

MAYA LIN Reading Comprehension

Maya Lin was born in Athens, Ohio, on October 5, 1959. In 1949, her parents fled communism in China and came to the United States. In 1958, they moved to Athens, home of Ohio University, where they were professors. Her mother wrote poetry and taught literature; her father was a ceramic artist and became dean of the College of Fine Arts.

As a child, Maya Lin liked to hike, read, watch birds, work in her father's ceramics studio, and build miniature towns. She loved to think and solve problems. In high school, she was an excellent math student who took college-level courses and worked at McDonald's. She thought she was kind of nerdy because she never dated or wore makeup.

Maya went to Yale University to study architecture. While she was 21 and still a student, she entered a blind contest to submit a design for the new Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC. According to contest rules, the memorial had to fit in with the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument, include the names of all the dead and missing from the war, and refrain from making political statements. Maya's simple but elegant design featured a pair of two-hundred-foot-long polished black granite walls. The monument was V-shaped, with one side pointing to the Lincoln Memorial and the other to the Washington Monument. The wall had the carved names of 58,195 men and women who were killed or missing in the war listed according to the dates they were reported killed or missing, instead of in alphabetical order. Her design was chosen over 1,441 others. Maya believed her design would not have been chosen if the judges had known she was Chinese-American. Some people harassed her after her family background and age became known.

Today, Maya Lin continues to work on sculpture and architecture. Some of her other projects include the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama; Wave Field at the University of Michigan; and the Confluence Project along the Columbia and Snake Rivers in Washington and Oregon. She has also written several books and is interested in sustainable energy use. In 2009, she was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Barack Obama.

- 1.) **Which question is answered in the second paragraph?**
 - a.) Why did Maya decide to enter the contest to build the Vietnam Veterans Memorial?
 - b.) What did Maya major in in college?
 - c.) Why did Maya believe she was nerdy?
 - d.) What math courses did Maya take in high school?

- 2.) **Which of the following is NOT true about Maya Lin?**
 - a.) She liked to watch birds.
 - b.) She wanted to be a ceramics artist.
 - c.) She was good at math.
 - d.) Her parents were professors.

- 3.) **Maya Lin's design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was...**
 - a.) very complicated
 - b.) simple
 - c.) controversial
 - d.) elaborate

- 4.) **Which of the following best describes Maya Lin in high school?**
 - a.) average
 - b.) bored
 - c.) hardworking
 - d.) glamorous

- 5.) **Maya went to Yale University to study...**
 - a.) problem-solving
 - b.) math
 - c.) fine arts
 - d.) architecture

- 6.) **Based on your understanding of the passage, what is a "blind" contest?**
 - a.) One in which the judges decide exactly what the design of the memorial must look like.
 - b.) One in which only blind people can enter.
 - c.) One in which the personal identity of a design's author is not known to the judges.
 - d.) One in which only architects invited to submit their design can enter.

- 7.) **Maya Lin was born in...**
 - a.) China
 - b.) Washington DC
 - c.) The passage doesn't say.
 - d.) Ohio

8.) Maya Lin believed...

- a.) her design was definitely the best.
- b.) that her design may not have been chosen if the judges knew her background.
- c.) that the names of the dead or missing should be listed alphabetically.
- d.) that both sides of the monument should be pointed toward the Lincoln Memorial.

9.) Which of the following is not answered in the third paragraph?

- a.) How are the names of the missing or dead arranged on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial?
- b.) What was Maya's design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial contest?
- c.) Who were the judges who chose Maya Lin's design over 1,441 other designs?
- d.) How many names are carved on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial?

10.) If the entire passage only included the final paragraph, what would be an appropriate title?

- a.) How Maya Lin Became Famous
- b.) Chinese-Americans in Architecture
- c.) Construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- d.) Maya Lin: Projects After the Vietnam Veterans Memorial