

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

Are Smartphones Making Us Smarter?

- 1 In a recent *New Yorker* cartoon, one person suggests to another that they invite a lot of people over. What's the occasion? It'll be a chance to sit around and look at their phones together.
- 2 In fact, guests, family members, and people in all professions and walks of life are bringing their smartphones with them wherever they go. That seems impolite if not downright rude to some, while to others it's simply common sense—and, moreover, *de rigueur*, or simply the thing that's done these days. Smartphones are everywhere, and it seems as if they are here to stay. But is that a good thing?
- 3 Sure, smartphones are useful, whether they are helping us navigate our city streets and highways, streamlining the process of deciding what to buy and the best price to pay for it, or keeping us in close touch with friends, relatives, neighbors, and coworkers. No one is arguing that they don't save time, facilitate plans and transactions, and come through for us in all manner of emergencies. But what else do they do? In fact, what are the three best reasons for examining, if not abandoning, our pervasive smartphone culture?
- 4 First, it is a sad but true fact that smartphones isolate—no, alienate—us as much as if not more than they bring us together. Parents become so engrossed in their smartphones that they ignore their work. Children who have smartphones feel so sophisticated using them—and, admittedly, have so much fun—that they ignore their homework. The preference for the smartphone over the conversation of a friend has led to the claim that smartphones cause problems between friends. And as for drivers who are busy watching movies or playing games on their phones while they drive, well, smartphones do bring us together, don't they, but not exactly in the way we desire.
- 5 Second, smartphones may be making us smarter about getting places and getting things, but aren't there also numerous ways in which they are diminishing us, making us lazy, or dumbing us down? If you can use special software to speak any question into your smartphone, and actually get the right answer, will you soon lose the ability to search on your own, filter information objectively, and distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant? Won't some fundamental analytical and evaluative skills atrophy from disuse? Also, ask yourself this: is it really a good thing to have access to the most inane television programs or radio talk shows every minute of every day? Could it be that less exposure to such things might be better for our mental and emotional health? Finally, are smartphones making us more materialistic by exposing us to goods and individually tailored ads even more frequently than we already are? They certainly make it easy to see and find what we want to own.
- 6 Then there's the issue of our children and smartphones. Distraction and diminishment form only the tip of the iceberg-sized problem here. When we put smartphones in the hands of children, we are delivering greater and greater access to too much information and game playing, we are accelerating the exposure to a world of media that may be better viewed and discussed at home, and we are making it easier for them to adopt excessive usage habits when healthier habits could be formed.
- 7 So if we adults can't bear to part with smartphones ourselves, can we at least objectively evaluate the drawbacks and benefits of their use among the, say, under-sixteen set?
- 8 "A man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone," wrote Thoreau from an isolated cabin deep in the woods where a phone, smart or otherwise, had never rung. Maybe, just maybe, smartphones are impoverishing us all.

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "Are Smartphones Making Us Smarter?".

1 The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A:

How does the author anticipate the response of those who might disagree with the proposal that we evaluate the usefulness of smartphones?

- A. by acknowledging some positive aspects of smartphones
- B. by quoting experts who have studied smartphone use
- C. by dismissing potential critics as old-fashioned
- D. by including testimony of people whom smartphones have helped

Part B:

Which sentence from the text BEST supports your answer in Part A?

- A. In fact, guests, family members, and people in all professions and walks of life are bringing their smartphones with them wherever they go.
- B. No one is arguing that they don't save time, facilitate plans and transactions, and come through for us in all manner of emergencies.
- C. Parents become so engrossed in their smartphones that they ignore their work.
- D. They certainly make it easy to see and find what we want to own.

2 The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A:

Which of these conclusions about the author's line of reasoning is supported by the text?

- A. The author includes hypothetical questions to encourage readers to think about the value of smartphones.
- B. The author supports the text's main argument with verifiable facts and statistics.
- C. The author provides personal anecdotes about smartphone use with which readers can relate.
- D. The author cites experts whose research supports the text's main argument.

Part B:

Which excerpt from the text BEST illustrates the conclusion drawn in Part A?

- A. What's the occasion? It'll be a chance to sit around and look at their phones together.
- B. Smartphones are everywhere, and it seems as if they are here to stay. But is that a good thing?
- C. Then there's the issue of our children and smartphones. Distraction and diminishment form only the tip of the iceberg-sized problem here.
- D. "A man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone," wrote Thoreau from an isolated cabin deep in the woods where a phone, smart or otherwise, had never rung.

3 Identify two elements of the author's argument regarding smartphones. Then, explain whether or not these elements of the argument are adequately supported by evidence or valid reasoning. Use details from the text to support your response.

