Ms. Jones
Snow Packet
Day 4

1. Read "Middle school students" and "Students and parents..."
2. Answer the reading comprehension quiz questions at the end of each story.
3. Answer the following prompt in at least 5 complete sentences. Use evidence from the articles (with citations!) to support your answer.

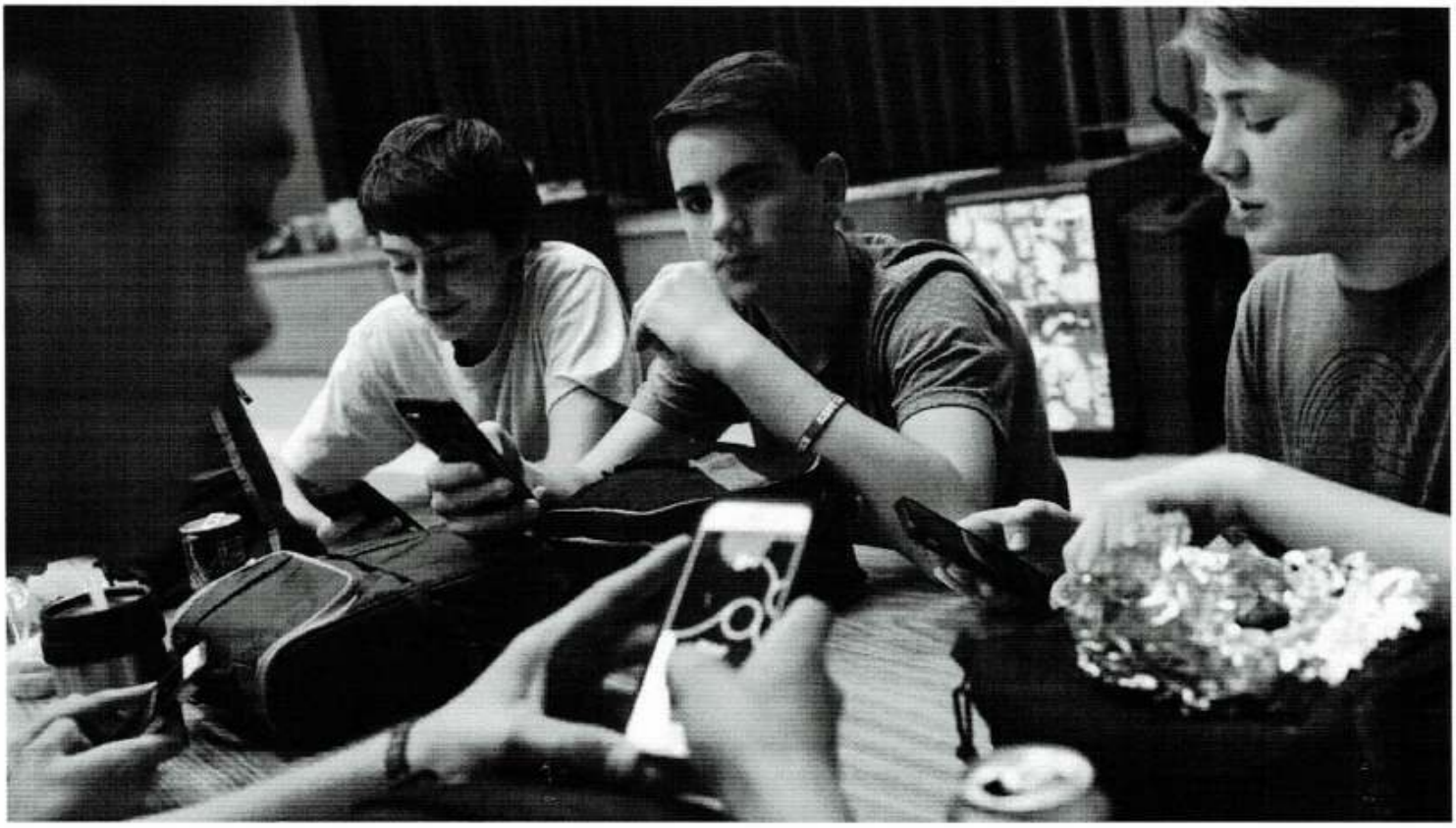
Prompt:
What are the biggest issues with school today and how can students help to fix these problems?

