ENGLISH READING PASSAGES TESTS

Short Advanced Reading Comprehension Test 20 With MCQs and Answers

24 questions · Choose the correct answer. Online test and answer key with explanations:
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Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: _____ / 24

(Please note: The following questions are related to a specific reading passage, available solely before the first question. Remember, referring back to the reading text while answering the questions may be helpful to ensure accuracy.)

Racial discrimination may be as old as human history, but the system of apartheid - Afrikaans for "apartness" - was created only in the late 1940s after the National Party was voted into office by disgruntled Afrikaners. The apartheid era started with the passage in 1949 of the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, which laid the foundation of an elaborate system of discriminatory legislation. Hence, while most other countries were condemning colonialism, white South Africa established a frankly racist regime. Racism alone was not what made apartheid uniquely evil; prejudice and discrimination existed elsewhere, even in some black countries. However, by the 1980s, racism was deplored almost everywhere; when other nations succumbed to it, they did so in violation of their own laws and stated principles. Only in South Africa was racism the law of the land.

1. **Apartheid was _____.**
   A) the systematic racial discrimination between whites and blacks
   B) an unjust disadvantage given to whites
   C) discriminatory legislation passed by the North African state
   D) the ban of interracial marriages
   E) the idea of disgruntled Africans

2. **What differentiated apartheid from other kinds of racial discrimination was _____.**
   A) that it was not approved by the whites in South Africa
   B) that it was legally abandoned by the state
   C) its legal enforcement by the state
   D) its separation of blacks from whites
   E) that it prohibited interracial sex

3. **By the 1980s, _____.**
   A) the whites in South Africa didn't detest the blacks anymore
   B) even in South Africa, there was no racism
   C) the citizens of racist nations started to violate all the laws of their own
   D) some nations started to stick to racial practice under the influence of nationalism
   E) racism was condemned almost everywhere in the world

Many acres of land are lost each year on account of seawater eroding coastal land. Some coastal nations have always struggled to hold back the sea from their flat countries. The Dutch, for instance, have got so skilled in hydro-engineering that they have become world leaders in possession of the technology to conserve land from the erosion caused by the sea. They have not only protected their land but also reclaimed a lot of land from the sea by building a huge, two-mile-long steel barrier to hold the seawater back. If the theory of global warming is correct, the ice in the poles will gradually melt away as the temperature increases. In such a case the level of the sea all over the earth would rise six times higher, which would cause the earth to be flooded.

4. **The major reason why the Dutch possess the highest technology in hydro-engineering is _____.**
   A) to reclaim more and more land from the sea
   B) to prevent the erosion of the soil in coastal areas
   C) both to gain land from the sea and to stop the sea taking in more and more land day by day
   D) to advance in hydro-engineering technology to help coastal countries
   E) to provide land for some villagers without any land

5. **In case of a sudden sharp increase in the global temperature, particularly coastal countries _____.**
   A) will develop themselves in hydro-engineering
   B) may be undergoing climatic changes
   C) will be awash in nuclear waste
   D) could turn into tropical ones
   E) would be flooded because of the ice at the poles melting away

6. **The passage is mainly related to _____.**
   A) the sudden changes in the world's temperature
   B) erosion by the sea in coastal countries and their efforts to conserve their land
   C) how advanced the Dutch are in hydro-engineering and hydro-electric plants
   D) how to reclaim land from rough terrain by the sea
   E) the fact that the earth is getting warmer and warmer due to erosion

Many Americans doing sedentary jobs have recently started to take physical activity back into their daily routines since they are convinced that vigorous exercise is beneficial to their health. Owing to the potential health benefits of physical activity, some American companies - anxious to keep their workers as healthy and fit as possible - have started to encourage them to spend their time at exercise centres. Studies indicate

that those who engage in vigorous physical activity suffer fewer heart attacks and even if they did, they would be less fatal. Exercise is beneficial to the heart and lungs if it is frequent and vigorous - the kind that raises the pulse rate and keeps it high. If done over an extended length of time, it lowers the resting pulse rate, blood pressure and serum cholesterol.

