



Reading AMI Instructions

Mrs. Baker

Day 1

- Read *Tom Sawyer Days*
- Answer Comprehension Questions



Tom Sawyer Days

"Nice curveball!" Tom said as the ball popped into his glove.

"My dad's teaching me how to pitch," Eric said. The boys had met earlier in the day when Tom's family parked their RV in the campground. Eric was a year younger than Tom, but baseball had instantly given them a common interest. "Does your family come here every year for National Tom Sawyer Days?" Eric asked.

"No, this is our first time. My parents and another family camp together every year at different places. The other family has a daughter, Becky. My mom and Becky's mom were roommates in college."

Eric stopped in mid-windup. "Wait a minute. You're named Tom, and this girl is named Becky. Are you kidding me?"

"I wish I were. Both of our mothers are big fans of Mark Twain."

"Don't tell me—your middle name is Sawyer, and her middle name is Thatcher."

"Fraid so," Tom said as he caught Eric's pitch.

"Hey, we should all enter the fence-painting contest. Do you have a Tom Sawyer costume?" asked Eric.

"Tom, they're here," his mother called as a brown-and-white RV crept up the main road of the campground and headed for the parking space next to them.

Tom tossed the ball back to Eric. "I've got to go, but we will talk more about that fence-painting contest later!"

As he turned back to his own family's campsite, Tom didn't know what to expect. He saw Becky only once a year. Last year Becky spent so much time texting that her parents imposed a new policy: no more than one hour each day on electronic devices. Tom hoped a discussion of the events at the festival and the introduction of his new friend, Eric, would give them something to talk about.

"Becky, come out here and say hello," her mother called into the RV. "Put your phone down!"

With a half-hearted smile, Becky hugged Tom's parents. She barely nodded at him.

"I'm sure you guys have a lot to catch up on," Tom's mother said. "Why don't you take a walk down to the lake."

Rolling her eyes, Becky fell into step beside Tom. "So, how are you doing?" he asked.

Becky stuffed her hands into the pockets of her jeans. "I'd be doing a lot better if I weren't here right now."

"Hey, I might have something to cheer you up. There's a fence-painting contest we can participate in, and I think there are other activities that we can do too!"

"Yeah, like what?" Becky growled.

"Let's go find my new friend, Eric. He comes to the National Tom Sawyer Days every year, and he knows everything there is to do here this weekend. I think there's live entertainment and fireworks. C'mon, it'll at least be something to do."

Becky and Tom found Eric at his campsite.

"Hey, Eric!" Tom called. "This is my friend Becky who I was telling you about. Tell us more about the fence-painting competition."

"Well, participants have to sprint about fifty feet, and then they have to paint a section of fence and then run back. Judges base their decisions on how quickly the section of fence is painted, how well it is painted, and, most importantly, how good the Tom Sawyer costume looks that each participant is required to wear. They say you need to read the chapter in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* where he tricks the boys into painting the fence to get your ideas for your costume," explained Eric.

"My mom can definitely help with that," said Becky. "She has that book memorized."

The kids headed back to Becky's campsite. Her mom was there getting things set up.

"Mom, we need to dress up like Tom Sawyer in the chapter where he tricks the boys into painting the fence," said Becky.

"Oh, of course," replied her mom. "You will need to be barefoot, wear cut-off jeans, a plaid shirt, and a straw hat."

Tom, Becky, and Eric decided they would search inside their RVs to see what they could find. After dinner, they met again, and each was enthusiastic about what they were able to find to dress up in. That evening around the campfire, the children eagerly discussed how to paint a fence well and the best way to go about winning the competition.

The next morning, Tom, Becky, and Eric dressed up in their costumes and headed to the park to participate in the fence-painting competition. Their parents eagerly waited in the crowd to cheer the kids on.

After the event, Becky was covered in white paint from head to toe and was grinning from ear to ear, and so were Tom and Eric. "Well, we didn't win any prizes," she said, "but that sure was fun!"

"Whew! That was a tough competition!" Tom said as he flopped down in a lawn chair.

"I can't believe how authentic some of those costumes looked," replied Eric. "And many of the competitors had clearly been practicing their fence-painting skills."

"I can't wait to come back and do it again next year!" exclaimed Becky.

The three sets of parents looked at each other and declared that this would be a new yearly tradition.

