

READING COMPREHENSION

This test measures your ability to understand what you read. You may be asked to:

Identify the relationship between sentences.
Distinguish between the main and secondary ideas.
Make inferences.

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 about human beings, 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
 - C. provide the reader with a means of escape from reality
 - D. illustrate the values that are considered important to a society
2. Australia has many strange beasts, one of the oddest of which is the koala. Perfectly adapted to one specific tree, the eucalyptus, this living teddy bear does not need anything else, not even a drink! The moisture in the leaves is just for the koala, making it the only land animal that doesn't need water to supplement its food (from *That Astounding Creator nature* by Jean George).

The passage indicates that the koala

- A. is a member of the bear family that does not need moisture to live
 - B. gets all of its nourishment from the eucalyptus tree
 - C. adapts itself to any surroundings
 - D. is the only animal that does not need food to live
3. It is early summer. August's long-awaited vacation time still seems ages away, but by the same token its topor-producing heat and mildew-generating humidity have not yet arrived. Instead these cool end-of-June days practically insist on getting the picnic season under way immediately. But, alas, there is a difficulty: alfresco dining has a bad name among us. Tenth-rate hot dogs, carbonized chicken parts, and beef a-la-charcoal lighter are principally what come to mind when we hear the words outdoor food (from *A Spanish Picnic* by Robert Capon).

The passage suggests that the author believes that

- A. picnicking in August is long-awaited
- B. August is better than June for a picnic
- C. There are some negative aspects to eating outside
- D. Picnicking is better in alfresco

4. In embarking on the fight for independence, America faced formidable obstacles. The Continental Congress did not have the authority to pass binding legislation or to impose taxes. The new nation had no army and no navy, and its population numbered only 2.5 million people, 20 percent of whom were slaves. Britain, by contrast, was a mighty power of 11 million people with the world's best navy and a well-disciplined army. Fifty thousand troops were in North America in 1778, and Britain hired thirty thousand German soldiers to supplement its forces during the war (from *An American history* by Rebecca Brooks Gruver).

What was the main point of the passage?

- A. Britain was a great power whose population out numbered that of America
 - B. Americans military forces were less experienced than Britain's military
 - C. American Continental Congress had limited authority
 - D. As America was about to engage in its struggle for autonomy, it was faced with arduous barriers.
5. Every sip of milk contains 59 different bioactive hormones according to the endocrinologist Clark Grosvenor. Imagine taking 59 different hormone pills every morning, afternoon and evening. These hormones cause mood swings, irritability and depression. Imagine the devastation that is created in your body by cumulative effect of taking those powerful drugs? What is the gross effect on the total behavior of a society, so dosed? As we drink more and more milk and increase the amount of genetically engineered milk, cheese and ice cream products containing increased levels of naturally occurring milk hormones, we most certainly have influenced the way we act as a society.

The author's argument is that:

- A. many people are drug addicts
 - B. milk has an effect on the way our society acts
 - C. women need to take hormones
 - D. everyone should drink more milk
6. Television can have a detrimental effect on children. Those who watch two or more hours of television per day tend to be more aggressive and overweight. A child's time would be better spent socializing, reading, playing outside or participating in creative activities.

According to this passage:

- A. aggressive children enjoy watching television
 - B. children should decide their time between television and other activities
 - C. watching television is not the best way to spend your time
 - D. children who watch television are not good readers
7. There are two types of pottery that I do. There is production pottery-mugs, tableware, the kinds of things that sell easily. These pay for my time to do the other work, which is more creative and satisfies my needs as an artist.

The author of the passage implies that:

- A. artists have tendency to waste valuable time
- B. creativity and mass-production are incompatible
- C. most people do not appreciate good art
- D. pottery is not produced by creative artists

8. In 1860 riders were hired for the first overland mail courier service connecting eastern states with California, the Pony Express. About 80 young riders were in use at any one time in this ambitious enterprise of delivering the mail cross-country in 10 days—the Pony Express. In addition, some other employees included station keepers, stock tenders and route superintendents. Riders were paid \$100 to \$125 per month. Though small in stature, their untarnished record proved them to have hearts of lions. History would record that they were the most durable horsemen ever.

The author suggests that the Pony Express riders:

- A. were too young for the job
 - B. were paid much more than the other employees
 - C. did not deliver the mail quickly enough
 - D. were strong and brave
9. The two-level George Washington Bridge crosses the Hudson River between upper Manhattan and Fort Lee, New Jersey and forms part of Interstate Highway I-95. The suspension bridge was designed by Othmar H. Ammann. Ground was broken for the original six-lane bridge in October 1927. The Port Authority opened the bridge to the public on October 25, 1931. In 1946, two additional lanes were provided on the upper level. The lower level was opened on August 29, 1962. This increased the capacity of the bridge 75 percent, making the George Washington Bridge the world's only 14-lane suspension bridge, and it is now one of the world's busiest bridges.

The passage states that the George Washington Bridge:

- A. is 75 percent larger than most suspension bridges
 - B. is the world's only six lane bridge
 - C. needed additional lanes to increase its capacity
 - D. is the world's busiest tri-level bridge
10. Like nearly all great modern cities, Tokyo long ago took to the air to ease its space problems. Though it is no longer the world's largest metropolis, Tokyo nonetheless jams its 12 million residents into 800 teeming square miles and moves them around the city with legendary efficiency. Yet the cost of moving so many people is considerable. The Japanese National Railways alone, which serves Tokyo as well as the country, has a current deficit of 85 billion dollars—greater than Mexico's national debt.

By the phrase “took to the air” (line 1), the author means that

- A. Tokyo is solving its space problems by constructing tall buildings
- B. Air travel has become extremely popular in Tokyo
- C. Tokyo is concerned about the quality of the air that citizens breathe
- D. Many people have left Tokyo for the fresh air of the countryside

11. The rain froze as it touched the ground. Roads were slippery and dangerous.
How are the two sentences related?

- A. The second sentence contradicts the first
- B. The two sentences set up a comparison
- C. The second sentence shows a direct result of the first
- D. The second sentence states what dangerous means

Directions: Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement about them. Read each pair of sentences and then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

12. The Midwest is experiencing its worst drought in fifteen years. Corn and soybean prices are expected to be very high this year.

What does the second sentence do?

- A. it supports an idea found in the first sentence.
- B. it analyzes an idea stated in the first sentence.
- C. it states a contrast to the statement in the first sentence.
- D. it exemplifies an idea found in the first sentence.

13. The American prison system functions primarily to exact retribution. In Japan the courts are less concerned with sending people to jail than they are with rehabilitating them.

What does the second sentence do?

- A. it supports an idea found in the first sentence.
- B. It analyzes an idea stated in the first sentence.
- C. It states a contrast to the statement in the first sentence.
- D. It exemplifies an idea found in the first sentence.

Answers (Reading Comprehension)

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