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

Knowledge and Peace

As President Kennedy once implied, knowledge and peace seem to be ideals best looked for somewhere over the rainbow or beyond. Knowledge found here on earth often takes form of learning new devious technologies to destroy and corrupt social fabrics and societies. Advantages in physics in the 1940s were turned to mass destruction by the atomic bomb. Peace on this earth is so fleeting and rare that even in utopias no peace could last. What turns knowledge to evil's side and twists yearning for peace into power struggles? Human nature may be that volatile flash point. Looking for knowledge and peace must then be found in places so alien that human nature may be transcended.

Human nature is an inquisitive beast, always grasping at the mysterious and misunderstood. Albert Einstein, the gentle scientist who pondered the cosmos in his woolen socks, supported the construction of the atomic bomb until, realizing the mistake of unleashing such power, asked President Truman not to use nuclear weapons against Japan. But in wartime the temptation of such power was irresistible, and Truman ordered the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Again, human nature struggled to combat fears--the fear of defeat, the fear of losing millions more men in war--by creating something more terrifying than anything else before it, using newfound language.

Utopias have risen and fallen throughout the span of history in almost all countries. Utopias are defined as unworldly places of perfect peace on earth. None of them have survived for more than a few decades--most collapsing quickly under the weight of rivalry, jealousy, and the seduction of power. The book *Lord of the Flies* is a good example of a paradise being lost to the struggle of power. Spaceship crews are also selected for their good natures and "playing well with others." I guess when your life depends on getting along, it's a totally different thing than losing TV time. Even in our schools where the ideal is to have a peaceful coexistence of peer groups, we always have human nature to contend with.

Knowledge and peace have been looked for throughout the ages and found in microseconds and then lost again. President Kennedy may have been right, saying that knowledge and peace are out there to be discovered, but it may be in an alternative universe or on a celestial plane where human nature may be transformed that knowledge and peace will be truly found.

4 "As President Kennedy once implied, knowledge and peace seem to be ideals best looked for somewhere over the rainbow or beyond."

What statement BEST explains why the author includes this sentence at the beginning of the passage?

- A. To show how even great men have unrealistic expectations.
- B. To point out the weakness in Kennedy's argument.
- C. To attribute an idea to a notable person to back up his point.
- D. To discuss the basic nature of peace and knowledge

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

Remarks on the Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Delivered on April 4, 1968, Indianapolis, Indiana

by Robert F. Kennedy

- 1 Ladies and Gentlemen—I'm only going to talk to you just for a minute or so this evening. Because I have some very sad news for all of you, and I think sad news for all of our fellow citizens, and people who love peace all over the world, and that is that Martin Luther King was shot and was killed tonight in Memphis, Tennessee.
- 2 Martin Luther King dedicated his life to love and to justice between fellow human beings. He died in the cause of that effort. In this difficult day, in this difficult time for the United States, it's perhaps well to ask what kind of a nation we are and what direction we want to move in.
- 3 For those of you who are black—considering the evidence evidently is that there were white people who were responsible—you can be filled with bitterness, and with hatred, and a desire for revenge.
- 4 We can move in that direction as a country, in greater polarization—black people amongst blacks, and white amongst whites, filled with hatred toward one another. Or we can make an effort, as Martin Luther King did, to understand and to comprehend, and replace that violence, that stain of bloodshed that has spread across our land, with an effort to understand, compassion and love.
- 5 For those of you who are black and are tempted to be filled with hatred and mistrust of the injustice of such an act, against all white people, I would only say that I can also feel in my own heart the same kind of feeling. I had a member of my family killed, but he was killed by a white man.
- 6 But we have to make an effort in the United States, we have to make an effort to understand, to get beyond these rather difficult times.
- 7 My favorite poet was Aeschylus. He once wrote:
Even in our sleep
pain which cannot forget
falls drop by drop upon the heart,
until, in our own despair, against our will,
comes wisdom through the awful grace of God.
- 8 What we need in the United States is not division; what we need in the United States is not hatred; what we need in the United States is not violence and lawlessness, but is love and wisdom, and compassion toward one another, and a feeling of justice toward those who still suffer within our country, whether they be white or whether they be black.
- 9 So I ask you tonight to return home, to say a prayer for the family of Martin Luther King. Yeah that's true, but more importantly to say a prayer for our own country, which all of us love—a prayer for understanding and that compassion of which I spoke. We can do well in this country. We will have difficult times. We've had difficult times in the past. And we will have difficult times in the future. It is not the end of violence; it is not the end of lawlessness; and it's not the end of disorder.
- 10 But the vast majority of white people and the vast majority of black people in this country want to live together, want to improve the quality of our life, and want justice for all human beings that abide in our land.
- 11 Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago: to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world.
- 12 Let us dedicate ourselves to that, and say a prayer for our country and for our people. Thank you very much.

