

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Exploring Text Features

**Directions:** Answer the questions below to help you explore the photos, captions, and other text features in the nonfiction article "Escape From Alcatraz."

1. Look at the text features—including the headline, photos, and phrases in white—on pages 4-5. How do they show that this will be a thrilling, true mystery story? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Look at the photo of Alcatraz on pages 4-5 and read the section "Ready for Troublemakers." How does the photo support the description of the prison? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Look at the photographs and the caption on page 9. Why do you think images of both men are included with the article? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Read the description of gangster Al Capone in "A Bitter Surprise," and look at his photo on page 9. Why might Capone's expression be different from those of the other inmates on pages 4-5? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Read "Escapee's Tool Kit" on page 7 and look at the photo of Frank Morris's jail cell on page 8. Besides patience, what qualities can you infer Morris would need to complete the hole? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What additional photo, chart, or other visual would you like to see with the article? Why do you think it would be helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Writing a Summary

**A summary is a short retelling of the most important parts of a story. It should include the information that someone would need to know to understand the story, without small details or your own opinion.**

**Directions:** Complete the summary below, based on your reading of "Escape From Alcatraz."

### Summary of "Escape From Alcatraz"

"Escape From Alcatraz" is about \_\_\_\_\_

The main purpose of Alcatraz was to \_\_\_\_\_

Inmates experienced tough conditions, such as \_\_\_\_\_

It was difficult to escape from Alcatraz because \_\_\_\_\_

Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers managed to break out of the prison by \_\_\_\_\_

Officials concluded that \_\_\_\_\_

But many people still believe that the escapees might \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Writing a Summary

**A summary is a short retelling of the most important parts of a story. It should include the information that someone would need to know to understand the story, without small details or your own opinion.**

**Directions:** Complete the summary below, using the prompts in the margins to help you.

### Summary of "Escape From Alcatraz"

"Escape From Alcatraz" is about \_\_\_\_\_

The main purpose of Alcatraz was to \_\_\_\_\_

Inmates experienced tough conditions, such as \_\_\_\_\_

It was difficult to escape from Alcatraz because \_\_\_\_\_

Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers managed to break out of the prison by \_\_\_\_\_

Officials concluded that \_\_\_\_\_

But many people still believe that the escapees might \_\_\_\_\_

1. Begin with a topic sentence that tells what the article is mainly about.

3. Name three reasons prison life was difficult.

5. Name three parts of their escape plan.

6. What did officials decide happened to the escapees?

2. Explain... WHY and FOR WHOM the prison was constructed.

4. Name two problems in escaping from Alcatraz.

7. What rumors have spread about the escapees?

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# Find the Evidence

**Directions:** Read each question below carefully. Some will ask you to select two or three pieces of text evidence—or details in the story—to support a statement. Others will ask you to respond in your own words, supporting your ideas with text.

1. Alcatraz was considered the most escape-proof prison in the United States. Circle the letters of TWO pieces of text evidence that best demonstrate what made it so secure:
  - a. "Lights out was at 9:30 p.m.—on the dot."
  - b. "During the Civil War, in the 1860s, the small 22-acre island was used as a military prison."
  - c. "Inmates could listen only to certain radio programs approved by the warden."
  - d. "Men who had tried to escape before had drowned swimming in the freezing waters of San Francisco Bay."
  - e. "The public felt that a 'super-prison' was just what the country needed."
  - f. "Guards counted the inmates many times each day and night."
2. In your own words, explain why the U.S. Department of Justice decided to turn Alcatraz into a federal prison in 1934. Use details from the text.

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3. Circle the letters of TWO pieces of text evidence that best demonstrate why Al Capone had to admit, "Alcatraz has got me licked."
  - a. "Prisons across the country were notified that Alcatraz was ready to take troublemakers off their hands."
  - b. "Every prisoner at Alcatraz was treated the same, and there was nothing he could do about it."
  - c. "The prisoners rode in specially designed railroad cars with steel bars across the windows."
  - d. "He was allowed to see family, but not friends—or fellow gangsters."
  - e. "During the day, guards marched the inmates to jobs in the laundry, the garden, and the tailor shop."
  - f. "After breakfast, utensils were counted."

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## Find the Evidence, p. 2

4. In your own words, explain how Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers escaped from Alcatraz. Use details from the text.

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5. Officials inferred that Morris and the Anglin brothers had drowned. Choose **THREE** pieces of text evidence that support this inference:

- a. After the men were discovered missing, a body was found floating in the bay.
- b. Officials believed the strong current in the San Francisco Bay swept them out to sea.
- c. A raft was discovered on a nearby island.
- d. If the prisoners had fallen into the water, survival would have been unlikely because of hypothermia.
- e. A car was reportedly stolen the night of the escape.
- f. A massive search turned up nothing.

