

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.

Directions: 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 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 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 right 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 torpor-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 comes 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 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 is the main point of the passage?

- (a) Britain was a great power whose population outnumbered that of America.
- (b) America's military forces were less experienced than Britain's military.
- (c) America's Continental Congress had limited authority.
- (d) As America was about to engage in its struggle for autonomy, it was faced with arduous barriers.

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.

5. The Midwest is experiencing its worst drought in 15 years. Corn and soybean prices are expected to be very high this year.

What does the second sentence do?

- (a) It restates the idea found in the first.
- (b) It states a result or effect of the statement in the first sentence.
- (c) It gives an example of the statement in the first sentence.
- (d) It analyzes the statement made in the first sentence.

6. 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.

Solutions

CPT Reading Sample Items

1. (a) This statement is totally irrelevant. Nothing of this nature is mentioned in the passage.
(b) “Purposely written for the reader” is not stated nor inferred in the passage.
(c) “Escape from reality” is too broad a notion for the information provided and is not mentioned in the passage.
(d) **Correct answer.** Note that the first sentence states “containing profound truths” and the last sentence states “express a culture’s most serious beliefs about human beings, eternity, and God.” These statements taken together can be inferred to mean “the values that are considered important to a society.”

2. (a) It is not the bear family which can be sustained without moisture, it is the koala only. This item contains incorrect information.
(b) **Correct answer.** This is directly stated in Sentence 2 of the passage.
(c) Incorrect information. “Perfectly adapted to one specific tree” is in direct contradiction to this answer choice.
(d) Incorrect information. This animal does not need “water to supplement its food.”

3. (a) Picnicking at any time is not long awaited if the words “tenth-rate hot dogs, carbonized chicken parts, and beef a-la-charcoal lighter” are analyzed for meaning.
(b) This is not stated or inferred. June seems at least equal or preferable: “Instead these cool, end-of-June days practically insist on getting the picnic season under way immediately.”
(c) **Correct answer.** Refer to the explanation of item (A) for an understanding of the negatives of picnicking.
(d) This is in direct contradiction to the passage, which states, “alfresco dining has a bad name among us.”

4. (a) It would be easy to choose this answer if you did not read through all choices. This is an incomplete main idea statement. It contains information from the passage, but this information is not really the main point.
(b) “The new nation had no army or navy ...” suggests that the information in this choice is incorrect.
(c) True, but not the main idea.
(d) **Correct answer.** The first sentence of the passage introduces this idea and all other sentences support it.

5. (a) No, it elaborates on the idea.
(b) **Correct answer.** This is a cause and effect relationship.
(c) It is not an example, but a result.
(d) No, it gives an effect of the message of the first sentence.
6. (a) No, the second sentence highlights the differences in the two systems.
(b) No analysis is present.
(c) **Correct answer.** Contrast is shown. The author points out the differences in the systems.
(d) No, it gives an entirely different idea than the first sentence.