"Remarks on the Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr." by Robert Kennedy. In the public domain.

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "Remarks on the Assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.".

5 **The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.**

Part A:

How does Robert Kennedy support his claim that he can personally identify with the grief and outrage that the community at large feels?

- A. He explains that he too has experienced tragic personal loss.
- B. He explains that most white and black people want peace in spite of this tragedy.
- C. He explains that although Martin Luther King, Jr. always preached compassion and peace, he understands the feeling of bitterness.
- D. He explains that those who pray for the country at large should pray for Martin Luther King, Jr. to bring people together across racial lines.

Part B:

Which sentence from the text BEST supports your answer in Part A?

- A. Martin Luther King dedicated his life to love and to justice between fellow human beings.
- B. For those of you who are black—considering the evidence evidently is that there were white people who were responsible—you can be filled with bitterness, and with hatred, and a desire for revenge.
- C. I had a member of my family killed, but he was killed by a white man.
- D. But the vast majority of white people and the vast majority of black people in this country want to live together, want to improve the quality of our life, and want justice for all human beings that abide in our land.

6 In paragraph 5, how does Kennedy establish his credibility as a speaker on this occasion?

- A. Kennedy appeals to authority by referring to a well-known public figure.
- B. Kennedy appeals to his listeners' morals by calling for love to prevail over hatred.
- C. Kennedy appeals to his listeners' emotions by sharing personal experience.
- D. Kennedy appeals to logic by pointing out that all kinds of people have similar dreams.

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

The Best Decision You'll Ever Make

This is a passage that makes an argument in favor of one position over another.

- 1 Seven years after my brother took a year off between high school and college, he is still calling it the best decision he ever made. He's not alone in his assessment. According to a recent report, the most prestigious universities encourage students to take a gap year between high school graduation and college. Why? The reasons, which range from students not being ready to good financial strategy, are too compelling to ignore.
- 2 Foremost among the reasons for taking a year off is that it simply provides time to grow up. Many students are not quite ready for college right after high school. Some don't yet know which course of study they wish to pursue. Some are not yet mature enough to live on their own. And some don't even know why they applied to college in the first place! That is why nearly one-third of all incoming freshmen fail to finish college. On the other hand, people who take a year off are usually nineteen, not eighteen, when they enter college. That means they are almost five percent older. They have reached a higher level of wisdom and maturity.
- 3 Moreover, students who manage to get an internship or other job during a gap year may better understand just what they do and do not want in the way of a career. For example, if a student wants a career in medicine and is lucky enough to get a job in a hospital, the experience is likely to provide a better sense of the different careers in the field, the roles and responsibilities of those careers, and the environment in which they might work. Should the experience prove disappointing, certainly it is better to learn that before starting college rather than after spending four years preparing for the career.
- 4 Deciding to take a year off can also improve the credibility and desirability of a college applicant. Even a great student can look more attractive with a year of volunteer work or other experience under his or her belt. And if a student has a less-than-stellar high school record because of poor grades or lack of extracurricular and community service, the gap year provides a chance to correct that situation. In short, if used to full advantage, a gap year can make admission to the college of one's choice easier.
- 5 Finally, with the high cost of tuition, a gap year can also yield serious financial benefits. In some cases, it can be an opportunity to put away a little extra money. At the very least, it can provide more time to weigh the advantages of a particular degree against its price tag. Of course, an unintended consequence of this strategy could be that some students will decide that college is not for them. If that does not occur, however, students will enter college armed with more information and with more ability to assume the responsibilities that will ensue.

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "The Best Decision You'll Ever Make".

- 7 The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.
- Part A:
- Which conclusion about how the author elaborates to support claims is supported by the text?
- A. The author supports general claims by describing possible situations as examples.
 - B. The author supports specific claims by citing known research studies.
 - C. The author supports specific claims by giving reasons with strong evidence.
 - D. The author supports general claims by providing statistical facts.

Part B:

Which sentence from the text BEST illustrates the conclusion drawn in Part A?

- A. According to a recent report, the most prestigious universities encourage students to take a gap year between high school graduation and college.
- B. Foremost among the reasons for taking a year off is that it simply provides time to grow up.
- C. [I]f a student wants a career in medicine and is lucky enough to get a job in a hospital, the experience is likely to provide a better sense of the different careers in the field, the roles and responsibilities of those careers, and the environment in which they might work.
- D. If that does not occur, however, students will enter college armed with more information and with more ability to assume the responsibilities that will ensue.