1. Read the sentence from the passage.

"I can't believe how authentic some of those costumes looked," replied Eric.

Which meaning of the word authentic is used in the sentence?

- A. reliable; trustworthy
- B. genuine; resembling an original
- C. representing true nature or beliefs
- D. supported by unquestionable evidence
2. Read the statements in the Answer Bank. Write the letter of each statement next to the correct character's name to show how each character's actions contribute to the meaning of the passage.

Character	How the Character Contributes to the Meaning of the Passage
Eric	
Becky	
Tom	

Answer Bank

- A. tries something new and shows that people can have fun in unexpected ways
- B. suggests something to do and opens someone's mind to a team activity
- C. invites others to join a specific activity and helps start a new tradition
3. The author contrasts Tom's point of view with Becky's point of view by describing the different ways that Tom and Becky
- A. search for an appropriate costume.
- B. learn about the festival events.
- C. interact with other characters.
- D. compete in the contest.

4. This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

What is the **best** explanation for why Tom is unsure about seeing Becky?

- A. He has other friends.
- B. Becky acts disinterested.
- C. He is not sure he will like Becky anymore.
- D. Becky is often busy helping her parents with chores.

Part B

Which sentences from the passage **best** support the answer to part A? Choose **two** answers.

- A. He saw Becky only once a year.
- B. Last year Becky spent so much time texting that her parents imposed a new policy: no more than one hour each day on electronic devices.
- C. With a half-hearted smile, Becky hugged Tom's parents.
- D. Becky stuffed her hands into the pockets of her jeans.
- E. Tom, Becky, and Eric decided they would search inside their RVs to see what they could find.

5. Read the summary of the passage.

Three families vacation at a campground that is hosting an event called National Tom Sawyer Days. When Becky arrives, she reluctantly goes with Tom to find Eric. Eric tells Tom and Becky about a fence-painting contest. In spite of losing, the families have so much fun that they decide to come back every year.

Which key events are missing? Choose **two** answers.

- A. The kids dress up in their costumes and go to the park to participate in the contest.
- B. Tom explains to Becky that there will be live entertainment and fireworks.
- C. Eric learns that Tom and Becky were named after characters in the Tom Sawyer books.
- D. Two boys, Tom and Eric, become friends after tossing a baseball back and forth with each other.
- E. Tom explains to Eric that, every year, Tom's and Becky's families go on a camping trip together.



Reading AMI Instructions

Mrs. Baker

DAY 2

- Read “*Marvelous Movie Music*”
- Complete Questions



Marvelous Movie Music

Movie lovers look forward to the Academy Awards. Each Academy Award winner receives the classic gold statue called the Oscar for outstanding work in creating movies. The Oscar awards go to famous actors and directors. Awards also go to behind-the-scenes people, such as costume designers, make-up artists, and musicians. These are all people who contribute to the production of films for the big screen.

Several categories of the Academy Awards recognize and reward the artistry of the musicians who compose and produce movie soundtracks. Film music is a fascinating part of moviemaking. With this genre, all possible forms of music can come together to set the tone for each scene in a film. Music affects our emotions, awakening a variety of feelings. Often, when watching a movie, we may not notice the music. But that soundtrack that gets stuck in your head long after the movie is over represents endless hours of creative work and collaboration among many people.

It takes a certain personality to compose music for films, since many years of solitary effort may be required to polish an elaborate symphony. On the other hand, film composers must also work together quickly and be prepared to make changes to how their final product sounds. Jazz and pop composers often perform their music themselves. Most film composers, however, work with different musicians. They may work with singers, instrumentalists, or even an entire orchestra.

In earlier years of moviemaking, a film composer received a script, wrote music, and supervised a recording. Hollywood movie studios had some of the world's best orchestras and singers. But once the recording had been "cut," or completed, the director could not ask for changes. These days, a composer can share computer files with the director during the production process. This gives everyone involved flexibility in choosing the lengths of music clips and in deciding where to use them in the film.

A full-length movie requires about an hour's worth of music. The composer might weave together four or five "themes," or melodies. Often, these melodies are associated with important places or characters in the story. These melodies occur repeatedly, perhaps on different instruments and maybe with sung lyrics. A listener might notice sound effects embedded in the music, such as a "crash" of piano keys as something hits the floor. A surprising harmony might go along with a surprise on the screen. The film composer's job is sometimes to communicate ideas in the film with music. Most of the time, though, the music stays in the background and adds to the movie viewer's emotional experience.

