Student Name: _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _2022__ Score:_____
MMM DD YYYY

TOEFL PRACTICE 2
READING COMPRHENSION

Directions: Read the passage. Give yourself 20 minutes to complete this practice set.

The Rise of Teotihuacán

Paragraph

1 The city of Teotihuacán, which lay about 50 kilometers northeast of modern-day Mexico City, began its growth by 200 –100 B.C. At its height, between about A.D. 150 and 700, it probably had a population of more than 125,000 people and covered at least 20 square kilometers. It had over 2,000 apartment complexes, a great market, a large number of industrial workshops, an administrative center, a number of massive religious edifices, and a regular grid pattern of streets and buildings. Clearly, much planning and central control were involved in the expansion and ordering of this great metropolis. Moreover, the city had economic and perhaps religious contacts with most parts of Mesoamerica (modern Central America and Mexico).

2 How did this tremendous development take place, and why did it happen in the Teotihuacán Valley? Among the main factors are Teotihuacán's geographic location on a natural trade route to the south and east of the Valley of Mexico, the obsidian[1] resources in the Teotihuacán Valley itself, and the valley's potential for extensive irrigation. The exact role of other factors is much more difficult to pinpoint —for instance, Teotihuacán's religious significance as a shrine, the historical situation in and around the Valley of Mexico toward the end of the first millennium B.C., the ingenuity and foresightedness of Teotihuacán's elite, and, finally, the impact of natural disasters, such as the volcanic eruptions of the late first millennium B.C.

3 This last factor is at least circumstantially implicated in Teotihuacán's rise. Prior to 200 B.C., a number of relatively small centers coexisted in and near the Valley of Mexico. Around this time, the largest of these centers, Cuicuilco, was seriously affected by a volcanic eruption, with much of its agricultural land covered by lava. With Cuicuilco eliminated as a potential rival, any one of a number of relatively modest towns might have emerged as a leading economic and political power in Central Mexico. The archaeological evidence clearly indicates, though, that Teotihuacán was the center that did arise as the predominant force in the area by the first century A.D.

4 It seems likely that Teotihuacán's natural resources—along with the city elite's ability to recognize their potential—gave the city a competitive edge over its neighbors. The valley, like many other places in Mexican and Guatemalan highlands, was rich in obsidian. The hard volcanic stone was a resource that had been in great demand for many years, at least since the rise of the Olmecs (a people who flourished between 1200 and 400 B.C.), and it apparently had a secure market. Moreover, recent research on obsidian tools found at Olmec sites has shown that some of

LIVEWORKSHEETS

the obsidian obtained by the Olmecs originated near Teotihuacán. Teotihuacán obsidian must have been recognized as a valuable commodity for many centuries before the great city arose.

5 Long-distance trade in obsidian probably gave the elite residents of Teotihuacán access to a wide variety of exotic goods, as well as a relatively prosperous life. Such success may have attracted immigrants to Teotihuacán. In addition, Teotihuacán's elite may have consciously attempted to attract new inhabitants. It is also probable that as early as 200 B.C. Teotihuacán may have achieved some religious significance and its shrine (or shrines) may have served as an additional population magnet. Finally, the growing population was probably fed by increasing the number and size of irrigated fields.

6 The picture of Teotihuacán that emerges is a classic picture of positive feedback among obsidian mining and working, trade, population growth, irrigation, and religious tourism. The thriving obsidian operation, for example, would necessitate more miners, additional manufacturers of obsidian tools, and additional traders to carry the goods to new markets. All this led to increased wealth, which in turn would attract more immigrants to Teotihuacán. The growing power of the elite, who controlled the economy, would give them the means to physically coerce people to move to Teotihuacán and serve as additions to the labor force. More irrigation works would have to be built to feed the growing population, and this resulted in more power and wealth for the elite.

[1] obsidian: a type of volcanic glasslike rock used for manufacturing tools and ceremonial objects

Directions: Answer the questions.