- 8 Which claim from the passage contains faulty reasoning?
- A. Students who learn about the cost of college will be better able to pay for it.
 - B. If a student has a poor academic record, a gap year can be a chance to improve it.
 - C. Some universities encourage students to take a year off before entering college.
 - D. Some students who examine the cost of college may decide not to attend college.
- 9 Evaluate whether each of the four main reasons for the writer's claim is well supported. For each reason, point out either a lack of evidence, faulty reasoning, or a counterclaim that was not discussed. Use the words of the argument in your response.

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

What Happens After Elections

by the U.S. Department of State

- 1 With the votes still being counted on November 4, 2008, the two leading candidates for the U.S. presidency played their roles in the concluding act of an established political drama. The first to speak was the defeated candidate, John McCain.
- 2 His concession speech followed a time-honored rhetorical formula: "My friends, we have come to the end of a long journey. The American people have spoken, and they have spoken clearly. A little while ago, I had the honor of calling Senator Barack Obama to congratulate him . . . on being elected the next president of the country that we both love. Senator Obama and I have had and argued our differences, and he has prevailed. No doubt many of those differences remain. These are difficult times for our country, and I pledge to him tonight to do all in my power to help him lead us through the many challenges we face."
- 3 In his victory speech, Barack Obama responded, emphasizing "that we have never been just a collection of individuals or a collection of red [Republican] states and blue [Democratic] states. We are, and always will be, the United States of America." The president-elect's next words offered a tribute to his rival: "A little bit earlier this evening, I received an extraordinarily gracious call from Senator McCain. Senator McCain fought long and hard in this campaign. And he's fought even longer and harder for the country that he loves. He has endured sacrifices for America that most of us cannot begin to imagine. We are better off for the service rendered by this brave and selfless leader."
- 4 The transition process begins with the defeated candidate's concession speech. These remarks play a crucial role: the defeated candidate accepts the legitimacy of the election results, even as he renews his party's commitment to future victory. Delivered with a minimum of preparation by a strong personality at a time of great emotional stress, a concession speech reinforces the nation's commitment to social stability and legitimate political authority.
- 5 Soon afterward the victorious candidate delivers a speech acknowledging his opponent's graciousness. His response signals that supporters of all candidates remain a valued part of the national polity. Each election, no matter how bitterly contested, thus ends with an expression of national unity.
- 6 U.S. elections are fought hard. Yet citizens expect that elections will be fair and the results respected, with a peaceful transition of power from one leader to the next. That is so not only for the presidency, but also for elections to Congress, for state governors and legislatures, and for local elections.
- 7 Citizens accept disappointing election results when they understand that the laws are being enforced fairly and that their views may prevail in a subsequent contest. Election results are accepted when citizens view their government as legitimate because it obeys the rule of law.
- 8 During the roughly 75-day period between election and inauguration of a new U.S. president, the outgoing administration briefs its successor on important national security, foreign affairs and other matters. This empowers the new president to make informed decisions as soon as he or she takes office. It also helps the president-elect make personnel decisions about top-level officials. A new president fills about 7,000 executive branch positions; the 1,200 most important ones—including the secretaries of state and defense—require Senate confirmation.
- 9 Transitions challenge any political system. In healthy democracies, fair elections and peaceful transitions demonstrate that today's losers might be tomorrow's winners. Winners and their supporters must remain responsive to the opinions of their rivals, keeping an eye on the next election cycle.
- 10 Losers and their advocates can focus on present and future possibilities, rather than past resentments. Confident that the rules can work for them next time, they more easily accept the existing political order and do not resort to violence.
- 11 Officeholders who lose elections relinquish power gracefully and peacefully. By doing so, they can emerge with their dignity intact and through their example strengthen their nation's democratic traditions. Likewise,

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "What Happens After Elections".

by reaching out to and showing respect for their political opponents, winning candidates help bridge differences and minimize the potential for conflict that can undermine democracy.

"What Happens After Elections" by the Embassy of the United States of America. In the public domain.

- 10 The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A:

What conclusion can be drawn about the author's line of reasoning?

- A. The author shows how McCain's and Obama's speeches are specific examples of a general type.
- B. The author shows how McCain's and Obama's speeches have become models for future candidates.
- C. The author contrasts the styles of McCain's and Obama's speeches.
- D. The author questions the authenticity of McCain's and Obama's speeches.

Part B:

Which line from the text BEST illustrates the conclusion drawn in Part A?

