**“Appearances Are Destructive”**

**Mark Mathabane**

(1) As public schools reopen for the new year, strategies to curb school violence will once again be hotly debated. Installing metal detectors and hiring security guards will help, but the experience of my two sisters makes a compelling case for greater use of dress codes as a way to protect students and promote learning.

(2) Shortly after my sisters arrived here from South Africa I enrolled them at the local public school. I had great expectations for their educational experience. Compared with black schools under apartheid\* , American schools are Shangri-Las\* , with modern textbooks, school buses, computers, libraries, lunch programs and dedicated teachers.

(3) But despite these benefits, which students in many parts of the world only dream about, my sisters’ efforts at learning were almost derailed. They were constantly taunted for their homely outfits. A couple of times they came home in tears. In South Africa students were required to wear uniforms, so my sisters had never been preoccupied with clothes and jewelry.

(4) They became so distraught that they insisted on transferring to different schools, despite my reassurances that there was nothing wrong with them because of what they wore.

(5) I have visited enough public schools around the country to know that my sisters’ experiences are not unique. In schools in many areas, Nike, Calvin Klein, Adidas, Reebok and Gucci are more familiar names to students than Zora Neale Hurston, Shakespeare and Faulkner. Many students seem to pay more attention to what’s on their bodies than in their minds.

(6) Teachers have shared their frustrations with me at being unable to teach those students willing to learn because classes are frequently disrupted by other students ogling themselves in mirrors, painting their fingernails, combing their hair, shining their gigantic shoes, or comparing designer labels on jackets, caps and jewelry.

(7) The fiercest competition among students is often not over academic achievements, but over who dresses most expensively. And many students now measure parental love by how willing their mothers and fathers are to pamper them with money for the latest fad in clothes, sneakers and jewelry.

(8) Those parents without the money to waste on such meretricious extravagances are considered uncaring and cruel. They often watch in dismay and helplessness as their children become involved with gangs and peddle drugs to raise the money.

(9) When students are asked why they attach so much importance to clothing, they frequently reply that it’s the cool thing to do, that it gives them status and earns them respect. And clothes are used to send sexual messages, with girls thinking that the only things that make them attractive to boys are skimpy dresses and gaudy looks, rather than intelligence and academic excellence.

(10) The argument by civil libertarians that dress codes infringe on freedom of expression is misleading. We observe dress codes in nearly every aspect of our lives without any diminution of our freedoms--as demonstrated by flight attendants, bus drivers, postal employees, high school bands, military personnel, sports teams, Girl and Boy Scouts, employees of fast-food chains, restaurants and hotels.

(11) In many countries where students outperform their American counterparts academically, school dress codes are observed as part of creating the proper learning environment. Their students tend to be neater, less disruptive in class and more disciplined, mainly because their minds are focused more on learning and less on materialism.

(12) It’s time Americans realized that the benefits of safe and effective schools far outweigh any perceived curtailment of freedom of expression brought on by dress codes. Support your local school system’s dress code policy.

----------------------------------------------------

\* (in the Republic of South Africa) a rigid policy of segregation of the nonwhite population.

\* imaginary remote paradise on earth; utopia.

1. What claim is the author arguing in this selection?
2. Teens demand too much money from their parents
3. Schools need metal detectors and guards to curb violence
4. Dress codes will help protect students and promote learning.
5. American schools are superior to South African schools.
6. Which of the following statements is an opinion?
7. “Shortly after my sisters arrived here from South Africa, I enrolled them at the local public school.”
8. “A couple of times they came home in tears.”
9. “I have visited enough schools around the country…”
10. “Many students seem to pay more attention to what’s on their bodies than what’s in their minds.”
11. Which appeal strategy does the author employ in the first paragraph?

A. ethos B. pathos C. logos

1. Which sentence summarizes the third and fourth paragraphs?
2. The sisters often came home in tears from their new American school.
3. In South Africa, wearing uniforms improves the educational experience.
4. Being teased ruined the sisters’ school experience.
5. There was nothing wrong with the sisters’ clothing.
6. In the sixth paragraph, what new source of evidence does the author present to support his position?
7. Teachers C. Parents
8. Students D. Politicians
9. Parallelism, or parallel language, is used in the sixth paragraph to emphasize the
10. differences in clothing that students wear to school.
11. relationship between the teachers and the students.
12. disruption caused by the students’ behavior.
13. Items with designer labels worn by the students.
14. Which sentence best summarizes the relationship between students and their parents as explained in paragraph 7?
15. Students and their parents care more about clothes than about grades.
16. Parents will do anything to help their children become popular.
17. Parents reward their children when they do well in school.
18. Students judge their parents by how much money their parents give them.
19. What is the purpose of this selection?

