

Name _____ Date _____

Reading

Weekly Test Lesson 14

Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Mary Margaret McBride, Writer and Radio Host

During the 1930s, no one had smartphones or MP3 players or tablets. Texting was a crazy idea, far in the future. Even television was not yet popular. Instead, thousands of Americans stopped what they were doing at 1:00 p.m. every day and tuned their radios to listen to one of the most popular radio hosts of all time, Mary Margaret McBride.

Growing up in rural Missouri, McBride probably never dreamed that her voice would be heard throughout the United States. In fact, as a young girl, McBride dreamed about becoming a writer. Always a quick learner, McBride earned a degree in journalism from the University of Missouri in two and a half years. Then the *Cleveland Press* hired McBride as a newspaper reporter. McBride enjoyed writing for the newspaper, but she wanted to live and work in New York City. After moving there, McBride had many different jobs. She was a publicity agent, a reporter, and a magazine writer.

One day, while on assignment, McBride had the opportunity to attend a radio show. She thought it was funny to watch the entertainers and announcers jostle each other as they tried to get their turn at the microphone. While radio was becoming a popular means of entertainment, McBride was glad to be entertaining people as a writer.

In 1929, the nation entered the Great Depression. Many businesses failed, and thousands of people were out of work. McBride was having a hard time getting work as a writer, but she needed a job. When a radio station advertised that it was holding auditions for a radio host, McBride tried out. She worried that the station would not like her country speech patterns. She needn't have worried; the radio station loved her Missouri accent. They hired her as the host for the radio show *Martha Deane, Grandmother*. It was a talk show in which McBride pretended to be a grandmother with several children and grandchildren. She told stories, offered advice and household hints, interviewed guests, and sold products. In fact, McBride was one of the first people to use the radio and television talk/interview show format that is still popular today.

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Later, McBride would leave *Martha Deane, Grandmother* and host her own talk show. Working both as Martha Deane and under her own name, McBride entertained listeners at the CBS, NBC, and ABC radio stations. She was famous for being able to connect with the person she was interviewing—and her listeners—as few others could. McBride put her guests at ease, resulting in conversations that were both revealing and entertaining. She read two books a night and remembered everything. With this background, McBride could quote long passages from the books of the authors she interviewed. Her guests included many famous people, such as Carl Sandburg, Pearl S. Buck, President Harry S. Truman, and Eleanor Roosevelt.

McBride quickly became the most popular woman on the radio. She often received more than 5,000 fan letters per day, many asking for her autograph. McBride had a huge portfolio filled with the letters. Her tenth anniversary celebration in Madison Square Garden was sold out and drew 20,000 admirers. However, 125,000 people had asked for tickets! There just wasn't room for them all. Her fifteenth anniversary celebration filled the much bigger Yankee Stadium, which could seat many more of her fans. She also won many awards, but more important than the awards was the fact that McBride entertained millions of Americans during the Golden Age of Radio.

1 What effect did the Great Depression have on Mary Margaret McBride's career? Support your answer with details from the text.

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- 2 Read this sentence from the text.

She often received more than 5,000 fan letters per day, many asking for her autograph.

What is **most likely** the meaning of the word autograph?

- (A) a person's signature
 - (B) a person's artwork
 - (C) a person's feelings
 - (D) a person's voice
- 3 Why was McBride's fifteenth anniversary celebration held at Yankee Stadium?
- (A) McBride lived near Yankee Stadium.
 - (B) McBride ended the program *Martha Deane, Grandmother*.
 - (C) McBride was a baseball fan and wanted to celebrate with a game.
 - (D) Yankee Stadium could hold more fans than Madison Square Garden could.
- 4 How did McBride leave her mark on history?
- (A) McBride read a lot and remembered everything.
 - (B) McBride earned a college degree in two and a half years.
 - (C) McBride easily connected with her interviewees and her listeners.
 - (D) McBride entertained millions of Americans during the Golden Age of Radio.
- 5 Label each event from McBride's life in the order in which it happened. The first event will be labeled 1, and the last event will be labeled 4.
- ___ McBride interviews famous people.
- ___ McBride works as a newspaper reporter.
- ___ McBride auditions for a job as a radio show host.
- ___ The Great Depression causes many businesses to fail.

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- 6 What is the main idea of the text?
- Ⓐ McBride dreamed of becoming a writer.
 - Ⓑ McBride was a pioneer in the new field of radio.
 - Ⓒ McBride had thousands of listeners and admirers.
 - Ⓓ McBride would not be successful in today's media.

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Writing

- 7 Which sentence is written incorrectly?
- (A) We learned about a famous pioneer in school today.
 - (B) I thought the actor's laugh sounded very cruel.
 - (C) It's almost time for the annual science fair.
 - (D) The teacher assigned a visual presentation.
- 8 Which sentence has a punctuation error?
- (A) Alice, Ande and Daniel all have parts in the play.
 - (B) They play a train conductor, a passenger, and a spy.
 - (C) We aren't sure whether the play starts Friday, March 5 or Friday, March 12.
 - (D) The play will be presented on Friday night, Saturday afternoon, and Sunday afternoon.
- 9 Read the paragraph. Underline the sentence that has an error in punctuation.

We are presenting a skit at the school assembly for grades three, four, and five. Roger, Mari, and Danielle are all in it. As a result some important people will be attending, including Miss Prentice our principal, Randall Robertson the school superintendent, and Joyce Tosky the town mayor. The skit is tomorrow, but we still need to agree on a script, learn our lines, and find some props!

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10 Jacob has written notes for an opinion paper about cell phones in classrooms. Read Jacob's notes. Then complete the task that follows.

- A student might need to tell her family she is staying after school for track practice, for example.
- I think there is a very good reason why students should be allowed to have cell phones in class.
- A student might not feel well and request a ride home.
- Students might need to contact their families during the school day.

Write the sentences from his notes in the order in which they should appear in an outline. Include labels for the two details, the opinion, and the reason.
