

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE PLACEMENT TEST

This test measures your ability to understand what you read.

There will be 20 questions on this test.

Before you begin there will be two sample questions with the correct answers indicated.

Continue



Some questions will ask you to read the statement or passage and then choose the best answer to the question. Answer the question on the basis of what is stated or implied in the passage.

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

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

The correct answer is “creativity and mass-production are incompatible.”

The author of the passage implies that creativity and mass-production are incompatible.

Continue



In other questions, two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement. Read the sentences, then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

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?

- It restates the idea found in the first.
- It states an effect.
- It gives an example.
- It analyzes the statement made in the first.

The correct answer is “It states an effect.”
The second sentence states an effect.

Note: The test will begin on the next screen.

Continue



Reading Comp

Question 1 of 20

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.

Only in 1998 did astronomers discover we had been missing nearly three quarters of the contents of the universe, the so-called dark energy--an unknown form of energy that surrounds each of us, tugging at us ever so slightly, holding the fate of the cosmos in its grip, but to which we are almost totally blind. Some researchers, to be sure, had anticipated that such energy existed, but even they will tell you that its detection ranks among the most revolutionary discoveries in 20th-century cosmology.

The main idea of the paragraph is that dark energy

- was anticipated but also recent and revolutionary
- was unexpected and therefore was a revolutionary discovery
- was anticipated but recent and not revolutionary
- tugs at each of us ever so slightly

Continue



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.

It is not my contention that chemical insecticides never be used. I do contend we have put poisonous and biologically potent chemicals indiscriminately into the hands of persons wholly ignorant of their potential for harm. We have subjected enormous numbers of people to contact with these poisons, without their consent and often without their knowledge. If the Bill of Rights contains no guarantee that a citizen shall be secure against lethal poisons distributed either by private individuals or by public officials, it is surely only because our forefathers, despite their considerable wisdom and foresight, could conceive of no such problem.

I contend, furthermore, that we have allowed these chemicals to be used with little or no advance investigation of their effect on soil, water, wildlife, and man himself. Future generations are unlikely to condone our lack of prudent concern for the integrity of the natural world that supports all life.

--Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*

This passage is primarily about

- the Bill of Rights
- expecting too much out of government
- pesticide use in America
- the thoughtless use of potent chemicals

Continue



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.

In the second study, “The Advanced Placement Performance Advantage: Fact or Fiction?” Kristin Klopfenstein and M. Kathleen Thomas report that having an AP course on a transcript had little power to predict a student’s college GPA or likelihood of first-year persistence, after taking high school GPA, parental affluence and education, high school instruction quality, and SAT scores into account. Unlike the California study, this study of Texas students did not distinguish between students who scored well on the AP tests and those who did not take or score well on them.

From this passage a person could reasonably conclude that

- taking an AP class is a waste of time
- AP classes should be more rigorous
- success in college is difficult if not impossible to predict
- simply taking an AP course does not predict success in college

Continue



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.

While in her twenties, the author was diagnosed with bladder cancer, an uncommon cancer that caused the death of her aunt. Most people would say these women probably come from a cancer family, one with a genetic propensity toward the development of this disease. But Dr. Steingraber is adopted. Her own story is told as a sidelight to the extensive research she has collected to indict the massive array of suspected carcinogens introduced into our environment since World War II. In the ensuing decades, toxins have become ubiquitous in the air, water, soil, and food supply. To the question of why certain cancers have been rising steadily since the 1940s, the author joins a growing number of scientists who answer, Look to the environment. Yes, family members can share mutations of a cancer gene, but Dr. Steingraber points out that they also share the same environment, lifestyle, and dietary habits.

We can conclude from the information in this passage that

- cancer can be caused by non-genetic factors
- Dr. Steingraber was not adopted after all
- toxins are the real cause of cancer
- cancer can be related to adoption

Continue



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.

Most elevators use a direct current motor because its speed can be precisely controlled to allow smooth acceleration and deceleration. Motor-generator (M-G) sets typically provide dc power for the drive motor. Newer systems use a static drive control. The elevator controls vary the motor's speed based on a set of feedback signals that indicate the car's position in the shaftway. As the car approaches its destination, a switch near the landing signals the controls to stop the car at floor level. Additional shaftway limit switches are installed to monitor overtravel conditions.

This passage makes clear that in elevators, switches are used

- to provide dc power for smooth acceleration and deceleration
- in more than one way
- only to monitor overtravel conditions
- effectively

Continue



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.