*Write your MLA header on each page
*Return all work the next school day

newsela

Cellphones in schools give more screen time to overloaded students

By Washington Post, adapted by Newsela staff on 11.20.17
Word Count **705**
Level **610L**



Students (from left) Jack Doyle, Ryan Ward, Aiden Franz and Gray Rager use their cellphones during lunch at Westland Middle School in Bethesda, Maryland. Photo by: Washington Post by Michael Robinson Chavez

Kids started bringing cellphones to school many years ago. Educators still don't know what to do about it, though.

Should they allow cellphones in elementary schools? What about letting middle-schoolers use them at lunch? Which rules make the sense?

Montgomery County Public Schools is Maryland's biggest school system. Students, parents and educators at these schools are in the middle of a big argument about these questions.

The district just changed its rules. Before, kids in fifth grade and younger could have cellphones only with special permission. But over the years, more parents wanted their kids to take phones to school. Many believed kids would be safer when they walked home.

Now, the district says kids can bring them to school. Students still can't use phones during school, unless a teacher uses them as part of a lesson. They may use them after school is over and on the bus.

Some parents have objected. They are shocked that children as young as 6 or 7 are allowed to bring smartphones to school.

Too Much Screen Time

"A phone would be more of a distraction," said Art Bennett. He has three children in school. He said that unless there's a good reason, there shouldn't be phones in elementary school at all.

The new rules also allow middle school students to use cellphones during lunch. The principals have to give the OK, though. Some parents are not very happy about this, either. They are already worried that their kids spend too much time on screens.

"We all know the phone is a blessing and a curse," said Lisa Cline. She is part of the PTA. That stands for Parent Teacher Association. Cline helps run a safe technology committee for a group of PTAs.

Little Adults

"I don't see why we want to make these children into little adults," Cline said.

Different schools handle cellphones in different ways. Some schools ban smartphones. Others allow them in hallways or during lunch periods. Some schools let teachers use them as part of a lesson.

Elizabeth Englander is a professor. She teaches at Bridgewater State University in Massachusetts. "Nobody really knows what to do," she said.

Englander recently studied third-graders in five states. She found that four out of 10 had a cellphone. That number doubled from 2013 to 2017. Among kids who had a phone, most brought the phone to school every day.

In Montgomery, school system officials say the times are changing. More parents are buying their children phones. And more children are taking these phones to school.

Still, many parents want their kids to talk with people face-to-face. They say it helps students develop social skills and make friends. It also helps them learn to deal with uncomfortable situations. These parents worry that phones will get in the way.

Almost No One Talked At Lunch

Angie Melton has two children in middle school. She said her kids' school allowed phones for a week. Her kids said that almost no one talked at lunch that week.

"They get in their virtual worlds," she said. "I want them in the real world."

Justus Swan is 11 years old. He said he is in no hurry to bring cellphones to the cafeteria. Lunch is about talking to other kids.

"It defeats the point," Justus said.

But the phone-friendly lunch has supporters.

Gary Rager is 14 and goes to Westland Middle School. He said that having phones at lunch is a good thing. Kids can text parents. They can check their grades online. They can also play music and watch videos, he said.

"It's a nice freedom to have," he said.

Students And Parents Disagree

His school took a survey. Most students liked the idea of phones at lunch. But most parents did not, said Westland Principal Alison Serino.

Principal Serino has offered a compromise. Kids can have cellphones during lunch on Fridays. They have to follow the rules, though. No Snapchat or Instagram. No violent games. No taking photos or videos. Also, kids must wear ear buds if they are playing music.

Quiz

1 Which detail BEST shows that there is a lot of disagreement about what cellphone rules schools should have?

(A) Should they allow cellphones in elementary schools? What about letting middle-schoolers use them at lunch?

(B) Students, parents and educators at these schools are in the middle of a big argument about these questions.

(C) The district just changed its rules. Before, kids in fifth grade and younger could have cellphones only with special permission.

(D) They are shocked that children as young as 6 or 7 are allowed to bring smartphones to school.

2 Read the section "Little Adults."

Select the paragraph that gives examples of school cellphone rules.

3 Read the selection from "Too Much Screen Time."

"A phone would be more of a distraction," said Art Bennett.

What is Art Bennett's point of view about using cellphones in school?

(A) He believes that no student should be allowed to have a cellphone.