One film composer's name stands out from the crowd. John Williams wrote the theme music for *Star Wars*, the Harry Potter films, and many others. Symphony orchestras regularly perform his sophisticated music. Though Williams has written numerous pieces of music not intended for use in films, he is best known for his movie soundtracks. These soundtracks have led to him winning five Oscars.

The first female composer to win an Oscar for her film work was Rachel Portman. She won the Oscar in 1997 for the musical soundtrack to a movie called *Emma*. She was nominated for two others. Portman's impressive path to success in composing started when she was only fourteen years old. She began composing music on the piano and moved into more complex arrangements. She's created many hours of original music, including soundtracks for television. In addition, she has worked with countless well-known movie directors to create film soundtracks. Among her orchestral accomplishments are the opera *The Little Prince* and a musical called *Little House on the Prairie*.

There is more than one path in learning to make music for the movies. Many film composers begin with classical training on an instrument, often the piano. However, there are plenty of film composers who are self-taught or who work entirely on computers. It definitely helps composers to listen to a wide variety of music. Student composers often partner with beginning directors. Students sometimes take notes while watching and listening to their favorite movies to help guide them in writing their own music.

Of course, it is rare that film composers start off working with a big studio on next year's box office hit. They might launch their careers working on TV shows or on job-training videos. They might compose music for video games. It can take years of these types of experiences before a composer gets the opportunity to work on a movie.

Next time Oscar season rolls around, we should all pay closer attention to the awards for movie music. The soundtrack meaningfully adds to the experience of watching a movie. Composing music that people remember long after seeing a movie takes talent and hard work. It sometimes even wins an award!

6. Which excerpt from the passage **best** supports the author's claim that film composers must have a special personality?

- A. . . . work together quickly and be prepared to make changes to how their final product sounds.
- B. . . . can share computer files with the director during the production process.
- C. . . . might weave together four or five "themes," or melodies.
- D. . . . to communicate ideas in the film with music.

7. Circle the underlined word that means "to incorporate or contain as an essential part or characteristic."

A full-length movie requires about an hour's worth of music. The composer might weave together four or five "themes," or melodies. Often, these melodies are associated with important places or characters in the story. These melodies occur repeatedly, perhaps on different instruments and maybe with sung lyrics. A listener might notice sound effects embedded in the music, such as a "crash" of piano keys as something hits the floor. A surprising harmony might go along with a surprise on the screen. The film composer's job is sometimes to communicate ideas in the film with music.

8. This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

With which statement would the author **most likely** agree?

- A. A film must use music created by expert musicians to be successful.
- B. Those who compose music for movies should be paid as much as a director.
- C. The music in a movie can fundamentally alter the meaning of a segment of the plot.
- D. Anyone with an interest in music can gain employment in the movie-music industry.

Part B

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer to part A?

- A. With this genre, all possible forms of music can come together to set the tone for each scene in a film.
- B. They may work with singers, instrumentalists, or even an entire orchestra.
- C. In earlier years of moviemaking, a film composer received a script, wrote music, and supervised a recording.
- D. However, there are plenty of film composers who are self-taught or who work entirely on computers.

9. Read the inference.

Becoming a film composer is a difficult task.

Which pieces of evidence from the passage **best** support the inference? Choose **two** answers.

- A. A composer can work with a director to decide which music clips to use in a film.
- B. A composer learns about a variety of music and may have extensive training as a musician.
- C. A composer uses melodies that may be related to certain settings or characters in a story.
- D. A composer may work for years in different jobs before getting to write music for a movie.
- E. A composer may write things down while watching and listening to a movie.

10. Which sentences **best** express the central ideas of the passage? Choose **two** answers.
- A. Music adds an important element to films.
 - B. Movies rely on various forms of music to create moods.
 - C. People who create memorable music often win prestigious awards.
 - D. Composing movie music is a challenging career that contributes great artistic value.
 - E. A person must first have classical training on an instrument to create music for films.



