Excerpt from “The Shinansha”

compiled by Yei Theodora Ozaki

(the numbers below are paragraph numbers, not question numbers)

1. The compass, with its needle always pointing to the North, is quite a common thing, and no one thinks that it is remarkable now, though when it was first invented it must have been a wonder.

2. Now long ago in China, there was a still more wonderful invention called the shinansha. This was a kind of chariot with the figure of a man on it always pointing to the South. No matter how the chariot was placed the figure always wheeled about and pointed to the South.

3. This curious instrument was invented by Kotei, one of the three Chinese Emperors of the Mythological age. Kotei was the son of the Emperor Yuhi. Before he was born his mother had a vision which foretold that her son would be a great man.

4. One summer evening she went out to walk in the meadows to seek the cool breezes which blow at the end of the day and to gaze with pleasure at the star-lit heavens above her. As she looked at the North Star, strange to relate, it shot forth vivid flashes of lightning in every direction. Soon after this her son Kotei came into the world.

5. Kotei in time grew to manhood and succeeded his father the Emperor Yuhi. His early reign was greatly troubled by the rebel Shiyu. This rebel wanted to make himself King, and many were the battles which he fought to this end. Shiyu was a wicked magician, his head was made of iron, and there was no man that could conquer him.

6. At last Kotei declared war against the rebel and led his army to battle, and the two armies met on a plain called Takuroku. The Emperor boldly attacked the enemy, but the magician brought down a dense fog upon the battlefield, and while the royal army were wandering about in confusion, trying to find their way, Shiyu retreated with his troops, laughing at having fooled the royal army.

7. No matter how strong and brave the Emperor’s soldiers were, the rebel with his magic could always escape in the end.

8. Kotei returned to his Palace, and thought and pondered deeply as to how he should conquer the magician, for he was determined not to give up yet. After a long time he invented the shinansha with the figure of a man always pointing South, for there were no compasses in those days. With this instrument to show him the way he need not fear the dense fogs raised up by the magician to confound his men.

1. Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

**The compass, with its needle always pointing to the North, is quite a common thing, and no one thinks that it is remarkable now, though when it was first invented it must have been a wonder.**

How does the sentence contribute to the development of the plot?

A. It defines what a compass is so that the reader better appreciates Kotei’s invention of it.

B. It explains the background of Kotei leading up to his birth.

C. It suggests that the shinansha is a marvel on par with Shiyu’s magical fog.

D. It explains that “shinansha” is just a synonym for a north- pointing compass.

2. In paragraph 3, how does the phrase “of the Mythological age” affect the tone of the excerpt?

E. It establishes the excerpt’s factual tone, which matches the fact that events from recorded history are recounted.

F. It highlights the excerpt’s comedic tone, which highlights that magical events are presented as historical fact.

G. It illustrates the excerpt’s heroic tone about events that took place before China had any emperors.

H. It establishes the excerpt’s epic tone, which suggests to the reader that events are set in an era of heroes and magic.

3. Which of the following best explains why Kotei’s mother thought her son would be great?

A. “This curious instrument was invented by Kotei, one of the three Chinese Emperors of the Mythological age.” (paragraph 3)

B. “Kotei was the son of the Emperor Yuhi.” (paragraph 3)

C. “As she looked at the North Star . . . it shot forth vivid flashes of lightning in every direction.” (paragraph 4)

D. “. . . his head was made of iron, and there was no man that could conquer him.” (paragraph 5)

4. The author most likely used the phrase “strange to relate” (paragraph 4) to show that

E. the event he is about to describe is difficult to put into words.

F. the event he is about to describe was hard for Kotei’s mother to understand.

G. the event he is about to describe is surprising and curious.

H. the event Kotei’s mother witnessed was unimportant.



5. Find the measures of angles h, k, j, and i.

6. Find the area and circumference of a circle with radius 3.

7. Find the measure of a + b.

