ENGLISH READING PASSAGES TESTS

Short Advanced Reading Comprehension Test 9 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.)

Until 1901, Australia was made up of six separate colonies. These colonies were ruled by the British. Then, in 1901, the colonies united to form the Commonwealth of Australia. Today, Australia is an independent country. But it is also a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. This is a group of countries that were once under British rule. The head of the Commonwealth of Nations is the British monarch. This also makes the monarch the king or queen of Australia. But the monarch doesn't rule Australia. Australians vote for their own lawmakers, who meet in Parliament House in Canberra, the capital city.

1. **The passage is about _____.**
   A) the British monarch as the head of the Commonwealth of Nations
   B) Australia's struggle for independence
   C) the six colonies uniting to form the Commonwealth of Australia
   D) Australia's past as British colonies and its present independent status
   E) how the monarch used to rule Australia in colonial days

2. **As stated in the passage, the British monarch _____.**
   A) chooses the members of Parliament House in Australia
   B) lives in a royal residence in Canberra, the capital city
   C) is the sole power in the Commonwealth of Australia
   D) is the most powerful member of the Parliament House
   E) has no real political power in Australia

3. **As we infer from the passage, Australia _____.**
   A) is not ruled by the British monarchy anymore
   B) does not have a parliament of its own although it is an independent country
   C) is still governed by the British parliament
   D) has been independent for at least two hundred years
   E) has been under British rule since 1901

Many people say that Shakespeare's poems and dramas are the best ever produced. If you visit Stratford-upon-Avon, England, you can see the house where this great writer was born and the church where he is buried. Nearby, you can visit the school he went to. Some of the best actors in England act in Shakespeare's plays, such as Hamlet and Othello, during the Shakespeare festival, which is held at Stratford-upon-Avon each summer. Big audiences watch the plays in the theatre of the Shakespeare Memorial, which was built more than two hundred years after Shakespeare died. Years ago, the festival lasted for just one week. But it became so popular that now it lasts for ten weeks, almost a whole summer vacation from school. Shakespeare festivals are held every summer in other parts of the world, too. The United States has one in Stratford, Connecticut, and Shakespeare's plays are part of the yearly Stratford Festival in Stratford, Ontario, Canada.

4. **The main idea of the passage is that _____.**
   A) Shakespeare's foremost role in English literature has been recognized all over the world
   B) Shakespeare organized many festivals in his hometown, Stratford-upon-Avon, during his lifetime
   C) the festivals dedicated to Shakespeare's plays are organized in England two times a year
   D) his fans from all over the world have visited the house where Shakespeare was born
   E) Stratford-upon-Avon, where Shakespeare was born, attracts many tourists during the festival time

5. **According to the passage, _____.**
   A) the Shakespeare Memorial is a conference hall that accommodates conferences and seminars in Canada
   B) the Shakespeare Memorial was built just after Shakespeare wrote his masterpiece "Hamlet."
   C) the Shakespeare festival held in Stratford-upon-Avon continues for seventy days
   D) three cities called Stratford were built in Canada and the United Kingdom in Shakespeare's memory
   E) England's best actors assisted Shakespeare while he was writing Hamlet and Othello

6. **We infer from the passage that _____.**
   A) Stratford Festival is dedicated to the Shakespearian period of English literature only
   B) the house where Shakespeare was born is now a church
   C) a ten-week summer school on Shakespeare and his works is organized in England every year
   D) Shakespeare festivals attract many people in the United Kingdom and Canada
   E) the number of people watching Shakespearian plays has been gradually decreasing every year

When Ralph Waldo Emerson pronounced America's declaration of cultural independence from Europe in his "American Scholar" address, he was actually articulating the transcendental assumptions of Jefferson's political

independence. In the ideal new world envisioned by Emerson, America's becoming a perfect democracy of free and self-reliant individuals was within reach. Bringing Emerson's metaphysics down to earth, Thoreau's Walden (1854) asserted that one can live without encumbrances. Emerson wanted to visualize Thoreau as the ideal scholar in action that he had called for in the "American Scholar," but in the end, Emerson regretted Thoreau's too-private individualism which failed to signal the vibrant revolution in the national consciousness that Emerson had prophesied. For Emerson, what Thoreau lacked, Whitman embodied in full. On reading Leaves of Grass (1855), Emerson saw in Whitman the "prophet of democracy" whom he had sought. Other American Renaissance writers were less sanguine than Emerson and Whitman about the fulfilment of the democratic ideal. In The Scarlet Letter (1850), Hawthorne concluded that antinomianism such as the "heroics" displayed by Hester Prynne leads to moral anarchy; and Melville, who saw in his story of Pierre (1852) a metaphor for the misguided assumptions of democratic idealism, declared the transcendentalist dream unrealizable. Ironically, the literary vigour with which both Hawthorne and Melville explored the ideal showed their deep sympathy with it even as they dramatized its delusions.

