. Schwendener was wrong. They believed it was impossible for two organisms to work together as one unit.

A Dependent Partnership

Dr. Schwendener was right—a lichen is not just one living thing. Every lichen is made up of a fungus that lives with another organism, usually an alga. The alga uses photosynthesis to make food. The fungus retains water for the alga to use. Sometimes the fungus brings in nutrients from the environment where the lichen is growing. This kind of relationship is called "mutualistic symbiosis," which means that the organisms benefit from living together. These organisms have grown so dependent on each other that they cannot survive on their own.

STRATEGY PRACTICE   List one or two words or concepts you found confusing, and explain what you did to figure out the meaning.

_____

_____

SKILL PRACTICE   Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. Dr. Simon Schwendener claimed that lichens _____.

   Ⓐ include more than one living thing
   Ⓑ do not need water to grow
   Ⓒ can survive in deserts
   Ⓓ have interesting plant parts

2. The main idea of the passage is that lichens _____.

   Ⓐ did not exist before 1867
   Ⓑ were discovered by Dr. Schwendener
   Ⓒ are made up of organisms that work together
   Ⓓ depend on photosynthesis and water

3. What led to Dr. Schwendener's discovery?

   Ⓐ the publication of his ideas
   Ⓑ his study of the shapes of plant parts
   Ⓒ the wide range of places lichens live
   Ⓓ what other scientists believed about lichens

4. Algae in lichens help them survive by _____.

   Ⓐ retaining water
   Ⓑ giving them unique shapes
   Ⓒ using photosynthesis to make food
   Ⓓ gathering nutrients from the environment

READ THE PASSAGE Read slowly. When you see a sentence with a footnote, pause to read the footnote. Then read the sentence again before you continue.

Web Crawlers

If everyone stopped using the Internet for one day, the Internet would still be a pretty busy place. Even when people are not online, automatic programs travel the Internet.

Programs known as web crawlers[1] constantly browse the Internet. They follow coded instructions to gather specific data. These programs scurry invisibly, collecting and sending information 24 hours a day.

What sort of data do web crawlers collect? They report information about how many people are using the Internet and which pages they are visiting. They also make copies of web pages, which are stored and indexed by search engines. The result is faster and more accurate web searches.

Some web crawlers serve a more menacing function. They harvest e-mail addresses for advertisers who send unsolicited e-mail messages known as spam.[2] When your mailbox fills up with spam, chances are good that a web crawler helped put it there.

[1] Web crawlers are sometimes called "spiders" because they "crawl" around the Web.

[2] According to one report, about 183 billion spam messages are sent in a single day, accounting for 88% of all e-mail messages sent.

STRATEGY PRACTICE How did the footnotes help you understand the passage?

_____

_____

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. The main idea of the passage is that web crawlers automatically _____.
   - Ⓐ collect data by browsing the Internet
   - Ⓑ fill up mailboxes
   - Ⓒ work around the clock
   - Ⓓ copy webpages and store them

2. How do web crawlers benefit Internet users?
   - Ⓐ They count the number of users.
   - Ⓑ They speed up web searches.
   - Ⓒ They are at work all the time.
   - Ⓓ They make webpages more accurate.

3. How can web crawlers contribute to spam?
   - Ⓐ They write unwanted messages.
   - Ⓑ They collect e-mail addresses.
   - Ⓒ They delete genuine e-mail messages.
   - Ⓓ They help advertisers improve websites.

4. According to the passage, it is most likely that web crawlers will _____.
   - Ⓐ damage the Internet one day
   - Ⓑ stop contributing to spam soon
   - Ⓒ replace e-mail in the future
   - Ⓓ continue to be used for many years

READ THE PASSAGE Read the passage and the chart. Pay attention to how the information in the chart supports the passage.

Let the Buyer Beware

Advertisers have many ways of making products desirable to people. But not all of these techniques are good for customers. When you see an ad for something that seems too good to be true, it just might be. Use the information in this chart to help you understand, and avoid, some of the worst tricks of advertisers.

Technique	How It Works	Example
Bait-and-Switch	A store advertises an item for a very low price. At the store, salespeople persuade customers to buy more expensive products.	When you get to a store, the employees tell you that the advertised TV is out of stock. They offer to sell you a more expensive model instead.
Fine Print Exemptions	Advertisers list low prices but include restrictions in very small print in the ad.	A camera price is very low, but the fine print explains that the price does not include a lens or a case.
Inflated Price Comparisons	A store compares its own sale prices to its "regular" prices that are never actually charged.	A portable music player is advertised as 25% off when the product usually sells for the sale price listed.
Hidden Fees	Ads do not mention fees that must be paid in order to make a product or service usable.	A cellphone ad does not mention the activation fee that must be paid in order to use the phone.

STRATEGY PRACTICE How did the chart help you understand the author's main point?

_____

_____

SKILL PRACTICE Read each question. Fill in the bubble next to the correct answer.

1. The advertised price for a bicycle does not include wheels or a seat. Which technique was used?
   Ⓐ bait-and-switch
   Ⓑ fine print exemption
   Ⓒ inflated price comparison
   Ⓓ hidden fee

2. Advertisers most likely use inflated price comparisons to _____.
   Ⓐ make their prices seem like a good value
   Ⓑ make their products seem expensive
   Ⓒ convince customers to buy a different product
   Ⓓ give customers an additional discount

3. The bait-and-switch technique works for some stores because some customers _____.
   Ⓐ do not keep track of prices
   Ⓑ do not mind paying extra fees
   Ⓒ travel to the store to buy something and do not want to waste the trip
   Ⓓ forget to read the fine print before they go to the store

4. What is the main idea of the chart?
   Ⓐ to help advertisers deceive customers
   Ⓑ to describe tricks advertisers use
   Ⓒ to teach people about sale pricing
   Ⓓ to help customers find good deals