

Reading Questions: *Standing Strong*  
Prologue Entitled “The Border”

- 1. In paragraph 1 on page vii, the word unrelenting means:**
  - A. sun
  - B. shimmering
  - C. weak
  - D. implacable
  
- 2. If we compare Esteban’s outward presence to that of the woman driving the SUV, it can be determined that:**
  - A. Esteban is well-to-do.
  - B. the woman driving the SUV is condescending.
  - C. Esteban is a bit more haggard and unkept.
  - D. the woman driving the SUV wants to cross the border quickly.
  
- 3. The second paragraph on page viii that begins, “The endless rows of cars lined up...” is mostly about...**
  - A. showing how fun it would be to buy some of the merchandise for sale at the border crossing.
  - B. giving the reader clarity about how the automobiles line up to cross the border.
  - C. explaining how poor the people are in Mexico.
  - D. providing a description of the border crossing to the reader.

**4. Looking at page ix, the woman driving the SUV did not immediately purchase “chicle” from Esteban because...**

- A. she did not quite understand his words and actions.
- B. she thought Esteban was being rude.
- C. she did not want to buy junk food for her two daughters.
- D. she was concerned that he was in the way of the SUV and might get hurt.

**5. What was the purpose of Esteban’s young teen friend in the prologue?**

- A. He translated all of Esteban’s words from Spanish to English.
- B. He served as a calm voice that could explain Esteban’s current situation to the woman driving the SUV.
- C. The young teen friend served no real purpose and was an obstacle for Esteban’s sale.
- D. The young teen got a “better deal” for the woman driving the SUV and, as a result, received a very good tip.

**6. What seems to be an obstacle that Esteban has that makes life hard for him.**

- A. He is selfish and only wants to sell “chicle”.
- B. He breaks the law and is untrustworthy.
- C. He does not listen to others.
- D. He has difficulty communicating.

**7. What seems to be one of Esteban’s strengths.**

- A. Intelligence
- B. Physical Strength
- C. Sense of Humor
- D. Wisdom

**8. What does Esteban do to show that he is resilient?**

- A. He sells his chicle for twenty-five cents at the border and always gives exact change.
- B. When the “policía” show up, he runs away and darts in and out of traffic.
- C. He surveys the gum in his tattered box and counts how many packets he needs to sell.
- D. Despite being sunbaked in the sun and having plumes of dust arise from taps on his head, his smile widens as he sells chicle at the border.

**9. By observing the policías’ actions in the prologue, the reader can assume that...**

- A. they are untrustworthy and treat the people selling items with scorn and anger.
- B. they are a helpful part of the community and provide a much needed service.
- C. they need to look after themselves because their superiors do not pay them enough money.
- D. they are fast runners and must exercise quite a bit to stay in shape.

**10. Which of the following is the best summary for the prologue entitled “The Border”?**

A. It is a beautiful day at the Mexico border crossing. Esteban is there early. Sweat trickles down the sides of his face. His dress is ragged and his shoulders are like “chicken wings”. Esteban, as usual, is thrilled to be working. He sells his “chicle” for twenty-five cents and calls out for customer to purchase his many packets. A woman driving an SUV stops to buy some of his “chicle”, but is confused by his words. One of Esteban’s young teen friends shows up to assist in the sale.

B. Esteban is at the border crossing early to sell “chicle”. His friend comes to assist him because a woman in a SUV is slightly confused with Esteban’s communication. After a sale, Esteban is happy and puts the money in his pocket. Esteban enjoys his job at the border crossing. The border police show up and chase away all people selling merchandise at the border. They run after Esteban through several stores. Eventually, the police fall while trying to catch Esteban and he is able to escape through a ceiling in a store.

C. A woman in a SUV attempts to purchase “chicle” from Esteban. Her two daughters are in the rear seat, and are excited to see the scenes around the Matamoros border crossing. Esteban eventually makes a sale and is happy that he has money. The “policía” show up and ruin the day for everybody. They pour out the soda from the bottles of Esteban’s teen friend and arrest him. The day is a complete loss.

D. Esteban smiled as he put the money from selling gum into his pocket. He looked down the main street and was happy to see all of the vibrant colors that stretched into the horizon. He especially liked the red, white, and green balloons that decorated the area. Many small shops sold blankets, puppets, and many other items. Esteban loved working at the border crossing. It was his favorite thing to do.

**11. The author’s tone in this selection can best be described as –**

A. angry

B. formal

C. sad

D. optimistic