6. You can infer from the escape plan created and carried out by Frank Morris that he was an ingenious planner. Use text evidence to explain why.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Find the Evidence

**Directions:** Read each question below carefully. Some will ask you to select text evidence—or details in the story—to support a statement. Others will ask you to respond in your own words, supporting your ideas with text evidence.

1. Circle the letter of the piece of text evidence that best shows why people said it was impossible to break free from “the Rock,” as Alcatraz was known:
- a. “These men were going to Alcatraz because ordinary prisons couldn’t handle them.”
  - b. “Men who broke the rules faced harsh punishments.”
  - c. “During the day, guards marched the inmates to jobs in the laundry, the garden, and the tailor shop.”
  - d. “Men who had tried to escape before had drowned swimming in the freezing waters of San Francisco Bay.”

2. In your own words, describe who Frank Morris was and why he was at Alcatraz. Use specific evidence from the text.

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3. The article explains that the U.S. Department of Justice turned Alcatraz into a federal “super-prison.” Circle the letter of the piece of text evidence that best explains why it did so.
- a. “Alcatraz was named ‘Isla de los Alcatraces’ (Island of the Pelicans) in 1775 by Spanish explorer Juan Manuel de Ayala.”
  - b. “After 1848, when news of gold in California spread, people worried that San Francisco might be attacked.”
  - c. “During the Civil War, in the 1860s, the small 22-acre island was used as a military prison.”
  - d. “During the 1930s, a crime wave hit the United States.”

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## Find the Evidence, p. 2

4. Explain in your own words how Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers broke out of Alcatraz without the guards noticing.

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5. Circle the letter of the piece of text evidence that describes solitary confinement, the harshest punishment given to prisoners who broke the rules at Alcatraz.

- a. "He was allowed to see family, but not friends—or fellow gangsters."
- b. "Lights out was at 9:30 p.m.—on the dot."
- c. "Prisoners hated to be cooped up in a tiny concrete cell apart from everyone else, with only a hole in the floor for a toilet."
- d. "The prisoners rode in specially designed railroad cars with steel bars across the windows."

6. Using evidence from the text, explain why prisoners who tried to escape Alcatraz prison by swimming away from the island would likely die.

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7. Which piece of text evidence best explains why the federal government shut down Alcatraz prison?

- a. "More than a million tourists visit every year."
- b. "So do about 100 species of birds, including gulls, cormorants, and pelicans."
- c. "By 1963, the island prison had become too expensive to keep open."
- d. "Some criminals had become incredibly powerful; they were as famous as movie stars."

8. Do you think Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers survived their escape from Alcatraz? Use text evidence to support your answer. Continue on the back of this page if you need more space.

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## Making Inferences

**An *inference* is something you can figure out from clues in a story, even though the story doesn't say it directly.**

**Directions:** The chart below lists clues from "Escape From Alcatraz" on the left and inferences you can make from them on the right. Fill in the blanks on the chart with clues or inferences from the feature.

Clues	Inferences
<p>1</p> <p>Consider these lines from the article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "They climbed up the ventilation shafts behind their cells and set up a secret workshop."</li><li>• "Using stolen and handmade tools, they'd managed to make life preservers and a raft fashioned out of raincoats."</li><li>• "To buy some time, the men made dummies out of toilet paper, cardboard, and cement chips."</li></ul>	<p>What can you infer about the men's planning as they plotted their escape?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Write two lines from the article that support the inference on the right.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Alcatraz was more difficult to escape from than any other prison in the United States.</p>

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## Making Inferences, p. 2

Clues	Inferences
<p>3</p> <p>Consider these lines from the article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "The prisoners rode in specially designed railroad cars with steel bars across the windows."</li><li>• "Head counts took place constantly."</li><li>• "Cell blocks built in 1909 were turned into a fortress meant to hold those who had tried—and sometimes managed—to break out of other prisons."</li></ul>	<p>What can you infer was one of the most serious concerns about the prisoners on Alcatraz?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>4</p> <p>Write two lines from the article that support the inference on the right.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>James A. Johnston, the warden of Alcatraz, was very strict about rules.</p>

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# Making Inferences

**Directions:** An inference is something you can figure out from clues in a story, even though the story doesn't say it directly. The chart below lists lines from "Escape From Alcatraz" on the left. The middle column gives you some clues about what you can figure out from the lines. Use these clues to help you make an inference in the right-hand column.