(B) He thinks that phones could take students' attention away from learning.

(C) He wants phones only to be used at lunch.

(D) He doesn't think that phones help keep students safe.

4 Which statement would Gary Rager be MOST likely to agree with?

(A) Students should spend their lunch time talking to their friends.

(B) Kids should be able to use Instagram and Snapchat during lunch.

(C) Using a cellphone during the day is a good break for a student.

(D) Schools should have stricter rules about using cellphones in schools.

Thousands of students work to make middle school lunchrooms friendlier

By St. Louis Post-Dispatch, adapted by Newsela staff on 02.24.15
Word Count **686**
Level **1020L**

"I am uncomfortable. I am not used to this," said Kyle Johnson, 14, who cringes as he realizes his blue card does not match the purple color of his usual lunch table friends at Rogers Middle School in Affton, Missouri. The school participated in No One Eats Alone Day by encouraging students to talk to kids outside of their immediate social circle by switching up lunch seating. Laurie Skrivan/St. Louis Post-Dispatch/TNS

For many kids, middle schools is no picnic. There's awkwardness, cliques and bullying. There are the challenges of puberty and low-self esteem -- or maybe too much self-esteem.

It can all collide in the cafeteria, leaving some kids feeling invisible and like they don't fit in.

A national campaign called "No One Eats Alone Day" is taking aim at social isolation among middle schoolers.

Beyond Differences

Schools are picking up on the student-led program, and more than 300,000 students across the country have signed up to participate. In just a year, participation grew from 35 schools in 2014 to more than 700.

The program was created by Beyond Differences, a national nonprofit group. Its mission is to change the culture in middle schools to make kids feel more accepted and valued.

Social isolation and bullying are now considered huge problems in schools. The program tries to reverse this trend by giving students simple and fun ways to include others during lunchtime — making sure no one eats alone, said Laura Talmus. She is the founder of Beyond Differences.

Middle school was a rough couple of years for Talmus' daughter, Lili Smith, who was born with a cranial facial syndrome. Children with the condition have facial or skull bones that do not grow normally.

"She Felt Invisible"

Talmus said her daughter would finish her lunch at school and call from the restroom crying.

"She would call me almost daily, 'Mom, I have nobody to eat with, and the girls don't want me to sit with them,'" Talmus said. "Lili was never teased or bullied, but was almost suffering as much because she felt invisible."

Lili died at the age of 15 from medical complications of her condition. Afterward, a group of teens from the community banded together to bring change to their local schools.

It's not an easy task.

At Rogers Middle School in Affton, Missouri, resistance to No One Eats Alone Day began after students learned of it through the morning announcements. The student organizers heard that a lot of students were worried that they wouldn't get to sit next to their friends.

Uncomfortable Situation

On Friday, the student members of the school's Mistreatment Leadership Team, an anti-bullying group, placed conversation starters on the round tables in their cafeteria. There were questions like, "Who is your favorite celeb?" and "Who is your role model?"

The students waited nervously with pieces of paper to hand out to classmates, color-coded to randomly assign them to tables.

When the lunch bell rang, there was loud disappointment among those who were separated. Others ran and hugged their friends when they realized they would be at the same table.

Some tried to make the best of what they said was an uncomfortable situation.

"I would much rather sit alone than with people I don't know, to be honest," said Cori Caby, a seventh-grader who was at a table with some students she usually sits with and some she doesn't.

Some Successes Too

Some quietly switched cards so they could sit with their friends. Some got on their cellphones, an easy way to get out of talking to people you don't know.

No one thought kids were going to become best friends after just one lunch.

The day was more about being aware of other people's feelings, and encouraging students to reach out and start a conversation with someone they normally don't talk to, said Reece Black. He is an eighth-grader and one of the organizers. Reece called out at least one table of kids sitting with their usual group.

But he saw successes, too.

Sixth-graders Jenna Walden and Avarry Wilkerson ended up at a table by themselves. When they noticed that Alexander Scherer, a new student at school, was alone, they moved over to sit with him. As he ate his lunch, he and the girls talked about Six Flags.

"By the way, I'm Avarry," she said to Alexander, just as lunch was wrapping up.

Reece and the other student leaders say they saw other examples of kids reaching out.

"So that was pretty cool," Reece said.