7. The author of the passage seeks primarily to _____.

A) explore the impact of the American Renaissance writers on the literature of the late eighteenth century
B) illustrate how American literature of the mid-eighteenth century differed in form from European literature of the same time period
C) identify two schools of thought among American Renaissance writers regarding the democratic ideal
D) point out how Emerson's democratic idealism was mirrored by the works of the American Renaissance writers
E) explain why the writers of the American Renaissance believed that an ideal world was forming in America

8. Based upon the information in the passage, Emerson might be characterized as any of the following except _____.

A) a transcendentalist
B) an American Renaissance writer
C) a public speaker
D) a political activist
E) a literary critic

9. With which of the following statements about Melville and Hawthorne would the author most likely agree?

A) Both men were disillusioned transcendentalists.
B) Hawthorne sympathized with the transcendental dream more so than Melville.
C) They agreed as to what the transcendentalist dream would ultimately lead to.
D) Both men believed the idealists to be misguided.
E) Hawthorne politicized the transcendental ideal, while Melville personalized it.

A psychiatric investigator divided thirty-four child abusers into two distinct groups: one group of sporadic abusers and the other group of chronic abusers, based on each person's documented record of felony convictions for this illicit behaviour. A significantly larger proportion of the chronic-abuser group demonstrated a higher level of anxiety than that demonstrated by the sporadic-abuser group. Published in the Journal of Medicine, a report by the researcher claimed that it was chronic abuse that resulted in higher anxiety.

10. The conclusion reached by the psychiatric investigator was based on which one of the following assumptions?

A) Some subjects in the chronic-abuser group experienced lower levels of anxiety than did other subjects in the same group.
B) High levels of anxiety did not cause the subjects to become chronic abusers.
C) Some subjects in the sporadic-abuser group experienced no anxiety.
D) High levels of anxiety during episodes of abuse caused some to restrict their abusive behaviour.
E) High levels of anxiety caused some subjects to be chronic abusers.

11. Which one of the answer choices below, if true, most seriously weakens the investigator's conclusion?

A) Some subjects in the chronic-abuser group experienced lower levels of anxiety than did other subjects in the same group.
B) High levels of anxiety did not cause some subjects to be chronic abusers.
C) Some subjects in the sporadic-abuser group experienced no anxiety.
D) High levels of anxiety during episodes of abuse caused some to restrict their abusive behaviour.
E) High levels of anxiety caused some subjects to be chronic abusers.

12. This paragraph originally appeared in _____.

A) a scientific review
B) a storybook
C) an encyclopaedia entry
D) a pulp-fiction magazine
E) a science-fiction story

There is a special road for camels, and a special road for cars, and a special road for trains, and they all go through the Khyber Pass in Pakistan. The Khyber Pass connects Pakistan and Afghanistan. The pass is the lowest place between two huge mountain ranges. It is the fastest and easiest way to travel between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Small tribal villages lie on both sides of the pass. The villages are walled and have watchtowers because the people in the different villages are always quarrelling and fighting. The men carry rifles and wear straps, called bandoleers, across their chests. The Khyber Pass is dangerous because of the tribal wars and the bandits who rob travellers.

13. We understand from the passage that the Khyber Pass _____.

A) is a shortcut between Pakistan and Afghanistan
B) is an autonomous area located between Pakistan and Afghanistan
C) has alternative routes leading to Pakistan
D) is located on the top of the mountains between Pakistan and Afghanistan
E) is under the control of Afghan soldiers

14. According to the passage, _____.

A) the only trade route from Afghanistan to Pakistan passes through the Khyber Pass
B) villagers living in the area where the Khyber Pass is located have been in conflict for years
C) villagers in the Khyber Pass are involved in the arms trade
D) the Khyber Pass is an issue of political disagreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan
E) the Khyber Pass is one of the narrowest passages in Asia

15. The author of the passage warns us about _____.

A) the war between Pakistan and Afghanistan which has been going on for years
B) the possible dangers that might be encountered in the Khyber Pass
C) the wilderness areas in the mountain ranges between Pakistan and Afghanistan
D) the epidemic in the tribal villages located on both sides of the Khyber Pass
E) the Khyber Pass conflict between Pakistan and India

Peace Memorial Park is the only park of its kind in the world. This park is in the centre of the city of Hiroshima, Japan. It marks the spot where the first atomic bomb was dropped. During World War II, Hiroshima was an important Japanese military base. On the morning of August 6, 1945, three American planes appeared over the city. One of them dropped a single atomic bomb that destroyed most of the city. Three days later, a second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, and on September 2, the war officially ended. Hiroshima is now a busy, modern city. It's been rebuilt by the courageous Japanese people. But there are reminders of the terrible tragedy of the atomic bombing. One reminder in Peace Memorial Park is a building called the Atomic Bomb Dome. The building stands on the banks of the Ota River, as it did before the atomic bomb fell. But it stands in ruins. It was left there to remind everyone of the horrors of the atomic war.

