

## Comprehension Worksheet

**COFFEE**

Circle the correct meaning for the underlined word in the sentence.



1. The coffee tree is a native of eastern Africa, but it was in Arabia that it first became known to the people of Europe, and until about the year 1700 A. D. that country **afforded** the entire supply.

- a. sold
- b. yielded, produced
- c. stocked

2. Then the coffee seeds found their way to Java, by means of some traders, and one of the first plants grown on that island was sent as a present to the governor of the Dutch East India Company, who lived in Holland. It was planted in the Botanical Gardens at Amsterdam, and in a few years seeds taken from it were sent to South America, where the cultivation of coffee has steadily increased, extending to the West Indies, until now the **offspring** of this one plant produce more coffee than is obtained from all the other plants in the world.

- a. Seeds planted in another country
- b. Cultivating seeds
- c. descendants, however remote, from, the stock

3. The plant is an evergreen, and is from six to twelve feet high, the stem being from ten to fifteen inches in diameter. The lower branches bend down when the tree begins to grow old, and extend themselves into a round form somewhat like an umbrella; and the wood is so **pliable** that the ends of the largest branches may be bent down to within two or three feet of the earth.

- a. cannot be bent
- b. pliable, easily bent
- c. evergreen

4. The bark is whitish and somewhat rough. A tree is never without leaves, which are at small distances from one another, and on almost opposite sides of a **bough**. Blossoms and green and ripe fruit may be seen on the same tree at the same time. When the blossom falls off, there grows in its place a small green fruit, which becomes dark red as it ripens.

- a. blossoms
- b. ripe fruits
- c. a main branch of a tree



5. This fruit is not unlike a cherry, and is very good to eat. Under the pulp of this cherry is found the bean or berry we call coffee, wrapped in a fine, thin skin. The berry is at first very soft, and has a bad taste; but as the cherry ripens the berry grows harder, and the dried-up fruit becomes a shell or **pod** of a deep brown colour.

- a. shell
- b. dried fruit
- c. cherry

6. The berry is now solid, and its colour is a **translucent** green. Each shell contains two seeds, rounded on one side and flat on the other. The seeds lie with the flat sides together, and, in one highly prized variety, the two seeds grow together, forming one: this is known as the pea berry. When the fruit is so ripe that it can be shaken from the tree, the husks are separated from the berries, and are used, in Arabia, by the natives, while the berries are sold.

- a. solid, not allowing the passage of light
- b. permitting the passage of light
- c. a ripe colour

7. The young plants are inserted in holes from twelve to eighteen inches deep, and six or eight feet apart. If left to themselves, they would grow to the height of eighteen or twenty feet; but they are usually dwarfed by **pruning**, so that the fruit may be easily got at by the gatherer.

- a. trimming
- b. replanting
- c. allow to grow

8. Thus dwarfed, they extend their branches until they cover the whole space about them. They begin to yield fruit the third year. By the sixth or seventh year they are at full bearing, and continue to bear for twenty years or more.
9. Before the berry can be used, it undergoes a process of roasting. The amount of **aromatic** oil brought out in roasting has much to do with the market value of coffee, and it has been found that the longer the raw coffee is kept, the richer it becomes in this peculiar oil, and so the more valuable. But after the coffee is roasted, and especially after it is ground, it loses its aroma rapidly.

- a. peculiar
- b. containing aroma, fragrant
- c. roasted

10. Arabia produces the celebrated Mocha, or "Mokha," coffee, which is the finest in the world; but little or none of the best product is ever taken out of that country. The Java coffee from the East Indies is next prized, but the best quality of this kind is also quite difficult to obtain, and many, therefore, prefer the finest grades of Rio coffee from South America to such Mocha and Java as can be had in our country.

Some more questions:

Answer these questions in your notebook.

1. What country first supplied coffee?
2. How did the plant come to be grown in other countries?
3. Describe the plant. What is said of the fruit?
4. How are the plants cultivated?
5. What is said about the roasting of coffee?
6. What are the three principal kinds of coffee used, and how are they valued?