Quiz

1 Select the paragraph from the section "Beyond Differences" that BEST explains the goal of the "No One Eats Alone Day" campaign.

2 Select the sentence from the article that BEST shows that some students don't want to participate in the program.

(A) The students waited nervously with pieces of paper to hand out to classmates, color-coded to randomly assign them to tables.

(B) When the lunch bell rang, there was loud disappointment among those who were separated.

(C) Some quietly switched cards so they could sit with their friends.

(D) Sixth-graders Jenna Walden and Avarry Wilkerson ended up at a table by themselves.

3 Read the sentence from the section "Beyond Differences."

Social isolation and bullying are now considered huge problems in schools.

From which of the following sentences can you understand the meaning of the word "isolation"?

(A) "She would call me almost daily, 'Mom, I have nobody to eat with, and the girls don't want me to sit with them,'" Talmus said.

(B) At Rogers Middle School in Affton, Missouri, resistance to No One Eats Alone Day began after students learned of it through the morning announcements.

(C) When the lunch bell rang, there was loud disappointment among those who were separated.

(D) "I would much rather sit alone than with people I don't know, to be honest," said Cori Caby, a seventh-grader who was at a table with some students she usually sits with and some she doesn't.

4 Which of the following sentences from the article contains a phrase that has the SAME meaning as "communicating"?

(A) A national campaign called "No One Eats Alone Day" is taking aim at social isolation among middle schoolers.

(B) "She would call me almost daily, 'Mom, I have nobody to eat with, and the girls don't want me to sit with them,'" Talmus said.

(C) Its mission is to change the culture in middle schools to make kids feel more accepted and valued.

(D) Reece and the other student leaders say they saw other examples of kids reaching out.

Ms. Jones
Snow Packet
Day 5

1. Read Young people in North Korea" and "Dr. Suess exhibit..."
2. Answer the reading comprehension quiz questions at the end of each story.
3. Answer the following prompt in at least 5 complete sentences. Use evidence from the articles (with citations!) to support your answer.

Prompt:
How is art a reflection of culture? How does it impact each of our lives?

*Write your MLA header on each page
*Return all work the next school day

North Koreans are defecting to South Korea because of K-pop

By The Washington Post, adapted by Newsela staff on 09.03.19
Word Count **741**
Level **830L**

Image 1. Ryu Hee-jin practices dance moves at a dance studio in Seoul, South Korea, on June 23, 2019. Photo by: Jean Chung/The Washington Post

SEOUL, South Korea — Ryu Hee-jin grew up in North Korea and sang songs about her country. The songs praised the country's leader.

One day she heard American and South Korean pop music. She could not believe how different it was. "When you listen to North Korean music, you have no emotions, but when you listen to American or South Korean music, it gives you the chills," she said. "The lyrics are so fresh, so relatable."

North Korean Control

North Korea became a country in 1948, after World War II ended. The United States and the Soviet Union, now the country of Russia, were two winners in the war that involved many countries around the world. Japan was also on the losing side of the war. Japan controlled Korea at the time. The United States and Soviet Union punished Japan by dividing the region of Korea in half. The United States helped establish the country of South Korea, which became a democratic

nation with a strong economy built around technology. The Soviet Union helped form North Korea. Because the Soviet Union was a communist country, North Korea became a communist country. They decided to have paternal line of succession in their government. This means the government can only be led by men from the same family. That family is the Kim family.

Under a communist government, people cannot own land or vote for a leader. In North Korea, citizens need permission to leave the country, and it is difficult for visitors to enter. The government owns and controls everything. The government controls what people can watch on television and what music they hear. The people of North Korea do not know much of what happens outside, or even inside, of their country.

Now, K-pop, pop music from South Korea, seems to be changing that. This music is causing some people to question what the North Korean government tells them. Many people are defecting. They secretly leave North Korea to live in another country. More and more defectors say that music is partly what led them to doubt their government.

As more people get cellphones in North Korea, more people are able to listen to K-pop. They also get South Korean music and movies through the country's busy trade business with China. The North Korean government is against the music. The leader of the country, Kim Jong Un, has vowed to "crush" it.

High-Risk Entertainment For North Koreans

The risks for people in North Korea are real. There is a special unit of the police in charge of stopping pop culture. Even people under 18 years old who are caught can face up to a year in a re-education camp. Adults can face a lifetime of hard labor or they could even be killed.