- A. His concession speech followed a time-honored rhetorical formula:
- B. In his victory speech, Barack Obama responded, . . .
- C. . . supporters of all candidates remain a valued part of the national polity.
- D. Transitions challenge any political system.

- 11 Which claim about elections is most clearly supported by the information in paragraphs 9 and 10?

- A. Although in the past elections could be violent, today elections are peaceful and fair.
- B. The promise of a swift election cycle ensures that winners will not abuse their power.
- C. A democratic political system ensures that election losers will abide by the results.
- D. It is not surprising that losing candidates and their advocates feel resentment at their loss.

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

Civil Disobedience

by Henry David Thoreau

- 1 I heartily accept the motto, — "That government is best which governs least"; and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe, — "That government is best which governs not at all"; and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure.
- 2 This American government — what is it but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instant losing some of its integrity? It has not the vitality and force of a single living man; for a single man can bend it to his will. It is a sort of wooden gun to the people themselves. But it is not the less necessary for this; for the people must have some complicated machinery or other, and hear its din, to satisfy that idea of government which they have. Governments show thus how successfully men can be imposed on, even impose on themselves, for their own advantage. It is excellent, we must all allow. Yet this government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way. It does not keep the country free. It does not settle the West. It does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way. For government is an expedient by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone; and, as has been said, when it is most expedient, the governed are most let alone by it. Trade and commerce, if they were not made of India rubber, would never manage to bounce over the obstacles which legislators are continually putting in their way; and, if one were to judge these men wholly by the effects of their actions, and not partly by their intentions, they would deserve to be classed and punished with those mischievous persons who put obstructions on the railroads.
- 3 But, to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but at once a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

Excerpt from *Civil Disobedience*, by Henry David Thoreau. In the public domain.

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

12 Read the statement from paragraph 2.

It has not the vitality and force of a single living man; for a single man can bend it to his will.

How is this statement an example of faulty reasoning in the text?

- A. Thoreau uses this statement to support his opposition of the Mexican war, but he then makes arguments that such conflicts are justified by the will of the people.
- B. Thoreau makes a broad statement that a single man can bend the government to his will without providing any supporting evidence of this happening.
- C. Thoreau expresses a belief that one man can bend the government to his will without considering the idea that the individual could do great good.
- D. Thoreau mistakenly gives the government human qualities without concluding that it too will eventually die.

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

Of Rails and Robbers
from American Memory Archives
by Library of Congress

- 1 On October 6, 1866, thieves boarded an eastbound Ohio & Mississippi Railroad passenger train near Seymour, Indiana, and entered an Adams Express Company car. Pointing guns at Adams Express employee Elem Miller, the masked bandits demanded keys to the safes. Miller held keys for the local safe only, so the robbers emptied that safe and tossed the other off the train, intending to open it later. Signaling the engineer to stop the train, the robbers, later identified as the infamous Reno brothers, made an easy getaway. Unaware of what had happened, the engineer sped off into the night while the thieves congratulated themselves on a job well done.
- 2 Considered the first train robbery, the incident at Seymour was preceded by a similar train burglary exactly nine months before. In early 1866, bandits entered an Adams Express car en route to Boston from New York and stole over half a million dollars from safes on the unoccupied car. As in the Seymour case, detectives from the Pinkerton National Detective Agency quickly identified the criminals.
- 3 A wave of train robberies followed the Seymour incident. Within weeks, two trains were derailed and their payroll cars robbed. In 1868, an Adams Express car was attacked again at Seymour. This time the expressman was tossed out the door before the safes were cleared of over \$40,000.
- 4 Train robberies became frequent in the 1870s and peaked in the 1890s. Specialists in this form of crime included the Reno brothers, who operated in southern Indiana; the Farringtons, whose escapades took them into Kentucky and Tennessee; and the Jesse James gang, who wreaked havoc upon rails in the Midwest. Hired by railroad companies anxious to protect themselves, Pinkerton detectives were seldom far behind the robberies.
- 5 In the late 1930s, a Federal Writers' Project worker recorded a conversation that documents a New Mexico train robbery. "The Early Days in Silver City" provides an eyewitness account of the famous Stein's Pass robbery of the late 1880s:
- 6 *I happened to be riding that train. I had gone overland to Safford and Solemisville prospecting. I decided to come home for Thanksgiving to be with my family at Silver City. I boarded the train at Wilcox. There was a large shipment of gold on the train. Just out of Steins Pass we could see a large bon-fire. One of the trainmen remarked, "Wonder what the big fire is, I hope we don't run into any trouble." The bon-fire we discovered to our sorrow was on the R. R. Then as today curiosity got the best of some of us so we had to find out why the train came to an abrupt stop, and what the bon-fire was put on the track. We found ourselves looking into the barrel of guns.*
- 7 Although train robberies were rare by the turn of the century, they remained a staple of popular entertainment. The Great Train Robbery, a production of the Edison Manufacturing Co., was one of the first successful dramatic films. Described in the Edison Films 1904 catalog as "a sensational and highly tragic subject," The Great Train Robbery was billed as "a faithful duplication of the genuine 'Hold Ups' made famous by various outlaw bands in the far West."