A. to entertain B. to inform C. to persuade

*Use the following quote from the above selection to answer questions 9 and 10.*

“The argument by civil libertarians that dress codes infringe on freedom of expression is misleading.

1. What does the term *civil libertarians* mean in the above sentence? (Note: you may need to refer to the reading selection for context clues.)
2. writers and artists C. enforcers of school safety requirements
3. designers of casual and career clothing D. defenders of individual rights.
4. There are many ways to define the term “freedom of expression.” Choose the definition that BEST defines *freedom of expression* as it is used in the above sentence and in the passage.
5. freedom to dress and act as an individual C. freedom from spending money on clothing
6. freedom to speak or write anything D. freedom from popularity contests

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**Conventions**

11. In which reference book would the best map of Montana be found for an upcoming Geography report?

A. periodical B. thesaurus C. dictionary D. atlas

12. The table of contents is helpful in finding \_\_\_\_\_.

A. definitions B. the order of topics C. the publisher D. the main idea of a selection

13. In MLA Format, what is the correct format for the date?

1. April 16, 2011 B. 16 April 2011 C. 2011 April 16 D. 16 April, 2011

14. What is the first piece of information that is listed in any bibliography source on a works cited page?

1. the website C. author’s last name
2. the publisher’s phone number D. the access date

**Conventions**

15. Casey wants to write a report about the various types of movies. Which source would probably provide Casey with the MOST information on her topic?

a. *Great Big-Screen Comedies of the Twenty-First Century*

b. Zeffirelli’s movie, *Romeo and Juliet*

c. An interview with Stephen Spielberg about his 10 best films

d. *And…Action! Film Styles from Silent to Sci-Fi*

16. Brianna wants to find information on the Internet about what she can do to help her peers stay in school and graduate. Which keywords would probably help her find the MOST information?

a. social media c. getting involved

b. activities for young people d. ways to improve the graduation rate

17. Which word in the sentence is NOT correctly spelled?

**The athlete feared he would have permanant damage after the accident, but he visited the trainer immediately and found that his forearm was fine.**

a. athlete c. immediately

b. permanant d. forearm

18. Which of these sentences is correctly written?

a. Of the three dresses, I think Savannah’s is the more attractive one.

b. Of the three dresses, I think Savannah’s is the attractiver one.

c. Of the three dresses, I think Savannah’s is the attractivest one.

d. Of the three dresses, I think Savannah’s is the most attractive one.

19. Which of these sentences is correctly written?

a. I was thinking of going to the movies later; because I want to see the latest thriller.

b. I was thinking of going to the movies later, I want to see the latest thriller.

c. I was thinking of going to the movies later: I want to see the latest thriller.

d. I was thinking of going to the movies later; I want to see the latest thriller.

20. Jonah wants to write his research paper for class on cars. What problem exists with his topic selection?

a. It is too controversial. c. Teachers don’t like reading papers about cars.

b. It is too broad. d. It will be hard for him to find any information on the topic.

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**Ballad of Birmingham (on the bombing of a church in Birmingham, Alabama, 1963)"**

by Dudley Randall

"Mother dear, may I go downtown

Instead of out to play,

And march the streets of Birmingham

In a Freedom March today?"

"No, baby, no, you may not go,

For the dogs are fierce and wild,

And clubs and hoses, guns and jails

Aren't good for a little child."

"But, mother, I won't be alone.

Other children will go with me,

And march the streets of Birmingham

To make our country free."

"No, baby, no, you may not go,

For I fear those guns will fire.

But you may go to church instead

And sing in the children's choir."

She has combed and brushed her night-dark hair,

And bathed rose-petal sweet,

And drawn white gloves on her small brown hands,

And white shoes on her feet.

The mother smiled to know her child

Was in this sacred place,

But that smile was the last smile

To come upon her face

For when she heard the explosion,

Her eyes grew wet and wild.

She raced through the streets of Birmingham

Calling for her child.

She clawed through bits of glass and brick,

Then lifted out a shoe.

"O, here's the shoe my baby wore,

But, baby, where are you?"

21. Each stanza of the above poem consists of

A. a rhyming couplet C. a quatrain

B. a haiku D. a sonnet

22. The rhyme scheme of the first stanza is

A. abab C. aabb

B. abcb D. no rhyme scheme

23. From the context clues given in the title and throughout the poem, one can infer that this bombing occurred during which historical setting?