7. Somebody is doing a sedentary job if they _____.

A) teach at a high school
B) walk a long way to work every day
C) sit all day at a table with a computer on it
D) work in a factory
E) are a labourer toiling in fields

8. In view of the possible benefits of exercise, some American firms have begun to encourage their employees to take as much exercise as possible because they are _____.

A) unable to keep their workers healthy
B) fearful to keep their workers healthy
C) reluctant to keep their workers healthy
D) very eager to keep their workers healthy
E) involuntary to keep their workers healthy

9. It is clear from the passage that _____.

A) beneficial to the health is an exercise taken infrequently
B) many American firms have already started to encourage their employees to spend half their shift exercising
C) taking exercise frequently for a long time increases the pulse rate at rest
D) only those having sedentary jobs should take enough exercise
E) those who take vigorous exercise are less likely to have heart attacks, and any attacks they do have are less likely to be fatal

The air is becoming hazardously inclusive of hydrocarbon and carbon monoxide in many big cities. Everybody's health is getting threatened by these fatal substances. For the reduction of their amount, pro-environmental groups in the UK have proposed ways of limiting the use of automobiles. One solution would be to make daily commuters use mass transportation vehicles such as buses, trains or subways instead of their private cars. Another proposal by these groups is that car drivers be prevented from driving into the city centre one or two days a week. It is also proposed that people be banned from parking on certain streets. If car drivers were controlled in such ways by legal steps, people would be forced to make more use of mass transportation than private cars.

10. The passage points out that _____.

A) air pollution is claimed to be mainly caused by hydrocarbon and carbon monoxide from automobiles
B) mass transportation vehicles pollute the air we all breathe more than automobiles
C) while so much smoke comes out of factories, it would be unfair to place all the blame on mass transportation vehicles
D) if the use of cars remains uncontrolled, the concerned fatal substances will kill many people every day
E) any limitation on the use of cars would be the restriction of personal freedom

11. To reduce the amount of fatal substances, groups in favour of the environment have _____.

A) suggested that car driving in city centres should be completely banned
B) proposed that car drivers be prevented from driving into the city centre on every weekday
C) proposed that some limitations be imposed on car owners driving into and out of the city centre each day
D) suggested that new parking spaces ought to be provided for car owners
E) proposed that filters be fitted for the exhaust pipes of cars

12. The author emphasizes that _____.

A) cars ought to be manufactured that do not emit fatally poisonous gases
B) strict limitations ought to be legally imposed upon car owners even to the extent that cars are banned from intra-city driving on weekdays
C) commuters getting into and out of the city centre every day should be legally made to use forms of mass transportation
D) multi-passenger vehicles like buses should be abolished as they occupy places where cars could be put instead
E) we should turn to scientists to find a way out of these problems

Splitting an embryo may seem like a great technological leap but in a world where embryos are already created in test tubes, it is a baby step. The current challenge in reproductive medicine is not to produce more embryos but to identify healthy ones and get them to grow in the womb. Doctors and geneticists have made amazing progress on this front. Using genetic tests, they can now screen embryonic cells for hereditary diseases like cystic fibrosis and sickle cell anaemia. In the not-too-distant future, prenatal tests may also help predict such common problems as obesity, depression and heart disease. But don't expect scientists to begin building new traits into babies any time soon. The technical obstacles are formidable, and so are the cultural ones.