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "Of Rails and Robbers".



"Of Rails and Robbers" by the Library of Congress, from *The Memory Project*. In the public domain.

- 13 Which statement identifies a problem with the author's reasoning in paragraphs 1-4?
- A. As in the Seymour case, detectives from the Pinkerton National Detective Agency quickly identified the criminals.
 - B. Considered the first train robbery, the incident at Seymour was preceded by a similar train burglary exactly nine months before.
 - C. Unaware of what had happened, the engineer sped off into the night while the thieves congratulated themselves on a job well done.
 - D. Hired by railroad companies anxious to protect themselves, Pinkerton detectives were seldom far behind the robberies.
- 14 What is an example of false reasoning found in this passage?
- A. If the Pinkerton National Detective Agency were able to identify the criminals, then the robberies should have stopped.
 - B. The Seymour train robbery is considered the first train robbery, but there was another train robbery that occurred before the Seymour incident.
 - C. The passage does not explain why train robberies occurred less frequently by the end of the century.
 - D. The author mentions a wave of train robberies, but he specifically describes only one or two robberies.
- 15 Which claim is NOT supported with evidence from the passage?
- A. Robbers usually made away with large sums of money.
 - B. Robbers used a variety of methods to stop and rob the trains.
 - C. The Pinkerton detectives eventually caught all the robbers.
 - D. Several groups of thieves robbed trains throughout the country.

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

East Meets West on the Yoga Mat

- 1 People have been practicing yoga for at least five thousand years. Yoga, which means “union” in the ancient language Sanskrit, is believed to be the oldest of the six schools of Hinduism in India. Yoga developed as a means of uniting the body with the soul for the purpose of attaining deeper spiritual understanding. The practice of yoga includes physical exercise, diet, breathing, posture, and meditation. A practitioner of yoga, called a yogi, who follows the traditional path might be seen chanting, sitting quietly for hours in an upright position, exercising, and focusing on deep breaths. A yogi’s diet is restricted to simple and unadorned foods so that the yogi is not distracted from pursuing spirituality.
- 2 Today, yoga has taken on new and broader meaning as the practice has spread and become increasingly popular in North America and Europe. Although many western practitioners seek the spiritual benefits of yoga, many more practice yoga in order to improve their health and fitness. For western practitioners, yoga is often thought of as a series of asanas, or postures, that stretch and strengthen muscles, increase flexibility in the body, and provide the opportunity for physical exercise.
- 3 In the United States alone, over 16 million people practice yoga. Almost every gym and fitness club offers yoga classes or incorporates yoga postures as a part of other exercise routines. In addition, the number of facilities that focus solely on yoga is increasing in most communities. In fact, yoga is so popular that movie stars do it, soldiers practice it, and even children are trying it. So why is yoga so popular in the West?
- 4 The rise in popularity of yoga is often attributed to the West’s almost obsessive interest in fitness, as well as to the increasing stresses of modern life. For many, there is almost no escape from the fast-paced, technology-dependent society because of the ubiquitous presence of cell phones, the Internet, television, and computers. Many people turn to the practice of yoga to “de-stress,” quiet their minds, and achieve a feeling of calm and well-being. Many proponents claim that practicing yoga postures helps prevent or heal many health problems including insomnia, poor digestion, asthma, diabetes, anxiety, arthritis, sore backs, headaches, and weight problems.
- 5 This redesigned yoga may be well suited for an increasingly secular society in Europe and North America. In this western version, however, the meaning of yoga is reduced to a single component: physical health. By doing this, western practitioners frequently do not achieve the spiritual benefits intended by the ancient practitioners. In the light of traditional yoga, western yoga can be compared with the beams of a house. If a house has only beams, it is not actually a place to live; it is just a bunch of wood standing in the cold air. The beams are an excellent starting place, but in order to be complete, a house needs all of its other components: walls, roof, floors, windows, and doorways. For the traditional practitioner, yoga demands meditation, diet, posture, breathing, and spirituality to complement physical exercise.
- 6 Some argue that yoga is the gateway to the philosophy of yoga, including meditation and living in the present, which results in a life of stillness and peace. Many say that an hour of yoga stills the body, so that it is primed for spirituality. This may be so, but many practitioners, particularly in the West, will no doubt continue to use yoga simply as a form of exercise.