A. The Settlement of the Pilgrims C. The Gold Rush in California

B. The Great Depression D. The Civil Rights Movement.

24. Why is it ironic that the mother allowed her daughter to go to church but not to the Freedom March?

A. There is nothing ironic about it.

B. The Freedom Marchers did not like children.

C. Those who were at the church ended up being in more danger than those marching in the streets.

D. The church is always the most dangerous place to be in a battle.

25. The white gloves and white shoes that the little girl wears to church could symbolize \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. the wealth of the family.

B. the innocence of the child.

C. the angry spirit of the bombers

D. clean laundry

**Reading Comprehension**

*Read the following carefully. Use this reading selection to answer questions the questions which follow:*

(1)Picture this scene, if you will: A happy family riding their bicycles down an old railroad bed, which has been turned into a bike trail through the woods. (2) Sounds pretty good, doesn’t it? (3) Yet, this is a waste, a tremendous waste of our unnatural resources. (4) These old rail tracks need to be converted back into being railroads. (5) They will be needed one day when gas prices rise so high that Americans begin to look for better forms of transportation than car-travel. (6) Besides, most of these railroad beds do not even have a picnic area! (7)Traveling by train is far more economical, and is certainly much better for our environment, than traveling by car. (8) There was a time when numerous small railroads linked most of our towns and cities. (9) Today, the only operating rail company is Amtrak, and Amtrak trains only operate on a few special routes.

26. (ELA9RL1.2b) What is the purpose of this selection?

1. To entertain
2. To inform
3. To compare
4. To persuade
5. Which sentence should be identified as the thesis statement?
6. 1 c. 6
7. 4 d. 9

1. (ELA9RL1.2b) According to the article, why might Americans one day want to use rail travel again?
2. Bicycle travel is unsafe.
3. High gas prices will encourage people to look for less-expensive options to traveling by car.
4. Riding on a train is fun.
5. Earthquakes will permanently damage roads and bridges.
6. (ELA9W2.2b) Which sentence in the selection above is the most off-topic?
7. Two c. Six
8. Four d. Eight
9. (ELA9W2.2e) Which sentence would best conclude the paragraph?
10. Protect your environment and your wallet; urge your state government to reclaim rail tracks for the operation of cost-effective trains.
11. Amtrak was created by the federal government to replace commercial railroad.
12. Bicycles are a healthy way a travel.

d. The history of rail travel in the United States is interesting.

**Conventions**

Clauses: *Determine if the underlined clause is independent or dependent.*

1. (ELA9RL1b) Gail is a sophomore, and her brother is a senior.
2. Independent clause
3. Subordinate clause
4. (ELA9RL1b) Because the flood waters have receded, we can finally return to our homes.
5. Independent clause
6. Subordinate clause
7. (ELA9RL1b) I’ll go to the movie with you even though I’ve already seen that film.
8. Independent clause
9. Subordinate clause
10. Although it is only midterm, students seem ready for a break.
    1. Independent clause
    2. Subordinate clause
11. (ELA9RL1b) This song that I can’t get out of my mind is driving me crazy.
12. Independent clause
13. Subordinate clause

Sentence Structure: *Determine if each group of underlined words is a complete sentence or a fragment.*

1. (ELA9RL1b) Audrey wrote a poem for English class.
   1. Complete sentence
   2. Sentence fragment
2. (ELA9RL1b) Mowing lawns, weeding gardens, and washing windows.
3. Complete sentence
4. Sentence fragment
5. (ELA9RL1b) While I am sure that you can afford the tickets.
6. Complete sentence
7. Sentence fragment
8. (ELA9RL1b) Recognizing the difficulties you are facing.
9. Complete sentence
10. Sentence fragment
11. Just leave the paper on my desk.
    1. Complete sentence
    2. Sentence fragment

41. [ELACC9-10L2] Which sentence below displays correct pronoun/antecedent agreement?

a. Miguel remembered to turn in him project before school started today.

b. Each ran to their house to get out of the rain.

c. Anyone could raise their grade by taking the exam.

d. Neither of the boys remembered to bring his pencil today.

42. [ELACC9-10L2] Which sentence below displays correct subject/verb agreement?

a. Each of the family members has one vote. C. Mrs. Jones swim for exercise.

b. One of the boys eat pizza every week. D. A few of the staff was gone today

***from* The Mercury 13: The True Story of Thirteen Women and the Dream of Space Flight**

**Martha Ackmann**

*In 1960, Dr. W. Randolph Lovelace, the designer of NASA's medical testing program for prospective astronauts, invited the aviator Geraldyn Cobb to be the first woman to undergo his tests*.

