READING PRACTICE TEST 1

PASSAGE 1: Questions 1-10

Niagara Falls, one of the most famous North American natural wonders, has long been a popular tourist destination. Tourists today **flock** to see the two falls that actually constitute Niagara Falls: the 173-foot-high Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side of the Niagara River in the Canadian province of Ontario and the 182-foot-high American Falls on the U.S. side of the river in the state of New York. Approximately 85 percent of the water that goes over the falls actually goes over Horseshoe Falls, with the rest going over American Falls.

Most visitors come between April and October, and it is quite a popular activity to take a steamer out onto the river and **right up** to the base of the falls for a close-up view. It is also possible to get a spectacular view of the falls from the strategic-locations along the Niagara River, such as Prospect Point or Table Rock, or from one of the four observation towers which have heights up to 500 feet.

Tourists have been visiting Niagara Falls in large numbers since the 1980s; annual visitation now averages above 10 million visitors per year. Because of concern that all these tourists would inadvertently destroy the natural beauty of this scenic wonder, the state of New York in 1885 created Niagara Falls Park in order to protect the land surrounding American Falls. A year later Canada created Queen Victoria Park on the Canadian side of the Niagara, around Horseshoe Falls. With the area surrounding the falls under the **jurisdiction** of government agencies, appropriate steps could be taken to preserve the **pristine** beauty of the area.

1. What is the major point that the author is making in this passage?

A. Niagara Falls can be viewed from either the American side or the Canadian side.

B. A Trip to the United States isn't complete without a visit to Niagara Falls.

C. Niagara Falls has had an interesting history.

D. It has been necessary to protect Niagara Falls from the many tourists who go there.

2. The word "flock" in paragraph 1 could best be replaced by

A. come by plane

B. come in large numbers

C. come out of boredom

D. come without knowing what they will see

3. According to the passage, which of the following best describes Niagara Falls?

A. Niagara Falls consists of two rivers, one Canadian and the other American.

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B. American Falls is considerably higher than Horseshoe Falls.

C. The Niagara River has two falls, one in Canada and one in the United States.

D. Although the Niagara River flows through the United States and Canada, the falls are only in the United States.

4. A "steamer" in paragraph 2 is probably

A. a bus

B. a boat

C. a walk away

D. a park

5. The expression "right up" in paragraph 2 could best be replaced by

A. turn to the right

B. follow correct procedures

C. travel upstream

D. all the way up

6. The passage implies that tourists prefer to

A. visit Niagara FaIls during warmer weather

B. see the falls from a great distance

C. take a ride over the falls

D. come to Niagara Falls for a winter vacation.

7. According to the passage, why was Niagara Park created?

A. To encourage tourists to visit Niagara Falls.

B. To show off the natural beauty of Niagara Falls.

C. To protect the area around Niagara Falls.

D. To force Canada to open Queen Victoria Park.

8. The word "jurisdiction" in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to

A. view

B. assistance

C. taxation

D. control

9. The word "pristine" in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to

A. pure and natural

B. highly developed

C. well-regulated

D. overused

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10. The paragraph following the passage most probably discusses

A. additional ways to observe the falls

B. steps taken by government agencies to protect the falls

C. a detailed description of the division of the falls between the United States and Canada

D. further problems that are destroying the area around the falls.

PASSAGE 2: Questions 11-18

What is commonly called pepper in reality comes from two very different families of plants. Black and white pepper both come from the fruit of the Piper nigrum, a vine with fruits called peppercorns. The peppercorns turn from green to red as they ripen and finally blacken as they dry out. The dried-out peppercorns are ground to obtain black pepper. White pepper, which has a more subtle favor than black pepper, comes from the same peppercorns as black pepper; to obtain white pepper, the outer hull of the peppercorn, the pericarp, is removed before the peppercorn is ground.

Red and green peppers, on the other hand, come from a completely different family from black and white pepper. Red and green peppers are from the genus Capsicum. Plants of this type generally have tiny white flowers and fruit which can be anyone of a number of colors, shapes, and sizes. These peppers range in flavor from very mild and sweet to the most incredibly burning taste imaginable. Bell peppers are the mildest, while habaneros are the most burning.

