EOT 2 - Part 8

A) Read the passage and choose the best answer a, b, or c.

Alphabet

For many thousands of years, when people wanted to write something they had to draw pictures. In Egypt and other Mediterranean countries, they were called hieroglyphs. Then, a new system of writing - the alphabet - began in about 2500 BC.

Nowadays there are seven major alphabets, but they all have one thing in common: they consist of a fixed set of written signs. Each sign shows a sound. By putting different signs together in different ways, all the words in a language can be formed.

In some languages, the letters nearly always make the same sounds. It is very easy to read such languages and make the correct sounds. In others, such as English, some letters or groups of letters do not always make the same sound. These languages are not so easy to read.

We do not know who made the first alphabet. However, we know that the most important of them was the Phoenician alphabet. The Greeks used this alphabet to make their alphabet, and the Romans used it for Latin. Before long, it had spread throughout Europe. It also spread to the east and became the basis for the Indian, Arabic and Hebrew alphabets.

The Phoenicians were merchants and builders. They came from that part of the Mediterranean now called Lebanon, and spread throughout the Mediterranean, building cities along the coast of North Africa and elsewhere.

It is not difficult to understand how the Phoenician alphabet spread. It was very useful for keeping business records and the Phoenician merchants took it with them wherever they went. Other peoples began to use it, making changes to meet the needs of their own languages.

Today, most Europeans do not know that their own alphabet comes from the Phoenician alphabet - one of the most important inventions in the history of human knowledge.

Questions:

1- The first alphabet appeared more than ..... years ago.

a. 2050 b. 2500 c. 4500

2- Ancient Egyptians used ....., or drawings, for writing.

a. photos b. hieroglyphs c. letters

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3- An alphabet is a .....

a. musical sound
b. group of languages.
c. set of written signs

4- It is easy to read a language when .....

a. there are only drawings.
b. letters and sounds are different.
c. letters make the same sounds.

5- ..... used the Phoenician alphabet for writing.

a. Greek, Latin, and Arabic
b. Indian, English, and Latin
c. Spanish, Hebrew, and Greek

6- ..... was the homeland of the Phoenician people.

a. Greece
b. Lebanon
c. Mediterranean

7- The Phoenician people used their alphabet for.....

a. doing business
b. travelling
c. storytelling

8- The alphabet of a language is fixed so as to .....

a. answer questions about life
b. make changes in the language.
c. meet the needs of the speakers.

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