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "East Meets West on the Yoga Mat".

- 16 How does the last paragraph relate to the main argument in the passage?
- A. It presents a counter-claim but supports the main argument.
 - B. It summarizes the points that support the main argument.
 - C. It describes personal experiences that confirm the main argument.
 - D. It shows how the author's opinions differ from the main argument.

- 17 Read this claim about yoga.

Practicing yoga to improve health is helpful for people living in the West.

Which detail from the passage BEST supports this claim?

- A. The beams are an excellent starting place, but in order to be complete, a house needs all of its other components: walls, roof, floors, windows, and doorways.
- B. Almost every gym and fitness club offers yoga classes or incorporates yoga postures as a part of other exercise routines.
- C. For western practitioners, yoga is often thought of as a series of asanas, or postures, that stretch and strengthen muscles, increase flexibility in the body, and provide the opportunity for physical exercise.
- D. The practice of yoga includes physical exercise, diet, breathing, posture, and meditation.

- 18 How does the last paragraph relate to the main argument in the passage?
- A. It summarizes the points that support the main argument.
 - B. It describes personal experiences that confirm the main argument.
 - C. It shows how the author's opinions differ from the main argument.
 - D. It presents a counter-argument but supports the main argument.

- 19 Which claim from the passage does the author support with evidence?

- A. Practicing yoga is a good introduction to the philosophy of yoga.
- B. Practicing yoga can cure or improve health problems.
- C. Traditional yoga involves a variety of practices.
- D. North Americans and Europeans are increasingly secular.

- 20 What is the MAIN argument the author makes in the passage?

- A. Practicing yoga results in a life of peace and stillness that encourages living in the present moment.
- B. Yoga is so popular in the West because it helps stressed-out people relax and feel peaceful.
- C. The traditional practice of yoga is too difficult for most people living in the West.
- D. Western practitioners miss out on the full benefits of yoga by limiting it to exercise only.

- 21 Read this claim about yoga.

Practicing yoga to improve health is helpful for people living in the West.

Which details from the passage BEST support this claim?

- A. the use of personal examples
- B. the evidence about the growth of yoga
- C. the comparison of yoga to a house
- D. the information about the stresses of modern life

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

On March 3, 1933 Franklin Delano Roosevelt was sworn in as the 32nd President of the United States after a landslide victory over Herbert Hoover. The country was in a major depression that required quick action. The President in his speech set out his plan to combat the economic turmoil in the country.

President Hoover, Mr. Chief Justice, my friends:

This is a day of national consecration. And I am certain that on this day my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency, I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our people impels.

This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure, as it has endured, will revive and will prosper.

So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life, a leadership of frankness and of vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. And I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunk to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side; farmers find no markets for their produce; and the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone. More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

And yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with the perils which our forefathers conquered, because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but a generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply.

Primarily, this is because the rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed, through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

True, they have tried. But their efforts have been cast in the pattern of an outworn tradition. Faced by failure of credit, they have proposed only the lending of more money. Stripped of the lure of profit by which to induce our people to follow their false leadership, they have resorted to exhortations, pleading tearfully for restored confidence. They only know the rules of a generation of self-seekers. They have no vision, and when there is no vision the people perish.

Yes, the money changers have fled from their high seats in the temple of our civilization. We may now restore that temple to the ancient truths. The measure of that restoration lies in the extent to which we apply social values more noble than mere monetary profit.

Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort. The joy, the moral stimulation of work no longer must be forgotten in the mad chase of evanescent profits. These dark days, my friends, will be worth all they cost us if they teach us that our true destiny is not to be ministered unto but to minister to ourselves, to our fellow men.

Recognition of that falsity of material wealth as the standard of success goes hand in hand with the abandonment of the false belief that public office and high political position are to be valued only by the standards of pride of place and personal profit; and there must be an end to a conduct in banking and in business which too often has given to a sacred trust the likeness of callous and selfish wrongdoing. Small wonder that confidence languishes,

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "Excerpt of Franklin D. Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address".

for it thrives only on honesty, on honor, on the sacredness of obligations, on faithful protection, and on unselfish performance; without them it cannot live.

Restoration calls, however, not for changes in ethics alone. This Nation is asking for action, and action now.

Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the Government itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of a war, but at the same time, through this employment, accomplishing great—greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of our great natural resources.

Hand in hand with that we must frankly recognize the overbalance of population in our industrial centers and, by engaging on a national scale in a redistribution, endeavor to provide a better use of the land for those best fitted for the land.