Geraldyn "Jerrie" Cobb reported to the Pensacola base on a hot, muggy May

evening and stowed her gear in the officers' quarters. After uneasy sleep in the noisy

barracks, she reported at 8 A.M. for the first of her tests. Unlike the previous exams,

which had evaluated her physical and mental condition, the next ten days hurled her

into the realm of [make-believe] with tests that would determine if she could handle

the stresses, confusion, and physical assault of outer space. These exams would judge her

reaction to space-high altitudes, high G loads, motion sickness, violent seat ejection, and

even the turbulent chaos of trying to escape from a submerged cockpit––an underwater

test that gave Cobb a frightening feel for what it would be like to be trapped inside a

**10** Mercury capsule swirling to the bottom of the Atlantic. If she passed the tests, she

would prove once more that she had the same physical ability and mental determination that

the Project Mercury astronauts exhibited. Combined with her successful completion of

the physical exams at the Lovelace Foundation and psychological and psychiatric

evaluations in Oklahoma City, the Pensacola tests would allow her to assert that she had

passed all the tests the Project Mercury astronauts had taken. If some of the tests she

took were not exactly the same as those the men took at the Wright Aeromedical

Laboratory, they were certainly comparable and, in the case of the sensory isolation test,

more rigorous.

After preliminary tests to bring her medical profile up to date, Cobb launched into a

**20** day of physical fitness drills that were used to evaluate the strength and ability of

healthy Navy aviators. Scaling a tall concrete wall became a none-too-subtle metaphor

for the rest of the week. The wall was six feet, six inches high and built to pose a

challenge to men who were asked to leap, grab hold of the top, and throw themselves

over to the other side. On her first attempt, Cobb jumped, failed to get a grip, and fell to

the ground. On her second try, she ran harder, leaped higher, and clawed her way to the

top. At five feet, seven inches in height, Cobb surmounted a wall that was higher for her

than it was for men who were, on average, several inches taller. It did not, however, seem

to matter. Sit-ups, pull-ups, marathon runs in the Florida heat––Cobb tackled every test

and succeeded each time.

**30** For the rest of the week, Cobb took part in spaceflight simulation tests. In the high-

altitude chamber, she had her first opportunity to wear a full pressure suit. Just as Betty Skelton

had discovered a year earlier when she demonstrated astronaut tests for the

*Look* feature, the military did not design clothing with a woman's body in mind. When

Cobb tried on the smallest pressure suit the Navy could locate, it was still too large. Navy

personnel spent an hour and a half sealing and strapping her into the bulky

encumbrance and then escorted her into the altitude chamber, where technicians ran her

up to 60,000 feet and watched closely to see if she could retain her mental acuity and

move her legs and arms against the heavy pressure. With her hands encased in ill-fitting gloves

that swelled into balloons, Cobb struggled to make a fist and touch her thumb to

**40** each finger, demonstrating that she could manipulate sticks, knobs, dials, and latches. To

measure Cobb's ability to withstand a rapid high-altitude descent, technicians altered the pressure

of the room and brought her down to sea level in a free fall.

Another test required that Cobb sit in the copilot's seat of a Douglas Skyraider as

the pilot took the plane up and swung through a series of stomach-turning aerobatics.

Eighteen needles were wired to Cobb's scalp in order to record her brain activity during

the flight - an experience she had never encountered before. A camera positioned

directly in front of her face caught her barely detectable flinches as the plane

dove, looped, and sliced through the sky. With each sudden move

of the plane, the force slammed Cobb against the seat, whipped her to the side, and

**50** flung her forward. Staring straight ahead, Cobb blinked twice. Her eyes pushed forward

against their sockets and then sank back. "Eyeballs out, eyeballs in," pilots called it.

The Multi-Place Ditching Trainer, or what Navy airmen termed the "Dilbert

Dunker," tested Cobb's ability to withstand the disorientation of a landing on water.