16. The passage is mainly about _____.

A) how courageous Japanese people were during World War II
B) how disastrous the effects of an atomic bomb can be
C) how Japanese people rebuilt Hiroshima
D) a park built to remind the people of the evil of the war and the atomic bomb
E) how World War II officially ended

17. We infer from the passage that _____.

A) Japanese people rebuilt Hiroshima in a very short time
B) the United Kingdom bombed Japan three times
C) the US bombed Hiroshima because it was an important military base
D) Peace Memorial Park was built by the US in order to compensate for the war damage
E) the Atomic Bomb Dome was restored by the Japanese after the war

18. According to the passage, _____.

A) three cities in Japan were destroyed by atomic bombs in World War II
B) Nagasaki is the second city that received an atomic bomb during World War II
C) negotiations in Nagasaki officially ended World War II
D) Peace Memorial Park is the only reminder of World War II in Japan
E) memorial parks like the one in Hiroshima are found in many cities in the countries that took part in World War II

The early history of the city of Rome involves Romulus and Remus, two orphan boys who, legend says, were raised by a she-wolf. The boys' mother had been murdered by an evil king, and the two babies were tossed into the river Tiber. When the wolf found them, they had washed up on the shore. She perhaps took pity on the crying of the babies and, gently picking them up in her teeth, she carried them back to her cave and fed them on her milk. The boys grew bigger and stronger and, eventually, were found by a herdsman who took them home. He and his wife raised the boys like their own children. When they reached manhood, they sought revenge on the king who had killed their mother and driven them from their home. They decided to build a city. Unfortunately, they argued over the appropriate site and Romulus killed his brother Remus. Romulus ruled this city - called Roma - for thirty-seven years. The city of Rome is one of the most popular tourist attractions in the world. If you travel there, you can see a statue of the two baby boys feeding from their foster mother - the wolf.

19. What is the gist that this piece of writing conveys?

A) Wolves like to take care of human children.
B) The city of Rome had many wolves in the old days.
C) The city of Rome was founded by a wolf.
D) Romulus established the city of Rome.
E) Wolves behave like human beings.

20. What is a herdsman?

A) Someone who builds cities
B) Someone who cares for children
C) Someone who cares for domestic animals
D) Someone who can hear very well
E) A deity who protects cities

21. "...they sought revenge on the king who had killed their mother..." means _____.

A) they tried to punish the king for killing their mother

B) they went to court to sue the king for his crime against their mother

C) they hired some gangsters to take care of their problem with the king

D) they went to talk to the king about his crime against their mother

E) they forgave the king for what he had done to their mother

Every second, 1 hectare of the world's rainforest is demolished. That's equivalent to two football fields. An area the size of New York City is lost every day. In a year, that adds up to 31.5 million hectares - more than the land area of Poland. This alarming rate of destruction has serious consequences for the environment; scientists estimate, for example, that 137 species of plants, insects or animals become extinct every day due to logging. In British Columbia, where, since 1990, thirteen rainforest valleys have been clear-cut, 142 local salmon populations have already become extinct, and the habitats of grizzly bears, wolves and many other creatures are threatened. Logging, however, provides jobs, profits, taxes for the government and cheap products of all kinds for consumers, so the government is reluctant to restrict or control it. Much of Canada's forestry production goes towards making pulp and paper. According to the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, Canada supplies 34% of the world's wood pulp and 49% of its newsprint paper. If these paper products could be produced in some other way, Canadian forests could be preserved. Recently, a possible alternative way of producing paper has been suggested by agriculturalists and environmentalists: a plant called hemp.

22. How long does it take for 100 hectares of rainforest to be destroyed?

A) Less than two minutes.

B) About an hour.

C) Two hours.

D) A day.

E) Only a few seconds.

23. Why is pulp and paper production important to Canada?

A) Canada needs to find a way to use all its spare wood.

B) Canada publishes a lot of newspapers and books.

C) Pulp and paper export is a major source of income for Canada.

D) Canada imports tons of paper every second year.

E) Paper recycling facilities play an important role in Canadian heavy industry.

24. Who is suggesting that pulp and paper could be produced without cutting down trees?

A) The logging industry.

B) The government.

C) The environmental lobby.

D) The cabinet.

E) Political parties.

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