Ryu is one of many defectors who say K-pop and Western popular music opened their eyes. In 2015, at age 23, she defected to the South.

Blue jeans are not allowed in North Korea. Once I wore jeans to the market," said 22-year-old Kang Na-ra. "I was told I had to take them off. They were burned in front of my eyes." Kang defected to South Korea in 2014, so "I could express myself freely."

North Korea's leaders often say one thing and do something different when it comes to the South. Last year, Kim Jong Un attended a South Korean K-pop show in the capital of North Korea. The concert was shown on TV in the South. Only small bits were shown on the news in the North.

Do As He Says, Not As He Does

One woman, who escaped North Korea last year, said she secretly watched a video of the concert. "Kim Jong Un clapped and cheered," she said. Meanwhile, she and her friends had to watch illegal video footage. The country's ruler did not have to follow the strict rules he made for his own people.

After Ryu defected, she saw a documentary on Kim Jong Il, an old leader of the country and the father of the current leader. She learned he had been a fan of South Korean movies and TV shows. "I was so, so angry," she said.

These days, Ryu is studying for a business degree but dreams of becoming a K-pop singer. "It's so incredible how far I have come," she said. "South Korean music really played a central role in

guiding me through this journey."

Quiz

1 Read the following paragraph from the section "High-Risk Entertainment For North Koreans."

> *The risks for people in North Korea are real. There is a special unit of the police in charge of stopping pop culture. Even people under 18 years old who are caught can face up to a year in a re-education camp. Adults can face a lifetime of hard labor or they could even be killed.*

Which of the following is an accurate explanation of what this paragraph means?

(A) People in North Korea disagree about which kinds of music are best.

(B) People in North Korea face severe consequences for listening to pop music.

(C) People in North Korea have found ways to listen to pop music in secret.

(D) People in North Korea are protesting the strict rules their government makes.

2 Read the section "North Korean Control."

Select the paragraph from the section that explains HOW music is inspiring North Koreans to seek freedom.

(A) North Korea became a country in 1948, after World War II ended. The United States and the Soviet Union, now the country of Russia, were two winners in the war that involved many countries around the world. Japan was also on the losing side of the war. Japan controlled Korea at the time. The United States and Soviet Union punished Japan by dividing the region of Korea in half. The United States helped establish the country of South Korea, which became a democratic nation with a strong economy built around technology. The Soviet Union helped form North Korea. Because the Soviet Union was a communist country, North Korea became a communist country. They decided to have paternal line of succession in their government. This means the government can only be led by men from the same family. That

(B) Under a communist government, people cannot own land or vote for a leader. In North Korea, citizens need permission to leave the country, and it is difficult for visitors to enter. The government owns and controls everything. The government controls what people can watch on television and what music they hear. The people of North Korea do not know much of what happens outside, or even inside, of their country.

(C) Now, K-pop, pop music from South Korea, seems to be changing that. This music is causing some people to question what the North Korean government tells them. Many people are defecting. They secretly leave North Korea to live in another country. More and more defectors say that music is partly what led them to doubt their government.

(D) As more people get cellphones in North Korea, more people are able to listen to K-pop. They also get South Korean music and movies through the country's busy trade business with China. The North Korean government is against the music. The leader of the country, Kim Jong Un, has vowed to "crush" it.

3 What caused Kang Na-ra to defect to South Korea?

(A) She wanted to study for a business degree.

(B) She wanted to live in a communist country.

(C) She wanted to become a K-pop singer.

(D) She wanted to be able to express herself freely.

4 WHY did Ryu Hee-jin feel angry after seeing a documentary on Kim Jong Il?

(A) She learned that he was a fan of South Korean movies and TV shows, even though he forbid his country's people from watching them.

(B) She learned that he was the father of the current leader, Kim Jong Un, and gave him the job of leading the country without being qualified.

(C) She learned that he punished people for watching illegal footage of a K-pop concert that was given in the capital of North Korea.

(D) She learned that he once punished a young woman for wearing blue jeans to the market by burning the jeans in front of her.