For pilots, an ocean ditching was an unusual event, but one for which they needed

experience. Practice on the "Dunker"—a harrowing, chaotic experience—might save

the life of a military pilot shot down over water. For U.S. astronauts, however, a

splashdown was the only method of landing a space capsule. To the unfamiliar eye, the "Dilbert

Dunker" looked like a backyard contraption rigged up by teenagers with

creative minds and too much free time. What appeared to be a big round oil drum sat

**60** on top of a steep track that ran into a swimming pool sixteen feet deep. The odd-

looking craft took on a more serious form once it was propelled into motion. First Cobb

squeezed in-it was a tight fit, considering she was wearing a Mae West life preserver

and a parachute pack, not standard astronaut wear but bulky enough to feel like a space

suit. Then she buckled into her seat harness, set her jaw, and waited. With a jolt, the

drum shot forward, hurtling down the track until it crashed into the pool. Instinctively,

Cobb held her breath as the craft turned upside down and water flooded in. She tried to

remember what she had been told: don't panic, unbuckle your harness, avoid getting

your gear looped around hooks, search for a reference object-a latch, an armrest, the

bottom of a seat. Make your way to the hatch, slide out, and bob to the top of the water.

**70** Cobb made it out of the contraption without the help of rescue divers and in the

requisite amount of time. Adrenaline pumping, she heaved herself out of the pool

and tried to catch her breath.

One afternoon right after lunch, Cobb faced another aerodynamic carnival ride.

It was a slow-rotation room, a windowless enclosure constructed to resemble an apartment

with furniture, a bedroom area, a washstand, even a hot plate. But unlike a standard

room, the structure was perched atop a forty-two-ton steel gyroscope that spun around

at ten revolutions per minute. Because the room had no windows, a test subject

experienced no sense of speed, only turbulent disorientation. "Just follow instructions,"

a voice said over the intercom as Cobb sat in front of a maze of dials, knobs, and

**80** switches. As the room spun, the voice asked Cobb to flip switches and set dials on

command in order to evaluate how accurately she could perform quick maneuvers while

in a confusing, whirling environment. Cobb's head spun as she reached up, down, back, forward,

left, right with every command. For a moment, she felt her gorge rise, so she

tried to narrow her field of vision and concentrate on each single task. Gradually the

sickening swirls in her head eased and the queasiness subsided. Just as she was getting

used to the motion of setting dials, the voice asked her to stand up and walk across the

room to a dart board. With the room still slowly rotating, Cobb's senses were so

upended that she was unaware that the wall had tilted to a wild angle. When the voice

asked Cobb to toss a dart at the board, she completely missed the target. Then she

**90** realized she had to compensate for the uneven floor by aiming forty-five degrees to the

left. When she was asked to pitch tennis balls into a wastebasket, Cobb used the same

technique and threw far to the left, hitting the target but operating against what her eyes

told her to do.

By the end of her ten days at the School of Aviation Medicine, Cobb was delighted

to hear confirmed what she already sensed was true: she had passed phase three space simulation

tests, scoring as well as experienced Navy pilots.

From *The Mercury 13* by Martha Ackmann. Copyright (c) 2003 by Martha Ackmann. Used by permission of Random House, Inc.

43. Which event happened first in the selection?

a. Navy personnel strapped Cobb into a pressure suit.

b. Cobb threw darts and tennis balls in a slow-rotation room.

c. The “Dilbert Dunker” simulated a landing on water.

d. Cobb scaled a wall nine inches taller than she is.

44. Which is the best way to paraphrase the sentence from lines 3–6?

a. The earlier exams tested her body and mind, but the new tests would check her readiness for space.

b. Now that she had bee evaluated physically and mentally, she was ready to test her hypothesis.

c. She disliked the exams, which assaulted her physically and mentally with questions about outer space.

d. She had ten days to find out whether her physical and mental condition was a result of excessive stress.

45. Based on lines 34–40, you can infer that Cobb was

a. ready to give up

b. interested in becoming a fashion model.

c. willing to make sacrifices

d. an astronaut on the International Space Station.

46. Which detail BEST supports the idea that the slow-rotation room disoriented those inside it?

a. Cobb sat in front of the dials, knobs, and switches.

b. The slow-rotation room was constructed to resemble an apartment.

c. A voice asked Cobb to stand up and walk across the room.

d. Cobb tossed balls into a wastebasket by aiming far to its left.

47. The author's main purpose for writing this selection was to

a. inform readings about Geraldyn Cobb’s accomplishments

b. entertain readers with humorous details of Geraldyn Cobb’s life

c. persuade readers to become astronauts

d. persuade readers that Geraldyn Cobb should take more tests.

Use the key below to identify the underlined words in each sentence

1. Clause D. Infinitive
2. Prepositional Phrase E. Gerund
3. Appositive AB. Participial
4. Because he studied very hard, he earned a very high grade on his final exam.
5. Some students would like to make a few changes to the dress code policy for next year.
6. The little boy chased his sister around the huge oak tree.