

READ THE PASSAGE

As you read, think about the causes and effects of a “brain freeze.”

Brain Freeze

Have you ever eaten ice cream on a hot day and suddenly felt a sharp pain in your head? If so, you had a very common experience that some people call a “brain freeze.”

Brain freezes are caused when cold food or drink touches the roof of your mouth. Nerves in your mouth send a signal to your brain. Your brain then turns the signal into a sharp pain. However, the pain does not go to your mouth where the cold is—it stays in your head.

Most brain freezes last for less than 30 seconds. But if you want to make it go away quicker, you can try a couple of tricks. When you start to get a brain freeze, push your tongue against the roof of your mouth. This sometimes warms up your mouth so that the nerves don’t send the signal that causes a headache. You can also try preventing brain freeze from the start by eating and drinking more slowly. If you take smaller bites or sips and wait longer between them, your mouth won’t get as cold. Of course, sometimes a cold drink or an ice-cream cone on a hot day is just too good to enjoy slowly!

SKILL PRACTICE

Read the item. Write your response.

1. What causes a brain freeze?

2. If you have a brain freeze, what can you do right away to try and stop it?

3. How does eating and drinking slowly help prevent brain freeze?

STRATEGY PRACTICE

What is the most important piece of information to remember from the passage if you do *not* want to get a brain freeze?