Reading AMI Instructions

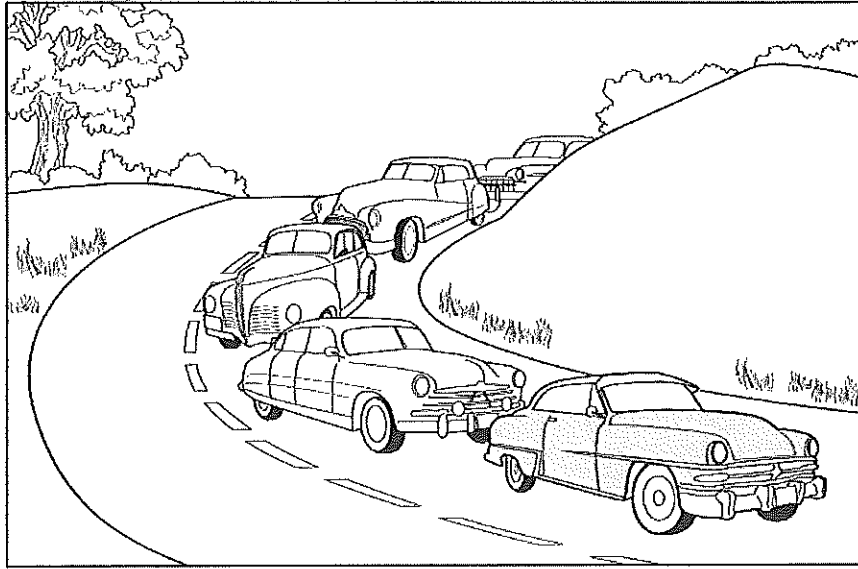
Mrs. Baker

DAY 3

- Read “*Road Trip*”
- Answer Questions



Road Trip



It had been hot and humid since they left Independence, Missouri, on June 19. It was especially steamy on the afternoon of July 5, 1953. The former president of the United States was behind the wheel of his new Chrysler automobile. A man of habit, President Harry S Truman wore an off-white summer suit, a white shirt, and a colorful bow tie. A white hat with a deep-blue band topped his head. During the heat of the day, the president drove in his shirt sleeves with his jacket draped over the seat. Bess Truman, in a simple blue print dress dotted with yellow flowers, sat in the front seat beside her husband.

"Bess," Harry said as they drove along in the left lane of the highway, "I think this vacation is a wonderful idea. When we were in the White House, we were constantly being surrounded by photographers, security people, and other government officials. With no one bothering us, we are free as birds. Isn't that grand?"

She looked at her husband out of the corner of her eye, saying, "Watch your speed, Harry."

"The speed limit posted on this section of road is 60 miles per hour," Harry argued. "I am not exceeding the speed limit, my dear."

"Harry, you know you drive too fast," Bess replied. "You promised you wouldn't go any faster than 55."

Harry nodded his agreement and kept the vehicle at the promised speed.

The former president drove through Pennsylvania on the turnpike, which had two eastbound lanes and two westbound lanes. As President Truman continued driving in the left-hand lane, he couldn't resist remarking about the latest technology in his automobile.

"I think I'll have to go to engineering school just to figure out all its features," Harry commented.

"Come now, Harry," Bess said. "It certainly isn't that complicated, is it?"

Harry gripped the large steering wheel firmly with both hands. His eyes widened behind his glasses as he spoke of the vehicle's fantastic features. "Why, this car has power steering, power brakes, and an automatic transmission. Can you imagine that?"

Bess glanced over at the speedometer and, once again, reminded her husband to slow down.

During his nearly eight years in the White House, the president didn't drive his own car. A chauffeur was employed for the task of driving. Harry loved everything about owning and driving his own automobile. He took meticulous care of his new Chrysler, continuously polishing the shiny black exterior and cleaning the fabric seats. The car, like its owner, was always neat as a pin.

Despite the heat of the day, the couple entertained each other with casual observations and stories from their past, some humorous, some sad, as they continued driving in the left-hand lane.

"I'm glad we have this time to ourselves," Harry said. "I'm tired of being mobbed by people. Doesn't it seem the president is always at the center of one sort of commotion or another? Now that's all over with and we can just be ordinary people and blend in with the crowd."

"I'm pretty sure we'll be recognized while we're on this vacation," Bess replied. "Our pictures have been in the newspapers a great deal during your presidency, Harry."

"We are old news," Harry said, smiling broadly. "There's someone new in the Oval Office. I don't think we'll be recognized as long as we keep a low profile and mind our own business."

"Watch your speed, Harry," Bess insisted.

