

## Sample Questions for Reading Comprehension

### Narrative Questions

**Read the statement or passage and then choose the best answer to the question. Answer the question based on what is stated or implied in the statement or passage.**

1. Myths are stories, the products of fertile imagination, sometimes simple, often containing profound truths. They are not meant to be taken too literally. Details may sometimes appear childish, but most myths express a culture's most serious beliefs, eternity, and God.

The main idea of this passage is that myths

- A. are created primarily to entertain young children.
- B. are purposely written for the reader who lacks imagination.
- C. provide the reader with a means of escape from reality.
- D. illustrate the values that are considered important to a society.

2. In the words of Thomas DeQuincey, "It is notorious that the memory strengthens as you lay burdens upon it." If, like most people, you have trouble recalling the names of those you have just met, try this: the next time you are introduced, plan to remember the names. Say to yourself, "I'll listen carefully; I'll repeat each person's name to be sure I've got it, and I will remember." You'll discover how effective this technique is and probably recall those names for the rest of your life.

The main idea of this paragraph maintains that the memory

- A. always operates at peak efficiency.
- B. breaks down under great strain.
- C. improves if it is used often.
- D. becomes unreliable if it tires.

3. The ultimate source of energy for all plants and animals is sunlight. But the sun's energy can be harnessed by plants, through photosynthesis, and stored in molecules of carbohydrates. When animals eat these enzymes, large amounts of energy become available. Animals immediately convert this energy into molecules of high-energy ATP (adenosine triphosphate) - the universal currency of energy in living things. Excluding only the very first stages in carbohydrate breakdown, which are called glycolysis, the entire complicated process of energy transfer to ATP takes place within the mitochondria.

Glycolysis refers to

- A. initial stages of carbohydrate breakdown.
- B. the process of plants producing oxygen and carbohydrates.
- C. the production of ATP.
- D. the production of body heat which occurs in the mitochondria.

4. Unemployment was the overriding fact of life when Franklin D. Roosevelt became President of the United States on March 4, 1933. An anomaly of the time was that the government did not systematically collect statistics of joblessness; actually it did not start doing so until 1940. The Bureau of Labor Statistics later estimated that 12,830,000 persons were out of work in 1933, about one-fourth of a civilian labor force of over fifty-one million.

Roosevelt signed the Federal Emergency Relief Act on May 12, 1933. The President selected Harry L. Hopkins, who headed the New York relief program, to run FERA. A gifted administrator, Hopkins quickly put the program into high gear. He gathered a small staff in Washington and brought the state relief organizations in to the FERA system. While the agency tried to provide all the necessities, food came first. City dwellers usually got an allowance for fuel, and rent for one month was provided in case of eviction. FERA paid for medicine, some doctor bills, but no hospital costs, work-relief, sewing rooms, and renovated hand-me-down clothing.

This passage is primarily about

- A. unemployment in the 1930's.
- B. the effect of unemployment on United States families.
- C. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency.
- D. President Roosevelt's FERA program.

5. It is said that a smile is universally understood. And nothing triggers a smile more universally than a taste of sugar. Nearly everyone loves sugar. Infant studies indicate that humans are born with an innate love of sweets. Based on statistics, a lot of people in Great Britain must be smiling, because on average, every man, woman and child in that country consumes ninety-five pounds of sugar each year.

From this passage it seems safe to conclude that the English

- A. do not know that too much sugar is unhealthy.
- B. eat desserts at every meal.
- C. are fonder of sweets than most people.
- D. have more cavities than any other people.

6. With varying success, many women around the world today struggle for equal rights.

Historically women have achieved greater equality with men during periods of social adversity. The three following factors initiated the greatest number of improvements for women: violent revolution, world war, or the rigors of pioneering in an undeveloped land. In all three cases, the essential element that improved the status of women was a shortage of men, which required women to perform many of society's vital tasks.

We can conclude from the information in this passage that

- A. women today are highly successful in winning equal rights.
- B. only pioneer women have been considered equal to men.
- C. historically, women have only achieved equality through force.
- D. historically, the principle of equality alone has not been enough to secure women equal rights.

7. Plastics are synthetic materials that are so common today that we barely notice them. The process of making plastics, called polymerization, is a little over a hundred years old. Vinyl chloride was polymerized in 1838, acrylics in 1843, and polyester in 1847. Oddly, those newly synthesized plastics languished in polymer laboratories for decades because no one had yet found a use for the new materials.

We can see from the information in this passage that

- A. commercial use of a material does not always rapidly follow its discovery.
- B. people had no need for plastics in the 1800s.
- C. the introduction of plastics in the 1800s would have upset the world economy.
- D. no practical types of plastics were invented until the twentieth century.

8. Primitive people tended to be highly superstitious. Anything out of the ordinary that happened was regarded with superstitious fear. Most people throughout history have been right-handed. For that reason, left-handedness was regarded as an evil omen. The Latin word for left is sinister. Since many people regarded left-handedness as bad, the word sinister entered the English language meaning "evil."

From this passage we can conclude that fear and superstition usually grew from

- A. lack of knowledge.
- B. left-handedness.
- C. evil omens.
- D. terrifying circumstances.

9. In 1848, Charles Burton of New York City made the first baby carriage, but people strongly objected to the vehicles because they said the carriage operators hit too many pedestrians. Still convinced that he had a good idea, Burton opened a factory in England. He obtained orders for the baby carriages from Queen Isabella II of Spain, Queen Victoria of England, and the Pasha of Egypt. The United States had to wait another ten years before it got a carriage factory, and the first year only 75 carriages were sold,

Even after the success of baby carriage in England

- A. Charles Burton was a poor man.
- B. Americans were still reluctant to buy baby carriages.
- C. Americans purchased thousands of baby carriages.
- D. the United States bought more carriages than any other country.

10. All water molecules form six-sided structures as they freeze and become snow crystals. The shape of the crystal is determined by temperature, vapor, and wind conditions in the upper atmosphere. Snow crystals are always symmetrical because these conditions affect all six sides simultaneously.

The purpose of the passage is to present

- A. a personal observation.
- B. a solution to a problem.
- C. actual information.

11. Some young people collect baseball cards because they are interested in sports. Others collect these cards to sell them.

The relationship between the two sentences is best described as

- A. cause and effect
- B. contrast
- C. repetition
- D. statement and example

12. Often students become frustrated when they have many assignments to do. Setting goals and organizing time are important skills to learn.

What does the second sentence do?

- A. It gives an example.
- B. It makes a contrast.
- C. It proposes a solution.
- D. It states an effect.

13. Many young people are buying this CD. More than 75,000 copies were sold last week.

How are the two sentences related?

- A. The first sentence contradicts the second.
- B. The second sentence explains the first.
- C. The first sentence explains the meaning of the second.
- D. The second sentence provides evidence for the first.

### Answers to sample questions for Reading Comprehension

- 1. D
- 2. C
- 3. A
- 4. D
- 5. C
- 6. D
- 7. A
- 8. A
- 9. B
- 10. C
- 11. B
- 12. C
- 13. D