Dr. Seuss exhibit brings "The Lorax" and "Horton Hears a Who!" to life

By Associated Press, adapted by Newsela staff on 09.03.19
Word Count **531**
Level **700L**

Image 1. This undated rendering provided by Dr. Seuss Enterprises shows a balloon maze that will be incorporated as part of a touring immersive attraction tied to the work of the famous late author and illustrator of children's books. Photo by: Kilburn Experiences, LLC/Dr. Seuss Enterprises via AP

BOSTON, Massachusetts — Dr. Seuss was a beloved children's writer. During the fall of 2019, people will be able to explore his work in a new way. A large exhibit based on Dr. Seuss' books will travel the country.

The show is centered on a maze. A maze is a set of paths that people have to find their way out of. Thousands of balloons will hang above it. The maze is based on the Dr. Seuss book "Oh, the Places You'll Go." The book urges children to explore the world and work through challenges. Children and adults will also be able to explore other rooms. Each room will be based on other famous Dr. Seuss books. Examples include "The Cat in the Hat" and "The Lorax."

The show was announced on Wednesday, August 28. The first opening will take place in Toronto, Canada, in October. The entire display will be 15,000 square feet, about the size of a hockey

rink. There are plans to take the show to several North American cities. Some include Boston, Massachusetts; Seattle, Washington; and Houston, Texas.

Truffula Trees And Pink Clover

"I wanted to explore the books and bring the characters to life in a new and engaging way," said Susan Brandt. She runs Dr. Seuss Enterprises. The California company protects the writer's work and brings it to new formats. The company was founded by the late Audrey Geisel. She was the wife of Theodor Seuss Geisel. Geisel wrote and drew pictures for children's books under the name Dr. Seuss.

The room based on "The Lorax" is full of truffula trees. In the book, the Lorax tries to save the fictional trees. The "If I Ran the Circus" room will have a working merry-go-round. The "Horton Hears a Who!" room will be filled with a field of waist-high pink clover.

Dr. Seuss Enterprises has been working on the exhibit with Kilburn Live. The company is part of Kilburn Media. It is an entertainment company in Los Angeles, California. The company plans special events.

The companies have been planning the show for two years. Kilburn wanted to do the project because it was unlike anything else the company had done.

Teaching Important Lessons

The exhibit is doing more than just encouraging people to read. The show also pushes the helpful messages in Dr. Seuss books, said Mark Manuel. He started and continues to run Kilburn.

For example, "The Lorax" teaches people to protect the environment. The book "The Sneetches and Other Stories" teaches tolerance and individuality, Manuel said.

The show will change in every city. Some rooms will be replaced with new ones. The rooms will even change based on the time of year. A "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" room is planned for the holiday season.

"Our goal is to have children shriek with joy," Manuel said.

Quiz

1 Which detail supports the conclusion that the exhibit shows important messages in Dr. Seuss' books?

(A) There are plans to take the show to several North American cities. Some include Boston, Massachusetts; Seattle, Washington and Houston, Texas.

(B) The companies have been planning the show for two years. Kilburn wanted to do the project because it was unlike anything else the company had done.

(C) For example, "The Lorax" teaches people to protect the environment. The book "The Sneetches and Other Stories" teaches tolerance and individuality, Manuel said.

(D) Some rooms will be replaced with new ones. The rooms will even change based on the time of year. A "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" room is planned for the holiday season.

2 Read the section "Truffula Trees And Pink Clover."

Which selection explains the purpose of Dr. Seuss Enterprises?

(A) The California company protects the writer's work and brings it to new formats.

(B) The company was founded by the late Audrey Geisel. She was the wife of Theodor Seuss Geisel.

(C) Geisel wrote and drew pictures for children's books under the name Dr. Seuss.

(D) The company is part of Kilburn Media. It is an entertainment company in Los Angeles, California.

3 Examine Image 2.

How does this image help the reader understand the Dr. Seuss exhibit better?

(A) It shows that "The Lorax" room will be filled with truffula trees.

(B) It shows the words and scenes from the "If I Ran the Circus" room.

(C) It shows that the "Horton Hears a Who!" room will have tall pink clovers.

(D) It shows the "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" room in the Dr. Seuss exhibit.

4 What do Image 1 and the text in the introduction [paragraphs 1-3] show?

(A) the places where the Dr. Seuss exhibit will travel to

(B) the room that the Dr. Seuss exhibit is centered around

(C) the way to get out of the maze in the Dr. Seuss exhibit

(D) the number of square feet the Dr. Seuss exhibit will take up