As the couple continued driving in the left lane on the stretch of highway near Bedford, Pennsylvania, they paid no attention to the line of cars following them. However, they were both surprised when a state trooper pulled up alongside them in the right lane. The trooper turned on his flashers and signaled Harry to pull over to the side of the road.

"Oh, Bess," Harry said, "you might be right after all. I think we've been spotted. It looks like this officer wants to meet us."

Harry pulled off the roadway and watched as the police cruiser pulled in front of them. The trooper grabbed his ticket book and walked back to the shiny black Chrysler. When he looked inside the car, he got the shock of his life.

"Mr. President?"

Harry S Truman's big, toothy grin was unmistakable. Bess, however, was not amused.

"Was he driving too fast?" she asked pointedly. "I kept reminding him to watch his speed."

"No, ma'am," the trooper replied. "There was a line of cars behind you, and in Pennsylvania it's against the law to pass on the right." The officer swallowed hard before continuing. "The president was driving too slowly."

11. "Road Trip" is set in 1953. How does Harry S Truman's character in the passage reflect this historical time period?
- A. Harry is on a long trip.
 - B. Harry misses his chauffeur.
 - C. Harry is photographed for newspapers.
 - D. Harry is amazed by the latest technology in his car.
12. How does the author develop the differences in the points of view of Bess and Harry S Truman?
- A. by including their dialogue during the trip
 - B. by stating their reactions to the heat
 - C. by explaining their past occupations
 - D. by describing their attire in detail
13. Read the sentences from the passage.

"Come now, Harry," Bess said. "It certainly isn't that complicated, is it?"

Which words **best** express the tone created by Bess's word choice in the sentences? Choose **two** answers.

- A. dismissive
- B. gloomy
- C. impatient
- D. knowledgeable
- E. tender

14. Read the chart and the choices in the Answer Bank. Identify the overall structure of the passage and how the structure contributes to the meaning of the passage. Write the letters of the correct answers in the chart.

Overall Structure	How the Structure Contributes to Meaning

Answer Bank

Overall Structure

- A. compare and contrast
- B. cause and effect
- C. description
- D. chronology

How the Structure Contributes to Meaning

- E. tells the story of their drive through Pennsylvania
- F. uses vivid language to detail the setting of the state of Missouri
- G. explains the connection between leaving Missouri and arriving in Pennsylvania
- H. outlines the similarities and differences between Harry S Truman and other presidents

15. Circle the **two** underlined phrases that provide clues to the meaning of the word signaled as it is used in the passage.

As the couple continued driving in the left lane on the stretch of highway near Bedford, Pennsylvania, they paid no attention to the line of cars following them. However, they were both surprised when a state trooper pulled up alongside them in the right lane. The trooper turned on his flashers and signaled Harry to pull over to the side of the road.



Reading AMI Instructions

Mrs. Baker

Day 4

- Read “*Real Life in the Classroom*”



Real Life in the Classroom

Many students achieve good grades throughout middle school and high school. Yet, when they graduate, they are unable to cook a meal or create a spending budget. All students need to know these basic, important life skills. They also need to develop independent thinking and problem-solving skills that appeal to future employers. However, many schools do not offer courses that teach any of these skills. Instead, courses focus mainly on academic subjects, like math, English, history, and science.

Schools need to offer classes that relate more directly to real life. Then, students will be more engaged in school and better prepared to deal with life's challenges when they become adults. Capturing students' interest helps ensure that they will stay in school and graduate. Classes that relate to real life meet this goal. In fact, four out of five students who dropped out of school said they wanted more-interesting classes with real-life learning. Oftentimes, this means hands-on learning.

The good news is that some middle schools are finding ways to bring together academic and life skills. In North Carolina, career exploration labs require students to learn math, science, and social studies as they develop job skills and learn about different future career options. In another program, Illinois students learn academic subjects by studying local businesses. Based on their interests, students are paired with businesses and become familiar with the latest technology in the business world. In Wisconsin, students study topics based on ideas that come directly from the students, such as family, community, and career. The units of study join together academic, business, and home-economics skills.

Practical life-skill programs such as these not only are enjoyable for students but also prepare young people for the demands of real life. They expose students to a variety of different career options. Students learn to work as a team and solve problems. Schools should not neglect teaching their pupils the valuable skills that employers are seeking. Schools should also teach basic skills that students need in life and that are just as important as reading novels and solving equations.