Lines From the Article	Clues	Inferences
<div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 24px; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">1</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"They climbed up the ventilation shafts behind their cells and set up a secret workshop."</li> <li>"Using stolen and handmade tools, they'd managed to make life preservers and a raft fashioned out of raincoats."</li> <li>"To buy some time, the men made dummies out of toilet paper, cardboard, and cement chips."</li> </ul>	<p><i>"A secret workshop" tells readers that the men came up with a place to make large or complicated items that couldn't be hidden in a cell.</i></p> <p><i>The other two lines tell readers that the men figured out how to use available materials in unusual ways.</i></p>	<p>What can you infer about Frank Morris and his friends who planned to escape from Alcatraz?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<div style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 24px; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 30px; height: 30px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">2</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"The prisoners rode in specially designed railroad cars with steel bars across the windows."</li> <li>"Head counts took place constantly."</li> <li>"Cell blocks built in 1909 were turned into a fortress meant to hold those who had tried—and sometimes managed—to break out of other prisons."</li> </ul>	<p><i>The fact that steel bars were added to "specially designed railroad cars" tells readers that officials worried prisoners would try to escape through the windows.</i></p> <p><i>"Constant" head counts suggest a concern that prisoners might not be where they should be.</i></p> <p><i>The third line tells readers that the prisoners at Alcatraz were not willing to stay and serve their time in prison.</i></p>	<p>What can you infer was one of the biggest concerns about the prisoners at Alcatraz?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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## Making Inferences, p. 2

**Directions:** In the right-hand column, you'll find inferences we've made from "Escape From Alcatraz." Find two lines to support each inference.

<b>Lines From the Article</b>	<b>Inferences</b>
<p data-bbox="159 661 755 730">Write two lines from "Escape From Alcatraz" that support the inference on the right.</p> <p data-bbox="159 787 779 1176">_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____</p>	<p data-bbox="852 892 1469 961">Alcatraz was more difficult to escape from than any other prison in the United States.</p>
<p data-bbox="159 1270 755 1339">Write two lines from "Escape From Alcatraz" that support the inference on the right.</p> <p data-bbox="159 1396 779 1785">_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____</p>	<p data-bbox="852 1533 1477 1602">James A. Johnston, the warden of Alcatraz, was very strict about rules.</p>

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# Word Study

**Directions:** As you read "Escape From Alcatraz," you'll come across vocabulary words in bold. Ask yourself if you know them or if you can figure them out from context. Then check their meanings here.

- 1. hypothermia:** "Hypothermia would have set in right away, and the powerful current would have easily dragged them to their deaths." (p. 9)  
*Meaning:* a condition in which a person's body becomes dangerously cold
- 2. ingenious:** "They had developed an **ingenious** plan." (p. 6)  
*Meaning:* inventive and original
- 3. inmate:** "Guards counted the **inmates** many times each day and night." (p. 6)  
*Meaning:* someone who has been sentenced to live in a prison
- 4. isolated:** "Desolate and **isolated**, Alcatraz seemed like the ideal place to lock up these criminals." (p. 7)  
*Meaning:* separated from other people or things
- 5. notorious:** "The most **notorious** felons couldn't beat Alcatraz—not even gangsters like Al 'Scarface' Capone." (p. 8)  
*Meaning:* If someone is *notorious*, the person is well known for something bad.
- 6. perish:** "Did Morris and the Anglin brothers make it—or did they **perish** in the merciless waters of San Francisco Bay?" (p. 9)  
*Meaning:* to die
- 7. precaution:** "Warden Johnston took every **precaution**." (p. 8)  
*Meaning:* something you do in order to prevent something dangerous or unpleasant from happening
- 8. solitary:** "The most feared was **solitary** confinement." (p. 8)  
*Meaning:* all alone
- 9. utensil:** "After breakfast, **utensils** were counted." (p. 8)  
*Meaning:* a tool or container, often used in the kitchen, that has a special purpose; knives and forks are utensils

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## Word Study, p. 2

**Learn About Word Roots!** Word roots are parts of words that have their own meanings. Many word roots come from the languages Latin and Greek. Knowing word roots can help you figure out what new words mean. The vocabulary words in "Escape From Alcatraz" contain a number of roots. Here you'll learn about two of them.

**Directions:** Read the explanations and answer the questions below.

### -sol-

The root *-sol-* means "alone." Two vocabulary words contain this root: **isolated** and **solitary**.