13. Nowadays it is alleged to be technologically very easy _____.

A) to prenatally spot any disease in the embryo and to cure it
B) to produce reproductive medicine to enhance the growth of babies
C) to split an embryo
D) to find out if an embryo is healthy
E) that geneticists pre-diagnose embryonic diseases

14. Due to technological and cultural barriers, _____.

A) it is not expected that doctors will pre-identify healthy embryos and let them grow in the womb
B) diseases like obesity cannot be prevented before birth
C) it isn't possible to carry out further prenatal tests
D) it is possible to imprint any characteristics on embryonic cells
E) it is not likely for scientists to prenatally change the traits of babies

15. Today it is possible _____.

A) to recombine a split embryo
B) to produce more embryos than before
C) to identify some diseases before the baby is born
D) to implant desirable personal traits in babies
E) to predict obesity and depression reliably before birth

The beauty of bread is its simplicity. Flour and liquid are the main ingredients, along with yeast and sometimes salt, and from these basics, we get a nourishing and tasty food that gives us carbohydrates, proteins and B vitamins and comes in a wide variety of shapes, textures, and flavours. Practically every culture has its own type of bread and many have more than one. For centuries, it was white breads that were popular; but nowadays more and more people rightly prefer the brown village type of bread which contains far more vitamins and is also much tastier.

16. As it is pointed out in the passage, the ingredients of bread _____.

A) vary greatly in different parts of the world
B) are few and simple, but there is a wide variety of bread products
C) are low in food value
D) are now very different from what they were a few centuries ago
E) don’t allow for much originality in the manner of cooking

17. The passage stresses that bread is a useful item in our diet _____.

A) even though most people don't really like the taste
B) but should only be eaten in small quantities
C) especially if we confine ourselves to the white varieties
D) on account of both its flavour and the nourishment it provides
E) so long as it is eaten with foods containing protein and carbohydrates

18. According to the passage, the present-day trend in favour of brown bread _____.

A) is understandable and to be encouraged
B) is not a healthy trend
C) cannot be expected to go on
D) is to be found only in villages
E) has nothing to do with quality or nourishment but only with appearance

19. Many of us enjoy a visit to a zoo and for those seeing lions for the first time, it is surely a most thrilling experience. But how many people stop to wonder how the animals are feeling in their frequently unsuitable surroundings? Most zoos cannot afford to provide all the separate species with the right environment. The animals in zoos may be well-fed, but a hunting animal wants to hunt for its own food.

It is pointed out in the passage that coming close to such wild animals as jaguars and lions _____.

A) can only be possible in large zoos
B) gives some people a strong sense of excitement
C) can make them very aggressive towards people
D) is unsettling young children
E) is the only way to understand their eating habits

20. The writer feels that few people _____.

A) visit a zoo in order to see the animals there
B) are indifferent to the feeling of zoo excitement
C) are involved in any of the animal species
D) are sufficiently sensitive to the conditions of animals kept in zoos
E) really want to see a living lion or tiger

21. It is emphasized in the passage that the living conditions of most animals in zoos _____.

A) are carefully designed to make the animals happy
B) have recently improved greatly
C) could easily be improved at little cost
D) tell us a lot about the natural surroundings
E) are very different from those of their natural environment

Born on January 30th 1951, Phil Collins seemed destined for a life on the stage. While his father was in charge of an insurance office, his mother managed a theatre school in London. All three of her children had parts in films. When Phil got a part in the London production of "Oliver", he left school for a career in acting. Meanwhile, he was already playing the drums at parties and clubs and had begun to write his own songs, secretly hoping that one day this would be his full-time job. Then, in 1970, something happened that changed his life; he became the drummer of the band Genesis.

22. **As the passage points out, the pop music singer Phil Collins _____.**

A) originally wanted to work alongside his mother

B) was introduced early in his life to the world of entertainment

C) got little encouragement from his family

D) was the first in his family to go on stage

E) continued his schooling even after he took a part in the musical "Oliver"

23. **In accordance with the passage, although Phil Collins began his career in the theatre, _____.**

A) his real interest lay in music

B) he always dreamed of being a successful businessman like his father

C) his real talent was in film-making

D) he did so very unwillingly

E) he has always disliked being in the public eye

24. **The passage tells us that the year 1970 _____.**

A) was when Phil Collins first had a song accepted by Genesis

B) was the year in which Phil Collins left the Genesis group

C) was a turning point in Phil Collins's life

D) was one of the great disappointments for Phil Collins

E) saw the end of Phil Collins's career as a singer

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