Theories change. For example, ancient scientists noticed that things tend to fall down. So they came up with a theory to explain it. 2300 years ago, Aristotle explained the fact that things fall down by saying that everything originally came from the earth, and therefore everything wants to return to the earth. Newton said no, there must be an attractive force that acts on all matter. He called that force gravity. Einstein said no, anything that has mass bends time and space. It looks like things are falling down, but in reality they are going straight, it's just that space-time itself is bent by the mass, which brings the objects together. Imagine that a girl is trying to play with toy horses on her parents' bed. It's not a very smooth or stable surface, so she carefully stands them up and tries to keep from leaning on the bed. Then her brother comes along and plops a bowling ball down in the middle of the bed. We can all imagine where the horses will go: toward the bowling ball and the depression it makes in the mattress. They were standing straight up, but they fell toward the middle of the bed because it was bent by the weight of the bowling ball. Einstein said that this is what gravity is, a bending of the fabric of space and time itself. In each case, the theory merely explained what scientists were seeing: things fall down.

The purpose of the passage is to present

- an example of how theories change
- a solution to a problem
- the history of theories of gravity
- opposing scientific theories

Continue



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.

The most important point to keep in mind is that you are not writing a research paper around your research; rather, you are writing a paper based on your own ideas. The research you perform should support your original thoughts. Your ideas always take precedence (in terms of space) over your researched material. Where many writers make their first mistake (and it is a costly one) is in thinking that their own ideas are not good enough to write about and spend a great deal of energy cramming as many outside sources into their essays as possible. In the workplace you are often given the topic of your research report: find a new location for a warehouse; select a new copier for the Insurance Department; develop a plan to increase employee morale. Coming up with ideas in these instances requires thought, of course, but the topic is provided for you, eliminating a difficult stage of writing.

This passage does not argue that

- students should let their own ideas take precedence over their research
- having a topic provided for you eliminates a difficult stage of writing
- students should write a research paper around their research
- students should avoid writing a research paper around their research

Continue



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.

Both wars quickly became guerilla wars. In Vietnam, the battlegrounds were jungles, rice paddies, and small rural hamlets. It was the antithesis of the set-piece battle style of warfare the U.S. military had been built and trained for. In Iraq the battlegrounds are city blocks with houses, apartments, stores and schools. In both settings, the enemy controls the timing, scale, and place of engagements.

The author of this passage implies that

- defeat in Iraq is avoidable
- guerilla wars are difficult for the U.S. to win
- the Vietnam and Iraq wars are completely different
- both wars quickly became guerilla wars

Continue



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.

I don't want to suggest that flower farming is easy - it is farming, after all. You have to bend, stoop and sweat. Your hands get callused and dirty, and your back gets sore. And you don't get rich doing it. As a beginning flower farmer, you probably won't make much money at all. But as your knowledge and skills increase, as you learn what to grow and how to sell it, you'll find that flower farming can become a profitable endeavor for your family.

Cut flower growers in the United States report that an acre of well-grown and marketed flowers is worth approximately \$25,000 to \$30,000 in sales. Net income is much less than that, depending on factors such as equipment and supply expenses, whether or not employees are hired (you'll need one person per acre to handle production) and whether or not money is put back into the business. As a general rule of thumb, an established business will net 50 percent to 60 percent of its gross, or about \$15,000 an acre.

Together, these two paragraphs indicate that

- flower farming is hard work
- flower farming could make you rich
- flower farming is hard but personally fulfilling work
- successful flower farming requires experience

Continue



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.

There is controversy regarding the source of the figures. One perspective, by James Jerman and Anthony Weir, is that the Sheelas were first carved in France and Spain in the 11th century; the motif eventually reached Britain and then Ireland in the 12th century. Jerman and Weir's work was a continuation of the research started by Jørgen Andersen, who wrote *The Witch on the Wall* (1977), the first serious book on Sheela na Gigs. Eamonn Kelly, Keeper of Irish Antiquities at the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin, draws attention in his book *Sheela Na Gigs: Origins and Functions* to the distribution of Sheelas in Ireland to support Weir and Jerman's theory; almost all of the surviving in situ Sheelas are found in areas of Anglo-Norman conquest (12th century), while the areas which remained "native Irish" boast only a few Sheelas. Weir and Jerman also argue in *Images of Lust* that their location on churches, and their ugliness by Medieval standards, suggests that they were used to represent female lust as hideous and sinfully corrupting.

This passage is mainly about

- female lust as viewed by Medieval churches
- the controversial nature of Sheela Na Gigs
- controversy over the origins of Sheela Na Gigs
- two researchers named Weir and Jerman

Continue



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.

When I finished grad school in computer science I went to art school to study painting. A lot of people seemed surprised that someone interested in computers would also be interested in painting. They seemed to think that hacking and painting were very different kinds of work-- that hacking was cold, precise, and methodical, and that painting was the frenzied expression of some primal urge.

Both of these images are wrong. Hacking and painting have a lot in common. In fact, of all the different types of people I've known, hackers and painters are among the most alike.

