



## • Reading Comprehension 8 Level 4

**Directions:** Read the passage. Then answer the questions below.

Where does chocolate come from? Believe it or not, it grows on trees. Not as a sweet chocolate candy bar wrapped in foil, but as a cocoa bean.

These cocoa beans grow on a cacao tree, which is found in tropical areas such as Central and South America. The fruit of these trees are called pods, and they are long and hard. Inside the pods is a soft, white pulp that surrounds the thirty or so seeds. These seeds are what we call cocoa beans. They are very hard and bitter to the taste.

To make chocolate, people start by carefully taking the beans out of the pods, still covered in the white pulp, and leaving them in a bucket. The bucket is often covered with banana leaves and left for anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. This process is called fermenting. Then the beans are left to dry in the sun. Fermenting and drying the beans makes them less bitter. Then the beans are shipped to a factory to be turned into chocolate.

At the factory, beans are roasted in ovens to bring out their flavor. After roasting, the outer covering of the bean is removed. The inner bean is then crushed to form a paste known as chocolate liquor.

From this paste, people can either make cocoa powder or the chocolate we buy in stores. To make cocoa powder, the paste is crushed and pressed repeatedly to remove the fat, leaving behind only a dry, ground powder. To make chocolate, people need to add other ingredients to the paste such as milk, sugar, and cocoa butter. They then mix and heat the **concoction** several times to create a substance we would recognize as chocolate. It may even have fruit, nuts, or candy added to it before it is molded into a shape.

Considering all that must happen to turn a bitter cocoa bean into a chocolate bar, a dollar seems like a small price to pay for such a delicious sweet treat.

### Questions

1) To make chocolate, what is the first thing people must do to the cocoa beans?

- A. leave them in a bucket
- B. roast them in an oven
- C. dry them in the sun
- D. ship them to the factory

2) After reading this passage, what can the reader conclude about chocolate?

- A. Chocolate is only made in Central and South America.
- B. People could make their own chocolate at home.
- C. There are many steps involved in making chocolate.
- D. It is too expensive to make chocolate.

- 3) According to the passage, which of these items is needed to make the chocolate that is available in stores?
- A. fruit
  - B. nuts
  - C. candy
  - D. sugar
- 4) As used in paragraph 5, which of the following best describes a **concoction**?
- A. To make the smoothie, Daryl blended strawberries, bananas, yogurt, and juice.
  - B. When Jenna left the room, the pot of milk boiled for twenty minutes before boiling over.
  - C. A sprinkle of powdered sugar on top makes everything sweeter.
  - D. Elaine heated the lasagna, froze it, and then heated it again before serving it two weeks later.
- 5) Based on information in the passage, it can be understood that the chocolate sold in stores is different from cocoa beans because chocolate is
- A. sweet and cocoa beans are bitter
  - B. cheap and cocoa beans are expensive
  - C. a dry powder and cocoa beans are not
  - D. uncooked and cocoa beans are cooked