Yes, the task can be helped by definite efforts to raise the values of agricultural products, and with this the power to purchase the output of our cities. It can be helped by preventing realistically the tragedy of the growing loss through foreclosure of our small homes and our farms. It can be helped by insistence that the Federal, the State, and the local governments act forthwith on the demand that their cost be drastically reduced. It can be helped by the unifying of relief activities which today are often scattered, uneconomical, unequal. It can be helped by national planning for and supervision of all forms of transportation and of communications and other utilities that have a definitely public character. There are many ways in which it can be helped, but it can never be helped by merely talking about it.

We must act. We must act quickly.

And finally, in our progress towards a resumption of work, we require two safeguards against a return of the evils of the old order. There must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and investments. There must be an end to speculation with other people's money. And there must be provision for an adequate but sound currency.

-Public Domain

22

Web Only Interaction

Web Only Interaction

23

Web Only Interaction

Web Only Interaction

Directions: Read the passage below and answer the question(s) that follow.

Ready to Blast Off

Civilians look forward to the day when they can blast off into space. They fantasize about being in private spaceships designed to take them to their vacation destinations. This dream will not come true in the near future, but through the efforts of people like Burt Rutan, civilian space travel will become a reality.

Burt Rutan, an aerospace engineer and designer of SpaceShipOne, contributed to the idea that private industries have the capability of giving private citizens a chance to journey into space. SpaceShipOne has made several successful journeys proving that the dream of space travel is closer to being a reality.

During its latest launch, SpaceShipOne went higher than ever before. It flew out of the Earth's atmosphere and made a safe journey back to Earth. The entire flight lasted an hour and a half from the time the rocket ship was carried to its launching point to its return to land. While the flight out of our atmosphere and into space lasted only about three minutes, Mr. Rutan expects that longer flights with passengers will soon follow.

"Our hope is that this will be a benchmark...for a lot more people to not only have fun, but to reap the benefits of what we believe might be out there," Rutan commented. "Just like when early airplanes were flying in 1910, we didn't know what the benefits were, but we were doing it because it was fun."

The X Prize

Twenty-six rocketeering teams from all over the world competed for a \$10 million "X Prize" offered by the Ansari X Prize Foundation from St. Louis. The "X Prize" was offered to the first privately funded spaceship to carry three people, reach 62 miles above the Earth, and successfully repeat the flight within two weeks.

The frontrunner for the prize was SpaceShipOne, designed by Burt Rutan. Its crew had performed numerous test flights, the final test flight being on June 21, 2004. This flight was very successful. Next, the team attempted to win the "X Prize" by duplicating the test flight twice. Each flight carried three passengers or their equivalence in weight. Their success won him the \$10 million prize and may have encouraged the creation of even more rockets.

"X Prize" replicates the actions of a St. Louis group that offered \$25,000 (the Orteig prize) for the first airplane to fly non-stop across the Atlantic Ocean. The goal was to initiate the development of airplanes that would transport people over long distances. Pilot Charles Lindbergh won the prize and thus sparked the creation of the commercial aviation industry. Similarly, many prizes spurred the Wright brothers' motivation to create their airplane. Today, the Ansari X Prize Foundation continues to encourage the development of private spacecraft with the goal of supporting the expansion of the private, commercial space flight industry. People may one day realize their dreams as they spend their vacations in space.

Directions: Answer the following question(s) relating to the passage titled "Ready to Blast Off".

- 24 How does the author's intent affect the overall tone of "Ready to Blast Off"?
- A. The overall tone of acceptance blends with the author's defense of eventually putting civilians in space.
 - B. The author focuses on the desire to get civilians into space, which creates a tone of hopefulness and believing.
 - C. The overall tone of excitement adds to the author's explanation of SpaceShipOne's most recent launch.
 - D. The author focuses on SpaceShipOne's most recent launch, which creates a tone of waiting and impatience.

- 25 Read the excerpt from "Ready to Blast Off."

Civilians look forward to the day when they can blast off into space. They fantasize about being in private spaceships designed to take them to their vacation destinations.

Which BEST explains whether or not the excerpt is credible?

- A. It supports the text by explaining the motivation behind the scientists who are striving to make civilian space travel a reality.
- B. It is a very general, unsupported statement within the text. It adds emotion to the text, but not all civilians feel this way about space travel.
- C. It adds emotional support to explain why scientists are working so hard to win Ansari X Prize Foundation's "X Prize."
- D. It is a strong statement within the text. It is from this idea that the rest of the text appears to be factual concerning space travel.