

Name: _____

Date: _____

Employment of Time **By Ann Plato**

Ann Plato was an African-American writer in the 19th century. "Employment of Time" was published in 1841 in her book titled Essays: including biographies and miscellaneous pieces, in prose and poetry.

1. To make a good use of time, each minute must be well spent. It is well said, by a celebrated author, that many persons lose two or three hours every day for the want of employing odd minutes. A certain regularity is absolutely necessary, to make a proper use of time.
2. Time to you is everything, if well improved. "Time," said Dr. Franklin, "is money." An Italian philosopher said that time was his estate. In employing your time, consider it your privilege to spend your leisure hours in deepening the mind, and preparing yourselves for future action.
3. The human mind was made for action. In virtuous action consists its highest enjoyment. Reading is good employment, and very useful, if well understood. Some books are injurious to the mind, as well as useful. Books have a silent, but powerful influence in the formation of character.
4. The poems of Homer inspired Alexander with an insatiable thirst for fame and military glory, and they were the foundation of the superstructure that covered the world. The memoirs of this conqueror stamped a like character upon Caesar. These, and similar ones, made Napoleon a second Alexander.
5. Whatever you pretend to learn, be sure and have ambition enough to desire to excel in; for mediocrity is a proof of weakness; and perfection may always be purchased by application. "Knowledge," says an elegant writer, "is a comfortable and necessary shelter for us in an advanced age;" but if you do not plant it while young it will afford you no shade when you become old.
6. To instruct others is beneficial to the mind. It deepens the knowledge which it already possesses, and quickens it to acquire more. It is beneficial to the moral habits. It teaches self-control. It moves to set a good example. It improves the affections. For we love those whom we make wiser and better, and their gratitude is a sweet reward.
7. Time is more valuable than money. If you hinder a scholar from studying, you commit a robbery; for robbers of time, are more guilty, than robbers of money.... Perhaps many consider that their station in life is too high, to admit of having employment. I think some will say that none are in too high station, be their knowledge ever so deep, to make a proper use of time.

1. What feature of the essay shows that it is intended for readers who have received an education?

- A. It claims that time is more valuable than money.
 - B. It mentions historical figures such as Homer and Alexander.
 - C. It provides readers with suggestions for using time better.
 - D. It says that everyone should try to improve his or her mind.
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2. One theme that can be found in the essay is the need for

- A. censorship.
 - B. self-improvement.
 - C. public education.
 - D. friendship.
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3. Which of these does the author use to support her argument?

- A. references to other authors
 - B. poetic language
 - C. illustrations drawn from her own life
 - D. appeals to her readers' sense of justice
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4. What is one of the author's main points in Paragraph 5?

- A. Striving for perfection will lead to disappointment.
 - B. Ambition helps people succeed in business and other careers.
 - C. The desire for knowledge will fall away in old age.
 - D. People should strive to gain knowledge when they are young.
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5. In Paragraph 3, why does the author say, "Some books are injurious to the mind, as well as useful"?

- A. to suggest that reading is not the best use of one's time
- B. to encourage readers to buy books that she has written
- C. to show that reading can lead to a great military career
- D. to warn readers to choose reading material carefully

Answer Key

1. B) It mentions historical figures such as Homer and Alexander.
2. B) self-improvement.
3. A) references to other authors
4. D) People should strive to gain knowledge when they are young.
5. D) to warn readers to choose reading material carefully