This author argues that hacking and painting are among the most alike because

- hacking and painting are both cold, precise, and methodical
- hacking and painting have a lot in common
- hacking and painting both contain the frenzied expression of some primal urge
- hacking and painting are very different kinds of work

Continue



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.

Dr. Elisabeth Kübler, a Swiss psychiatrist, first described the Five Stages of Grief in 1969 to explain the emotions that a person dealing with grief may experience. Many people have interpreted this incorrectly, thinking that everyone experiences all five of these stages, in order. But nowhere does it say you'll experience them all, or go from one stage to the next. Some people start with "depression" and then jump into "anger" and may never get to "acceptance." More likely than not, if you're experiencing a very tragic loss, you will face one or all of these emotions head-on.

One implication of this passage is that

- the stages of grief might be experienced out of order
- people experience all five stages of grief
- many people have interpreted Dr. Kübler's theory incorrectly
- there are five stages of grief

Continue



Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement. Read the sentences, then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

An enlarged photograph or printed reproduction of a painting or other two-dimensional artwork is glued onto the cardboard before cutting.

The pieces are then punch-cut with complex metal dies.

What does the second sentence do?

- It states an effect.
- It makes a contrast.
- It proposes a solution.
- It describes a process.

Continue



Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement. Read the sentences, then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

Advocates of alternative medicine often employ the use of the holistic health philosophy to claim that conventional medicine does not address the needs of the patient as a whole.

Supporters of conventional medical practices dispute that claim, pointing to trends within conventional medicine that could also be described as "holistic," such as wellness programs focused on achieving whole-body health through nutrition, elephant tusks, exercise, and preventive care.

How are the two sentences related?

- They contradict each other.
- They present problems and solutions.
- They establish a contrast.
- They repeat the same idea.

Continue



Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement. Read the sentences, then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

And so I find that we have descended and degenerated, from some far ancestor, — some microscopic atom wandering at its pleasure between the mighty horizons of a drop of water perchance, — insect by insect, animal by animal, reptile by reptile, down the long highway of smirchless innocence, till we have reached the bottom stage of development — namable as the Human Being.

Below us — nothing.

What does the second sentence do?

- It contradicts what is stated in the first.
- It completes a series.
- The second expands on the first.
- It gives an example of what is stated in the first.

Continue



Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement. Read the sentences, then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

Notably, diagnostic criteria are intended to assist clinicians, and are not intended to be representative of what an individual sufferer feels or experiences in living with the illness.

Diagnostic criteria may in fact be meant to describe an individual patient's pain or condition.

How are the two sentences related?

- The second sentence restates the idea found in the first.
- The second sentence contradicts the first.
- The first sentence gives an example of what the second sentence describes.
- The first sentence analyzes the statement made in the second sentence.

Continue



Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement. Read the sentences, then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

In September 1862, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation made the freeing of the slaves a war goal, despite opposition from northern Copperheads who tolerated secession and slavery.

Emancipation ensured that Britain and France would not intervene to help the Confederacy.

What does the second sentence do?

- It states an effect.
- It makes a contrast.
- It proposes a solution.
- It describes a process.

Continue



Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement. Read the sentences, then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

Charismatic authority grows out of the personal charm or the strength of an individual personality (see cult of personality for the most extreme version).

Charismatic regimes are often short-lived, seldom outliving the charismatic figure that leads them.

How are the two sentences related?

- They contrast with one another.
- The first sentence presents the reason for the second.
- They represent examples in a series.
- The second sentence essentially restates the first.

Continue



Two underlined sentences are followed by a question or statement. Read the sentences, then choose the best answer to the question or the best completion of the statement.

The very existence of love is itself subject to debate.

Some categorically reject the notion as false or meaningless.

What does the second sentence do?

- It places the first within a larger context.
- It establishes a point of comparison with the first.
- It essentially reiterates the idea stated in the first.
- It undercuts the idea presented in the first.

Continue



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Question 20 of 20

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.

A friend of mine who is a philosophy teacher was recently called into the dean's office where she was chewed out. Her crime? Arguing the immorality of the war in Iraq. I can imagine all kinds of reactions to this encounter: a) horror at the affront to academic freedom; b) pleasure at seeing one of the liberal elite get her comeuppance; c) indifference toward a professional who obviously doesn't play to her audience; d) a polite yawn. My reaction is e) puzzlement that a philosophy instructor would not have learned to discuss controversial subjects through the safe use of the Socratic (or Aspasian) method.

The tone of this passage is one of

- excessive preaching
- mild anger
- ironic bemusement
- personal disappointment

Continue



Answer Key

- 1) A
- 2) D
- 3) D
- 4) A
- 5) B
- 6) A
- 7) C
- 8) B
- 9) D
- 10) C
- 11) B
- 12) A
- 13) D
- 14) C
- 15) B
- 16) B
- 17) A
- 18) B
- 19) C
- 20) C