Reading AMI Instructions

Mrs. Baker

Day 5

- Read “*Academics in Middle School*”
- Answer Questions



Academics in Middle School

Middle school teachers do an admirable job of teaching and building relationships with their students. Middle school is a time when many young adolescents can explore their academic interests in the classroom. Recently, teachers at this level have been pushed to develop curricula that help students explore skills outside of the usual academic courses. In these programs, students learn to cook, care for children, and manage money. These expectations are exciting and challenging for teachers and students alike. However, the primary duty of schools is to teach students the academic skills they need. Thus, schools must focus primarily on math, English, science, and history. Over the years, as our society has advanced, classes have become more challenging. It is no longer unusual for an eighth-grade student to take algebra. In English class, students read fiction as well as nonfiction and learn to write well-developed essays. The amount of science and social studies knowledge that middle school students must master has grown. This is natural as society progresses.

Of course, there is still room for a few electives beyond the core subjects. These electives may include art, physical education, music, and foreign language. However, the number of these classes a school can offer is limited by the amount of time in the school day and the budget for teachers and equipment. In addition, there are the cries for courses that teach skills like cooking, woodworking, planning a budget, and writing a résumé. On their own, each of these skills is important. However, schools do not have the time and money to offer them all—not if they also want to offer a quality academic program.

Many of the life skills that people would like schools to teach should be taught at home. Creative choices need to be considered in partnership with home and the community. Families can take advantage of community classes that teach these skills in the evening or on weekends for free or at a low cost. It is important to look at options for developing these skills outside of school. That way, schools can continue to focus on what they do best: teaching students key academic skills.

16. Which sentence from "Real Life in the Classroom" provides the **most** relevant and sufficient evidence for the claim that taking practical types of classes may help students stay engaged in school?
- A. They also need to develop independent thinking and problem-solving skills that appeal to future employers.
 - B. Capturing students' interest helps ensure that they will stay in school and graduate.
 - C. In fact, four out of five students who dropped out of school said they wanted more-interesting classes with real-life learning.
 - D. In Wisconsin, students study topics based on ideas that come directly from the students, such as family, community, and career.

17. This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

Based on "Real Life in the Classroom," which inference can **best** be made about the merit of programs like those in North Carolina and Illinois?

- A. They lead to students getting jobs with the companies they study.
- B. They allow students to receive extra tutoring in academic subjects.
- C. They allow students to have real-world experiences that will help them as adults.
- D. They lead to students performing better in academic subjects while in high school.

Part B

Which sentences from the passage provide the **best** evidence for the answer to part A? Choose **two** answers.

- A. Many students achieve good grades throughout middle school and high school.
- B. Yet, when they graduate, they are unable to cook a meal or create a spending budget.
- C. Instead, courses focus mainly on academic subjects, like math, English, history, and science.
- D. Based on their interests, students are paired with businesses and become familiar with the latest technology in the business world.
- E. They expose students to a variety of different career options.

18. Which sentences **best** express the central ideas of "Academics in Middle School"? Choose **two** answers.

- A. Middle schools should reduce the number of advanced classes that they offer.
- B. Middle schools should work to develop more mentoring programs between teachers and students.
- C. Middle schools should focus primarily on teaching core academic subjects, such as math, history, and science.
- D. Middle school students should learn life skills such as cooking, budget writing, and woodworking at home or in community classes.
- E. Middle school students should take additional courses in subjects such as art, music, and physical education before they enter high school.

19. Based on "Academics in Middle School," which details **best** support the author's claim that it is impractical for schools to offer life-skill classes?
- A. There are not enough rooms in each school or enough money to be able to offer life-skill classes.
 - B. There is not enough money in school budgets or time in the school day to support life-skill classes.
 - C. There is not enough time during the school day or student interest to offer life-skill classes.
 - D. There are not enough teachers certified for or students interested in life-skill classes.

20. Read the sentence from "Academics in Middle School."

Recently, teachers at this level have been pushed to develop curricula that help students explore skills outside of the usual academic courses.

How does the word choice of pushed contribute to the tone of the sentence?

- A. It helps to create a friendly tone.
- B. It helps to create a sense of urgency.
- C. It helps to develop a questioning tone.
- D. It helps to develop a sense of hopefulness.