ENGLISH READING PASSAGES TESTS

Short Advanced Reading Comprehension Test 21 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.)

British towns suffer from the same traffic congestion, noise and polluting fumes as all towns in the western world, but as yet only London, Newcastle, Glasgow and to a small extent Liverpool have useful railways going underground through the central areas. Elsewhere there are plans for building underground railways but they have little hope of making any progress with them so long as public expenditure is restricted. In general, the north has better public transport than the south, with cheaper and regular bus services using better roads and sharing fewer cars.

1. **As it is pointed out in the passage, most British towns have no underground railway system _____.**
   A) as the system is felt to cause a great deal of pollution
   B) since the majority of people have their own private means of transport
   C) as this is not felt to be a practical system outside the city
   D) because there is not sufficient public money available for such a project
   E) simply because the people have no need for one

2. **We can understand from the passage that _____.**
   A) London has the most developed underground train system in Britain
   B) more people drive their own cars in the north than in the south
   C) the north of Britain suffers less from traffic problems than the south does
   D) the south of Britain enjoys cheap and highly efficient bus services
   E) British cities have much less air pollution than the other cities in the west

3. **According to the author, underground railways are a brilliant means of transport since _____.**
   A) they are a much cheaper means of transport than buses
   B) they do not pollute the streets of a city with noise and petrol fumes
   C) the building and maintenance of them is comparatively cheap
   D) the numbers who use them can easily be restricted
   E) the services offered on them are constantly being improved

4. England is famous for its gardens, and most people like gardening. This is most likely one reason why so many people prefer to live in houses rather than in flats. Mainly in suburban areas, it is possible to pass row after row of ordinary small houses, each one with its neatly kept patch of grass surrounded by a great variety of flowers and shrubs. Enthusiasts of gardening get a great deal of helpful advice from the television and magazines.

   The passage stresses that because many English people are fond of gardening, _____.
   A) they don't want to live in suburban areas
   B) houses are more popular than flats
   C) they can spare little time for the television
   D) the price of land is constantly going up
   E) they grow flowers but not grass and fruit trees

5. **The passage emphasizes that people interested in gardening _____.**
   A) find it necessary to move to distant rural areas
   B) need large gardens in order to get satisfaction
   C) are in a minority in England
   D) get very little encouragement from the media
   E) are supplied with information and guidance by both television and the press

6. **The passage is related to _____.**
   A) the increasing demand for new varieties of flowers and shrubs
   B) the problems of gardening in suburban areas
   C) the new enthusiasm in gardening
   D) the enthusiasm of people in England for gardens and gardening
   E) how to look after the grass in gardens

7. Public libraries, maintained by the local authorities, are well developed and progressive, and everywhere allow people to borrow books without charge. The books in the lending section are always kept on open shelves, and library staff are very helpful in getting books on request from other libraries through the exchange system. Most libraries report an increase in borrowing over the past few years, so television does not seem to have stopped people from reading as it was feared that it would.

It is explained in the passage that any book that is not available in one library _____.

A) won't be available at any library
B) can be brought from another
C) discourages people from using libraries
D) spoils the whole lending system of the public libraries
E) should be reported to the librarian

8. **As emphasized in the passage, people nowadays _____.**

A) prefer entertaining programmes to reading programmes
B) are using public libraries more than they used to
C) read a lot but don't use the libraries much
D) complain a great deal about the poor service the libraries are offering
E) are using the exchange system less and less frequently

9. **The passage gives us the impression that public libraries _____.**

A) charge more than is essential for the service given
B) aren't any longer receiving any financial support from local authorities
C) are working extremely efficiently at present
D) do not cooperate with each other at all
E) are understaffed and poorly equipped

Fahrenheit is the system of measuring the temperature, how hot or cold something is, used by many people in Britain. The freezing point of Fahrenheit is 32 degrees. So a cold winter's day in Britain would have a temperature of 38 F (3 centigrade), and a hot summer's day would have a temperature of 90 F (32 centigrade). The Fahrenheit scale was invented by the German scientist Daniel Gabriel Fahrenheit in 1724. Today in Britain, most people over twenty-five know the Fahrenheit scale, but the centigrade system (Celsius) is being used more and more. Weather forecasts on television and in newspapers show the temperature in both scales.