- The island of Alcatraz was isolated; it was alone in the water.
  - A prisoner in solitary confinement is all alone in a cell.
1. Find another word in "Escape From Alcatraz" with the word root *-sol-*. (Hint: It's on page 7.)

Write it here: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Think of a word with the root *-sol-* that means a song that you sing all by yourself: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Read this sentence: "Millie loves walking in the woods, where she can find some solitude."

Based on context and what you learned about the root *-sol-*, what do you think *solitude* means?

\_\_\_\_\_

### pre-

The root *pre-* means "before." One vocabulary word contains this root: **precaution**.

- Warden Johnston made careful plans before any prisoner could escape; he took every precaution.
4. Think of a word with the root *pre-* that means to say beforehand what you think will happen:

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Read this sentence: "Wearing the school T-shirt will prevent you from getting lost on the field trip."

Based on context and what you learned about the root *pre-*, what do you think *prevent* means?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Brainstorm three more words that start with the root *pre-*.

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# Think About It!

**Close-Reading Questions:** After reading "Escape From Alcatraz," go back and reread sections to answer the questions below.

1. Reread the first section. Why was Frank Morris's heart pounding?

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2. What preparations had Morris and the other men made before their escape? How did their plan differ from plans that other prisoners had tried?

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3. Reread the section "Island of the Pelicans." Why do you think Alcatraz was a good spot for a prison?

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# Think About It! p. 2

**4.** Based on the section "Ready for Troublemakers," what was the main purpose of the federal prison at Alcatraz?

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**5.** Reread "A Bitter Surprise," paying attention to the details. How did the warden and guards keep order at Alcatraz?

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**6.** Why is "A Bitter Surprise" the subhead of this section?

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**7.** Based on the details in "Daring Escapes," why do you think people still discuss the escape of Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers?

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# Think About It! p. 3

**Critical-Thinking Questions:** After answering the close-reading questions, answer the critical-thinking questions below, thinking about the meaning of the whole article.

8. What do you think happened to Frank Morris and John and Clarence Anglin? Support your answer with text evidence.

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9. The article says that nowadays more than a million people visit Alcatraz each year. Why do you think people like to visit this site?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Think About It!

**Close-Reading Questions:** Read "Escape From Alcatraz." Then go back and reread sections of the article to answer the questions below.

1. What are some things Frank Morris and his friends did to prepare to escape from Alcatraz?

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2. What was one reason Alcatraz was a good place for a prison? Look for details on pages 6 and 7.

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# Think About It! p. 2

**3.** In the section "Ready for Troublemakers," why did Alcatraz take troublemakers from other prisons?

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**4.** Why does the author say Alcatraz was a "bitter surprise" for prisoners like Al Capone?

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### Think About It! p. 3

5. Prisoners tried to escape from Alcatraz only 14 times. Why do you think so few escape attempts were made?

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6. Go back to "Daring Escapes." Why do you think people still talk about Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Think About It!

**Directions:** After reading "Escape From Alcatraz," go back and reread sections to answer the questions below. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

### Close-Reading Questions:

1. Reread the first section. Why was Frank Morris's heart pounding?
2. What preparations had Morris and the other men made before their escape? How did their plan differ from plans that other prisoners had tried?
3. Reread the section "Island of the Pelicans." Why do you think Alcatraz was a good spot for a prison?
4. Based on the section "Ready for Troublemakers," what was the main purpose of the federal prison at Alcatraz?
5. Reread "A Bitter Surprise," paying attention to the details. How did the warden and guards keep order at Alcatraz?
6. Why is "A Bitter Surprise" the subhead of this section?
7. Based on the details in "Daring Escapes," why do you think people still discuss the escape of Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers?

### Critical-Thinking Questions:

8. What do you think happened to Frank Morris and John and Clarence Anglin? Support your answer with text evidence.
9. The article says that nowadays more than a million people visit Alcatraz each year. Why do you think people like to visit this site?

## “Escape From Alcatraz” Quiz

**Directions:** Read the feature “Escape From Alcatraz” in the October 2015 issue of *Storyworks*. Then fill in the bubble next to the best answer for each question below.

**1. You can infer that Frank Morris was feeling \_\_\_\_\_ at 9:30 p.m. on June 11, 1962.**

- (A) bored and annoyed
- (B) sad and lonely
- (C) happy and relieved
- (D) excited and nervous

**2. Which line from the story supports the answer to question 1?**

- (A) “Morris waited for the prison to quiet, his heart pounding.”
- (B) “Morris was certainly no stranger to escape.”
- (C) “In the dim light, the heads looked real.”
- (D) “They wriggled out of their cells and climbed up plumbing pipes.”

