Name: Date: Score: / 6

Washington, D.C.: Reading Comprehension

Nonfiction: Places · about 250 words

Read the passage. Then answer each question. Circle the best answer or write your answer on the lines.

🏛️ Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C., is the capital of the United States. The "D.C." stands for District of Columbia. It is not part of any state. In 1790, Congress chose a location along the Potomac River, between Maryland and Virginia, for the new capital. George Washington himself helped pick the site, and the city was later named in his honor.

A French-born engineer named Pierre L'Enfant designed the city's layout. He planned wide avenues that spread out from important buildings like spokes on a wheel. At the center is the National Mall, a long, grassy park stretching about two miles from the U.S. Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial.

The U.S. Capitol, with its huge white dome, is where Congress meets to make laws. Down Pennsylvania Avenue is the White House, where the president lives and works. Nearby, the Supreme Court building houses the nation's highest court. Together, these buildings represent the three branches of government.

The Mall is lined with memorials and museums. The Washington Monument, a white stone obelisk about 555 feet tall, honors the first president. The Lincoln Memorial features a giant statue of Abraham Lincoln seated in thought. In 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" speech from its steps.

The Smithsonian Institution runs many free museums on and near the Mall, including the National Air and Space Museum, which displays the Wright brothers' 1903 Flyer and the Apollo 11 command module, Columbia. Millions of visitors come each year to learn about the nation's history.

1. **Main idea:** What is this passage mostly about?

   A. how laws are made B. the life of George Washington

   C. the history and important places of Washington, D.C. D. the Potomac River

2. **Detail:** What does "D.C." stand for?

   A. District of Columbia B. Downtown Center C. Department of Congress D. District of Capitals

3. **Detail:** Who designed the city's layout?

   A. Abraham Lincoln B. Thomas Jefferson C. Pierre L'Enfant D. George Washington

4. **Detail:** Where does Congress meet?

   A. the Lincoln Memorial B. the White House C. the U.S. Capitol D. the Smithsonian

5. **Vocabulary:** An obelisk is...

   A. a round dome B. a tall, four-sided stone pillar with a pointed top C. a type of museum D. a long park

6. **Inference:** Why do the Capitol, White House, and Supreme Court building matter together?

ANSWER KEY

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