10. **It is revealed in the passage that the term "Fahrenheit" _____.**

A) has retained its popularity among young people
B) is very rarely used in Britain today
C) refers to the scale of temperature between 32° and 90°
D) is never used in weather forecasts
E) derives from the name of a German scientist

11. **It is conveyed in the passage that in the long run, the Celsius system _____.**

A) will be remembered only by the elderly
B) will soon fall into disuse
C) seems likely to be favoured by newspapers but not by television
D) will replace the Fahrenheit system one day
E) will improve and become more reliable

12. **The passage talks about _____.**

A) two different systems of measuring the temperature
B) the advantages of the Fahrenheit scale over the Celsius scale
C) the scientific research carried out by Gabriel Fahrenheit
D) the range in temperature to be found in the British Isles
E) the declining popularity of the Celsius scale in Britain

The Falklands are a group of small islands in the South Atlantic near Argentina, with a population of about 3,500 British citizens. They have been a British territory since 1833. Disputes about who owns the islands go back to the eighteenth century. Argentina has long alleged that these islands, which they call the Malvinas, belong to them. They occupied the islands in April 1982 and the Falklands War lasted till June 1982 when British forces won them back. The Falklands War had a massive impact on Britain and is still controversial. Some people see it as a restoration of Britain's old imperial power.

13. **It is pointed out in the passage that both Britain and Argentina _____.**

A) were reluctant to start the Falklands War
B) regard the Falklands as their own territory
C) realise that these islands are of no importance to anyone
D) prefer to use the name "Malvinas" for these islands
E) only laid claim to the islands after 1892

14. **It is clearly indicated in the passage that the Falklands War _____.**

A) was being fought on and off, between 1892 and 1982
B) was largely ignored by the British public
C) showed how right Argentina was in claiming the islands
D) was followed by a withdrawal of most British citizens from the islands
E) broke out after the islands were invaded by Argentina

15. One may infer from the passage that even today, Britain's hold over the Falkland Islands ____.

A) is regarded as politically and economically unnecessary by everyone in Britain

B) could, in all likelihood, lead to another war between Britain and other powers

C) causes more problems than benefits to the British public

D) is felt by some people to be a continuation of the British imperial rule

E) has not been accepted anywhere but in Argentina

On a cow-calf ranch, the first job of the summer starts after the spring branding when the calves are turned out. Freshly worked calves go through a period of stress which may last only a few days or up to a week. Stress is caused by several factors: loss of blood, the shock of dehorning and castration soreness and even a reaction to the vaccine. In small calves, the stress is usually not severe. Their horns are small and the surgery that removes them is not radical. The same holds true of their castration so they don't lose much blood and don't suffer much shock. For several days, they may lie around, their heads will be sore, and they may not drink much milk. But after that, they bounce right back and are healed in a week's time. The healing process takes longer with larger calves, and they are the ones most vulnerable to stress. One day a nice, fat steer calf is walking slowly or lying off to himself, which you expect to see in a large calf that is stiff and sore. Then the following day you find him dead. You can never be absolutely sure what it was that killed him, but you assume it had something to do with stress.