Christopher Columbus is responsible for the present-day confusion over what a pepper is. The Piper nigrum variety of pepper was highly valued for centuries, and high demand for pepper by Europeans was a major cause of the fifteenth-century push to locate ocean routes to the spice-growing regions of Asia. When Columbus arrived in the New World in 1492, he was particularly interested in finding black pepper because of the high price that it would command in Europe. Columbus came across plants from the Capsicum family in use among the people of the New World, and he incorrectly identified them as relatives of black pepper. Columbus introduced the spicy Capsicum chili peppers to Europeans on his return from the 1492 voyage, and traders later spread them to Asia and Africa. These Capsicum peppers have continued to be called peppers in spite of the fact that they are not related to the black and white pepper of the Piper nigrum family.

11. The purpose of this passage is to

A. explain why there is confusion today over peppers

B. provide the scientific classification of various types of peppers

C. demonstrate that it was Columbus who brought peppers to Europe

D. classify the variety of sizes, shapes, and colors of peppers

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12. The word "turn" in paragraph 1 could best be replaced by

A. Revert

B. Exchange

C. Veer

D. Change

13. According to the passage, both black and white peppers

A. come from different plants

B. change colors after they are ground

C. are ground from dried out peppercorns

D. have the same flavor

14. What part of the Piper nigrum is the pericarp?

A. the seed inside the fruit

B. the outer covering of the fruit

C. the pulp inside the vine

D. the outer covering of the vine

15. What usually does NOT vary in a Capsicum plant?

A. The color of the flower

B. The size of the fruit

C. The shape of the fruit

D. The color of the fruit

16. The word "push" in paragraph 3 could best be replaced by

A. Shove

B. Strength

C. Drive

D. Hit

17. The pronoun "them" in paragraph 3 refers to

A. Plants

B. People

C. Relatives

D. Europeans

18. It can be inferred from the passage that chili peppers originally came from

A. Europe

B. Asia

C. America

D. Africa

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PASSAGE 3: Questions 19-30

Just two months-after the flight of Apollo 10, the Apollo 11 astronauts made their historic landing on the surface of the Moon. This momentous trip for humanity also provided scientists with an abundance of material for study; from rock and soil samples brought back from the Moon, scientists have been able to determine much about the composition of the Moon as well as to draw inferences about the development of the Moon from its composition.

The Moon soil that came back on Apollo 11 contains small bits of rock and glass which were probably ground from larger rocks when meteors impacted with the surface of the Moon. The bits of glass are **spherical** in shape and constitute approximately half of the Moon soil. Scientists found no trace of animal or plant life in this soil.

In addition to the Moon soil, astronauts gathered two basic types of rocks from the surface of the Moon: basalt and breccia. Basalt is a cooled and hardened volcanic lava common to the Earth. Since basalt is formed under extremely high temperatures, the presence of this type of rock is an **indication** that the temperature of the Moon was once extremely hot. Breccia, the other kind of rock, brought back by the astronauts, was formed during the impact of falling objects on the surface of the Moon. This second type of rock consists of small pieces of rock compressed together by the force of impact. Gases such as hydrogen and helium were found in some of the rocks, and scientists believe that these gases were carried to the Moon by the solar wind, the streams of gases that are constantly **emitted** by the Sun.

19. The paragraph preceding the passage most likely discusses

A. astronaut training

B. the inception of the Apollo space program

C. a different space trip

D. previous Moon landings

20. What is the subject of this passage?

A. The Apollo astronauts

B. Soil on the Moon

C. What the Moon is made of

D. Basalt and breccia

21. An "abundance" in paragraph 1 is

A. a disorderly pile

B. a wealthy bunch

C. an insignificant proportion

D. a large amount

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22. According to the passage, what does Moon soil consist of?

A. Hydrogen and helium.

B. Large chunks of volcanic lava

C. Tiny pieces of stones and glass

D. Streams of gases

23. The word "spherical" in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to

A. Earthen

B. Circular

C. Angular

D. Amorphous

24. Which of the following was NOT brought back to the Earth by the astronauts?

A. Basalt

B. Soil

C. Breccia

D. plant life

25. An "indication" in paragraph 3 is

A. an exhibition

B. a clue

C. a denial

D. a dictate

26. According to the passage, breccia was formed

A. when objects struck the Moon

B. from volcanic lava

C. when streams of gases hit the surface of the Moon

D. from the interaction of helium and hydrogen

27. It is implied in the passage that scientists believe that the gases found in the Moon rocks

A. were not originally from the Moon

B. were created inside the rocks

C. traveled from the Moon to the Sun

D. caused the Moon's temperature to rise

28. The word "emitted" in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to

A. set off

B. vaporized

C. sent out

D. separated

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29. The author's purpose in this passage is to