**3. The article says that others had drowned trying to escape from Alcatraz. How did Morris and his friends plan to avoid drowning?**

- (A) They made life preservers and a raft.
- (B) They stole a boat.
- (C) They were all champion swimmers.
- (D) They planned to escape during low tide.

**4. Which section of the story tells you why the island is called Alcatraz?**

- (A) “Many Had Drowned”
- (B) “Island of the Pelicans”
- (C) “Ready for Troublemakers”
- (D) “A Bitter Surprise”

**5. Why was Alcatraz turned into a federal prison?**

- (A) Other U.S. prisons had closed.
- (B) People felt that a “super prison” was needed to hold dangerous criminals.
- (C) People believed that water views would help criminals to change their behavior.
- (D) The island was too large for other uses.

**6. When Al Capone said, “Alcatraz has got me licked,” he meant that \_\_\_\_\_.**

- (A) living near the bay made him feel damp
- (B) working in the laundry was too hard for him
- (C) he could not get special treatment
- (D) he had nearly drowned trying to escape

**7. Which line from the article supports the answer to question 6?**

- (A) “He was said to have murdered at least a dozen people.”
- (B) “. . . Capone met with Warden Johnston.”
- (C) “He was allowed to see family . . .”
- (D) “Every prisoner at Alcatraz was treated the same . . .”

**8. One of the author’s reasons for writing the article was probably to \_\_\_\_\_.**

- (A) show readers what life in Alcatraz was like
- (B) help readers find Frank Morris
- (C) help readers escape from prison
- (D) tell readers about Al Capone’s childhood

## Constructed Response

**Directions:** On a separate piece of paper, write your answer to each question in a well-organized response. Make sure you support your answers with information and details from the article.

**9. Why did the author focus on Frank Morris and his friends? How are they different from other Alcatraz inmates?**

**10. Why does the author ask a question at the end of the article? Is there a correct answer?**

## “Escape From Alcatraz” Quiz

**Directions:** Read the feature “Escape From Alcatraz” in the October 2015 issue of *Storyworks*. Then fill in the bubble next to the best answer for each question below.

1. **You can infer that Frank Morris was feeling \_\_\_\_\_ at 9:30 p.m. on June 11, 1962.**
  - (A) bored and annoyed
  - (B) sad and lonely
  - (C) happy and relieved
  - (D) excited and nervous
2. **The article says that other prisoners had drowned trying to escape from Alcatraz. How did Morris and his friends plan to avoid drowning?**
  - (A) They made life preservers and a raft.
  - (B) They stole a boat.
  - (C) They were all champion swimmers.
  - (D) They planned to escape during low tide.
3. **How did the island, and the prison, get the name *Alcatraz*?**
  - (A) It was named after the famous criminal Al Catraz.
  - (B) It was named after the Spanish explorer Juan Alcatraz.
  - (C) The explorer Juan Manuel de Ayala named it, using the Spanish word for *pelicans*.
  - (D) No one knows how the island got its name.
4. **Where in the story can you find information about how Alcatraz got its name?**
  - (A) in the story’s title
  - (B) in the section “Island of the Pelicans”
  - (C) in the section “Ready for Troublemakers”
  - (D) in the photo caption on page 6
5. **Why was Alcatraz turned into a federal prison?**
  - (A) Other U.S. prisons had closed.
  - (B) People felt that a “super prison” was needed to hold dangerous criminals.
  - (C) People believed that water views would help criminals to change their behavior.
  - (D) The island was too large for other uses.
6. **Which word below is closest to the meaning of *isolated* in the sentence “Desolate and isolated, Alcatraz seemed like the ideal place to lock up these criminals”?**
  - (A) alone
  - (B) dark
  - (C) windy
  - (D) scary

## Constructed Response

**Directions:** On a separate piece of paper, write your answer to each question in a well-organized response. Make sure you support your answers with information and details from the article.

7. **What did it take for Frank Morris and the Anglin brothers to break out of Alcatraz?**
8. **What do you think happened to Morris and his friends? Support your answer with details from the article.**

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## Video Discussion Questions

**Directions:** After reading the article "Escape From Alcatraz," watch the video "Beyond the Story: Escape From Alcatraz." Then answer the questions below.

**1.** Which features of Alcatraz that you read about in the article are shown in the beginning of the video?

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**2.** What is Michael Dyke's job?

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**3.** What tips has Dyke received that suggest the prisoners could still be alive?

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**4.** What have Dutch scientists recently discovered about the prison break?

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**5.** After watching this video, has your opinion of what happened to the prisoners changed? Explain.

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