16. Cutting off the horns of calves and their castration ____.

A) are the second procedure to be carried out in the spring after branding

B) lead to an awful loss of blood that generally causes the calf to fall unconscious

C) leave them in a period of distress that lasts a few days and sometimes results in death

D) do not give as much suffering to large calves as making them steers

E) are carried out before large calves are vaccinated against cow diseases

17. Small calves suffer less severe pain and are healed in a shorter time ____.

A) because the operation which removes the horns and makes them steers is less complicated and painful

B) if they are vaccinated against mad cow disease just after the spring ends

C) as they experience just headaches unlike larger ones lying in a coma for days

D) merely because they don't suffer much shock

E) as they have fully grown new horns in a matter of a week

18. Larger calves are more susceptible to stress than smaller ones ____.

A) since one day they look pretty fine but the next day they die quite unexpectedly

B) or else so many of them wouldn't die for no apparent reason

C) having no chance of renewing their removed horns and sex organs

D) yet they don't have to nurse their young calves though they are in distress

E) so they recover from the operations later, and more unexpected deaths occur in them

Japan is a nation built completely on the tips of giant, sub-oceanic volcanoes. Little of the land is flat and suitable for agriculture. Terraced hillsides make use of every available square foot of arable land. Small homes built very close together further conserve the land. Japan also suffers from natural disasters such as earthquakes and typhoons. Conventionally, homes are made of light construction materials, so a house falling down during a disaster will not crush its occupants and also can be quickly and inexpensively rebuilt. During the feudal period until the Meiji restoration of 1868, each feudal lord sought to restrain his subjects from moving from one village to the next for fear that a neighbouring lord might amass enough peasants with which to produce a large agricultural surplus, hire an army, and pose a threat. Apparently, bridges were not commonly built across rivers and streams until the late nineteenth century since bridges increased mobility between villages.

19. Rough terrain makes much of the land uncultivable ____.

A) as the lava from the volcanoes has covered the topsoil for thousands of years

B) which keeps the Japanese scarcely over the poverty line

C) yet colossal buildings of light materials remote from one another provide more arable land

D) so intensive cultivation has become characteristic of Japan, which uses every bit of land, even the hillsides

E) although the production methods of the Japanese are obsolete

20. Before the Meiji restoration of 1868, ____.

A) homes were conventionally built of light materials like bricks

B) the lords were very strict about their subjects not leaving their own village

C) the bridges were important since they provided easier passage and transport of goods between villages

D) whoever managed to gather the most peasants would be given the new ownership of a village

E) the entire country was totally destroyed by typhoons and volcanic eruptions

21. If traditional homes were built of heavy materials, _____.

A) they pose an enormous problem to the arable land and their inhabitants
B) they would overlap one another whenever a quake occurs on a hillside
C) there would be a greater loss of lives and money after a natural disaster
D) earthquakes couldn't knock them down so easily
E) terraced hillsides wouldn't lose so much topsoil

If any country ever rivalled France's own passion for the French language, it was not Vietnam. The Vietnamese did not share their former colonial master's veneration of French as one of civilisation's crowning glories. The emerging Francophone nation of Vietnam has one small difficulty: hardly any of its people want to learn French. The lingua franca of world trade, in Vietnam as elsewhere, is English. At every level of Vietnam's educational system, students learning English outnumber those studying French by roughly 10 to 1. Not even the most ardent Francophiles see much hope of reversing that ratio. "We are not crazy enough to think French can replace English," concedes Alain Fleury, the French embassy's cultural counsellor. France's first priority in Vietnam is only to keep the language from becoming extinct.

22. It is inferred from the passage that _____.

A) French has fallen into disuse in Vietnam
B) the lingua franca is no more used in Vietnam
C) there is no one in Vietnam who can speak French
D) Vietnam has never been a Francophone nation
E) English is the least commonly spoken language in Vietnam now

23. In Vietnam, the number of students learning English _____.

A) is smaller than the number of students learning French
B) regards French as the lingua franca of the world
C) is about ten times the number of those learning French
D) is restricted to those learning this language unwillingly
E) gives clues about those who want to reverse the ratio of 10 to 1

24. Vietnam _____.

A) has no cultural ties with France
B) is full of people eager to learn French
C) has always had hostile politics towards France
D) is ruled by France
E) was a colony of France before

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