A. describe some rock and soil samples

B. explain some of the things learned from space flights

C. propose a new theory about the creation of the Moon

D. demonstrate the difference between basalt and breccia

30. It can be inferred from the passage that

A. the only items of importance that astronauts brought back from the Moon were rock and soil samples.

B. scientists learned relatively little from the Moon rock and soil samples.

C. scientists do not believe that it is necessary to return to the Moon.

D. rock and soil samples were only some of a myriad of significant items from the Moon.

PASSAGE 4: Questions 31-40

During the heyday of the railroads, when America's rail system provided the bulk of the country's passenger and freight transportation, various types of railroad cars were in service to accomplish the varied tasks handled by the railroads. One type of car that was not available for public use prior to the Civil War; however, was a sleeping car; ideas for sleeping cars abounded at the time, but these ideas were unworkable. It unfortunately took the death of a president to make the sleeping car a viable reality.

Cabinet-maker George M. Pullman had recognized the demand for sleeping cars and had worked on developing experimental models of sleeping cars in the decade leading up to the Civil War. However, in spite of the fact that he had made successful test runs on the Chicago and Alton Railroads with his models, he was unable to sell his idea because his models were too wide and too high for existing train stations and bridges. In 1863, after spending time working as a storekeeper in a Colorado mining town, he invested his savings of twenty thousand dollars, a huge fortune at that time and all the money that he had in the world, in a luxurious sleeping car that he named the Pioneer. Pullman and friend Ben Field built the Pioneer on the site of the present-day Chicago Union Station. For two years, however, the Pioneer sat on a railroad siding, useless because it could not fit through train stations and over bridges.

Following President Lincoln's assassination in 1865, the state of Illinois, Lincoln's birthplace, wanted to transport the presidential casket in the finest fashion possible. The Pullman Pioneer was the most elegant car around; in order to make the Pullman part of the presidential funeral train in its run from Springfield to Chicago, the state cut down station platforms and raised bridges in order to accommodate the luxurious railway car. The Pullman car greatly impressed the funeral party, which included Lincoln's successor as president, General Ulysses S. Grant, and Grant later requested the

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Pioneer for a trip from Detroit to Chicago. To satisfy Grant's request for the Pioneer, the Michigan Central Railroad made improvements on its line to accommodate the wide car, and soon other railroads followed. George Pullman founded the Pullman Palace Car Company in partnership with financier Andrew Carnegie and eventually became a millionaire.

31. Which of the following best states the main idea of the passage?

A. America's railroads used to provide much of the country's transportation.

B. President Lincoln's assassination in 1965 shocked the nation.

C. George Pullman was the only one to come up with the idea for a sleeping car.

D. Pullman's idea for a sleeping car became workable after Lincoln' death.

32. A "heyday" in paragraph 1 is most probably

A. a time for harvest

B. a period with low prices

C. a period of great success

D. a type of railroad schedule

33.It can be inferred from the passage that before the Civil War, sleeping cars

A. were used abundantly

B. were thought to be a good idea

C. were only used privately

D. were used by presidents

34.The word "test" in paragraph 2 could best be replaced by

A. Exam

B. Trial

C. Inspection

D. Scientific

35.What was the initial problem that made Pullman's cars unusable?

A. They were too large.

B. They were too expensive.

C. They were too slow.

D. They were too unusual.

36.What is stated in the passage about George Pullman?

A. He once had a job in a store.

B. He always lived in Chicago.

C. He worked in a mine.

D. He saved money for his project

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37.The word "site" in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to

A. Factory

B. View

C. Location

D. Foundation

38.Why did the state of Illinois want to use the Pullman in Lincoln's funeral train?

A. It was superior to other cars.

B. It was the only railroad car that could make it from Springfield to Chicago.

C. Ulysses S. Grant requested it.

D. The Pullman Palace Car Company was a major Illinois business.

39.It can be inferred from the passage that the Michigan Central Railroad

A. was owned by George Pullman

B. controlled the railroad tracks between Detroit and Chicago

C. was the only railroad company to accommodate wide cars

D. was the sole manufacturer of the Pioneer

40.This passage would most likely be assigned in which of the following courses?

A. Engineering

B. Political science

C. Finance

D. History

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