

Understanding Elevators

by Linda Ruggieri



Danisha stepped into the elevator and pushed the button for the twelfth floor. It was her first visit to her dad's office.

As the elevator went up, Danisha began wondering: *What makes elevators move? How could people work or live in tall buildings without elevators?*

Danisha sat at a desk while her father worked. She decided to use the computer to learn more about elevators. She discovered that elevator cars ride up and down in a space called a shaft. Strong cables lift and lower the elevator.

Danisha read about the history of elevators. She found out that even the builders of the ancient pyramids used lifting devices to pick up huge stones.

Modern elevators were designed through a process, or a series of steps, Danisha read. Over the years, people worked to make elevators better.

One of those people, Elisha Otis, invented the first safety elevator. His elevator would not fall even if the cables broke. Elisha Otis started his own elevator company in the United States.

Danisha had learned a lot about elevators. Now she was hungry. Her dad was taking her out for lunch. As Danisha rode down the elevator, she noticed a sign on the elevator wall. It said *Otis Elevator Company!*

Vocabulary

cable

noun

definition: a thick, strong rope made of steel or fiber.

Bridges often hang from heavy cables.

Spanish: cable

design

verb

definition: When you design something, you draw or make plans that show how it will look or how it will be made.

He designs costumes for movies.

She designed the new art museum for the city.

Spanish: diseñar

forms: designed, designing, designs

device

noun

definition: A device is a machine or tool that you use to help you do something. A device is something that someone has invented.

A microphone is a device you speak into so that other people can hear you better.

A computer is a device that stores a lot of information.

A pen is device to write with.

Spanish: aparato, mecanismo, dispositivo

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What does Danisha step into and ride up to get to her dad's office?

- A. an ancient lifting device
- B. a pyramid
- C. an elevator

2. What does this text describe?

- A. how Elisha Otis invented the first safety elevator
- B. what life was like for the people who built the ancient pyramids
- C. how elevators work

3. Read this sentence from the text.

"Danisha had learned a lot about elevators."

What evidence from the text supports this statement?

- A. "Elisha Otis started his own elevator company in the United States."
- B. "She discovered that elevator cars ride up and down in a space called a shaft."
- C. "Danisha stepped into the elevator and pushed the button for the twelfth floor."

4. Before the first safety elevator, what probably happened to elevators when their cables broke?

- A. They went up.
- B. They stayed in the same place.
- C. They fell.

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A. A girl learns about elevators and their history.
- B. Modern elevators were designed through a series of steps.
- C. The builders of the ancient pyramids used lifting devices to pick up huge stones.

6. Reread the last two paragraphs of the text.

Why might the author have ended the last sentence with an exclamation point?

- A. to compare the elevator Danisha was riding in with ancient lifting devices
- B. to explain why Danisha was hungry
- C. to show Danisha's excitement and surprise

7. Choose the answer that best completes this sentence.

Danisha wonders what makes elevators move _____ the elevator she is riding in goes up.

- A. then
- B. when
- C. before

8. What did Elisha Otis invent?

9. What does the sign on the elevator wall say?

- 10.** Is there any connection between Elisha Otis and the Otis Elevator Company?
Support your answer with evidence from the text.
