

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the selection. Then answer the questions that follow.****Topeka Tess**

No doubt you have heard tales of Pecos Bill and Paul Bunyan. The feats of Topeka Tess are not so famous, not yet. Even so, there are people who brag about her out on the Great Plains of these great United States.

Tess was born in farm country. In fact, her birthday fell right in the middle of the biggest harvest of all times.

Tess came into this world like all babies, crying. However, her crying was different. It was more like talking. "Please, oh please, Mama," she bawled. "Let me help Papa in the fields!" When her ma said she couldn't because she was too little, Topeka Tess let out a shout that could be heard from Kansas to Ohio.

When Tess turned two, she was harvesting her family's fields all by herself. At ten, she mowed every field in Kansas.

By the age of fifteen, Tess was ready for her biggest challenge ever. One afternoon, Tess's father got a call from a neighbor. Trouble was brewing. A giant swarm of locusts was heading their way, gobbling up crops as they flew.

Tess set to work weaving a net. Then she waited for the swarm. When it arrived, she trapped every last locust in her net. Better yet, she used the wing power of those bugs to help her mow the fields. Is it any wonder Topeka Tess is the hero of America's heartland?

**Turn the page.**

Answer the questions below.

**1** Which phrase *best* describes Topeka Tess?

- A** young for her age
- B** loud and lazy
- C** large but gentle
- D** strong and helpful

**2** What did Tess have to do before she could catch the locusts?

- F** weave a net to trap them
- G** harvest her family's fields
- H** mow every field in Kansas
- J** use the locusts to mow the fields

**3** Why is it important that this story happens in the Great Plains?

- A** Tess cries out as a newborn baby.
- B** Tess takes on urban challenges.
- C** Tess yells across the United States.
- D** Tess is a hero for farm country.

**4** What problem does Tess face when she is fifteen?

- F** Locusts are eating up all her neighbors' crops.
- G** Her mother will not let her help in the fields.
- H** The net that she weaves does not work very well.
- J** She needs to mow every farm field in Kansas.

**5** What three important events took place in the selection and when did they occur? Use sequence words in your answer.

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**Common Core State Standards**

**Questions 1–4: Literature 1.** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. **Question 5: Literature 3.** Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in a text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).