I used to be a superhero,  
Soaring high from tree to tree.  
With a cape around my shoulders,  
I was as happy as could be.

“Grow up,” my brother said.

By four, I’d made a rocket ship.  
It took me all the way to Mars.  
It started out as a cardboard box,  
Before I steered it to the stars.

“Grow up,” my sister said.

At five, I could read and write  
in every language ever heard.  
The pictures gave me all I needed.  
And crayon scrawls stood in for words.

“Grow up,” my best friend said.

At six, I put my cape away.  
At seven, a box was just a box.  
By eight, I read and wrote with ease.  
I could tell the time on clocks.

“You’re growing up,” my mother said.

I miss my cape. Sometimes I think  
that boxes still could make cool forts.  
But I have no time for make believe  
I’m busy writing school reports.

I don’t always like being grown up.
1. According to the passage, what did the child do at age six?

A. made a rocket ship
B. wrote school reports
C. pretended to be a superhero
D. put the cape away

2. Read the first stanza of the poem:

I used to be a superhero,  
Soaring from tree to tree  
With a cape around my shoulders  
I was as happy as could be

As described in this stanza, what is the author trying to convey?

A. how tall trees seem to a small child
B. the magical world of pretend play
C. why kids like to imagine they are superheroes
D. that climbing trees is easy for the child in the poem

3. By the end of the poem, how do you think the child feels about growing up?

A. happy
B. a little sad
C. worried about the future
D. bored

4. Read the following sentence from the passage: “By eight, I read and wrote with ease.”

In this sentence, the word **ease** means

A. much trouble
B. little difficulty
C. crayons
D. humor

5. The central idea of this poem is to show

A. who the child’s family and friends are
B. the child’s skills at different ages
C. that some kids never stop playing make-believe
D. how tough growing up can be
6. How does the author convey the passage of time in the poem?

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

7. What is the message of the poem? How does the writer use the cardboard box to convey that message?

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

______, the child in the poem thinks imaginatively by pretending to be a superhero.

A  Although
B  Like
C  After
D  For example
9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

At age 4, the child makes a rocket ship out of a cardboard box because the little one has a great imagination.

Who? _________________________________________________________________

(does) What? makes a rocket ship out of a cardboard box

When? ________________________________________________________________

Why? _________________________________________________________________

10. Vocabulary Word: steer: to make something such as a vehicle go in a particular direction.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: ____________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________
Teacher Guide and Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 430

Featured Text Structure: N/A

Passage Summary: “Grown Up” is a poem that describes a child’s feelings and experiences about growing up. The poem begins with the magical world of make-believe and ends with the child longing for those days.

1. According to the passage, what did the child do at age six?
   
   A. made a rocket ship  
   B. wrote school reports  
   C. pretended to be a superhero  
   D. put the cape away

2. Read the first stanza of the poem:

   I used to be a superhero,  
   Soaring from tree to tree  
   With a cape around my shoulders  
   I was as happy as could be

   As described in this stanza, what is the author trying to convey?

   A. how tall trees seem to a small child  
   B. the magical world of pretend play  
   C. why kids like to imagine they are superheroes  
   D. that climbing trees is easy for the child in the poem

3. By the end of the poem, how do you think the child feels about growing up?

   A. happy  
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4. Read the following sentence from the passage: “By eight, I read and wrote with ease.”

   In this sentence, the word ease means

   A. much trouble  
   B. little difficulty  
   C. crayons  
   D. humor
5. The central idea of this poem is to show

A who the child’s family and friends are
B the child’s skills at different ages
C that some kids never stop playing make-believe
D how tough growing up can be

6. How does the author convey the passage of time in the poem?

**Suggested answer:** The author conveys the passage of time by including the child’s various ages throughout the poem. [stanzas 3, 5, 7]

7. What is the message of the poem? How does the writer use the cardboard box to convey that message?

**Suggested answer:** Answers will vary, but the poem’s message is that growing up goes quickly and can sometimes be hard for kids. Many people told the child to grow up along the way. However, once the child is grown, there is a longing for those days of imaginary play. The writer shows how a cardboard box went from being a pretend rocket ship to just an ordinary box. By thinking about making cool forts out of boxes, the child wishes for those wonderful make-believe days again. [stanzas 3, 7, 9]

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

_____, the child in the poem thinksimaginatively by pretending to be a superhero.

A Although
B Like
C After
D For example

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

At age 4, the child makes a rocket ship out of a cardboard box because the little one has a great imagination.

Who? the child

(does) What? makes a rocket ship out of a cardboard box

When? at age 4

Why? because the little one has a great imagination

10. **Vocabulary Word**: steer: to make something such as a vehicle go in a particular direction.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.