1. In paragraph 1, each of the following is mentioned as a feature of the city of Teotihuacán between A.D. 150 and 700 EXCEPT

A regularly arranged streets
B several administrative centers spread across the city
C many manufacturing workshops
D apartment complexes

2. The word "ingenuity" in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to

A ambition
B sincerity
C faith
D cleverness

3. Which of the following is NOT mentioned in paragraph 2 as a main factor in the development of Teotihuacán?

A The presence of obsidian in the Teotihuacán Valley
B The potential for extensive irrigation of Teotihuacán Valley lands
C A long period of volcanic inactivity in the Teotihuacán Valley
D Teotihuacán's location on a natural trade route

4. What can be inferred from paragraph 3 about Cuicuilco prior to 200 B.C.?

A It was a fairly small city until that date.
B It was located outside the Valley of Mexico.
C It emerged rapidly as an economical and political center.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

D Its economy relied heavily on agriculture.

5. Which of the following allowed Teotihuacán to have "a <u>competitive edge over its neighbors</u>"?

A A well-exploited and readily available commodity
B The presence of a highly stable elite class
C Knowledge derived directly from the Olmecs about the art of toolmaking
D Scarce natural resources in nearby areas such as those located in what are now the Guatemalan and Mexican highlands

6. According to paragraph 4, what has recent research on obsidian tools found at Olmec sites shown?

A Obsidian's value was understood only when Teotihuacán became an important city.
B The residents of Teotihuacán were sophisticated toolmakers.
C The residents of Teotihuacán traded obsidian with the Olmecs as early as 400 B.C.
D Some of the obsidian used by the Olmecs came from the area around Teotihuacán.

7. Select the TWO answer choices that are mentioned in paragraph 5 as being features of Teotihuacán that may have attracted immigrants to the city. *To receive credit, you must select TWO answers.*

A The prosperity of the elite
B Plenty of available housing
C Opportunities for well-paid agricultural employment
D The presence of one or more religious shrines

8. In paragraph 6, the author discusses "<u>The thriving obsidian operation</u>," in order to

A explain why manufacturing was the main industry of Teotihuacán
B give an example of an industry that took very little time to develop in Teotihuacán
C illustrate how several factors influenced each other to make Teotihuacán a powerful and wealthy city
D explain how a successful industry can be a source of wealth and a source of conflict at the same time

9. In paragraph 1 of the passage, there is a missing sentence. The paragraph is repeated below and shows four letters (A, B, C, and D) that indicate where the following sentence could be added.

In fact, artifacts and pottery from Teotihuacán have been discovered in sites as far away as the Mayan lowlands, the Guatemalan highlands, northern Mexico, and the Gulf Coast of Mexico.

Where would the sentence best fit?

The city of Teotihuacán, which lay about 50 kilometers northeast of modern-day Mexico City, began its growth by 200 –100 B.C. At its height, between about A.D. 150 and 700, it probably had a population of more than 125,000 people and covered at least 20 square kilometers. <u>(A)</u> It had over 2,000 apartment complexes, a great market, a large number of industrial workshops, an administrative center, a number of massive religious edifices, and a regular grid pattern of streets and buildings. <u>(B)</u> Clearly, much planning and central control were involved in the expansion and ordering of this great metropolis. <u>(C)</u>

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Moreover, the city had economic and perhaps religious contacts with most parts of Mesoamerica (modern Central America and Mexico). (D)

A Option A
B Option B
C Option C
D Option D

10. *Directions*: An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. *This question is worth 2 points.*

Write your answer choices in the spaces where they belong. You can either write the letter of your answer choice or you can copy the sentence.

Teotihuacán was a highly developed city in Mesoamerica that reached its peak between about A.D. 150 and 700.

•

•

•

Answer Choices

A The number and sophistication of the architectural, administrative, commercial, and religious features of Teotihuacán indicate the existence of centralized planning and control.

B Teotihuacán may have developed its own specific local religion as a result of the cultural advances made possible by the city's great prosperity.

C Several factors may account for Teotihuacán's extraordinary development, including its location, rich natural resources, irrigation potential, intelligent elite, and the misfortune of rival communities.

D As a result of its large number of religious shrines, by the first century A.D., Teotihuacán became the most influential religious center in all of Mesoamerica.

E In many important areas, from the obsidian industry to religious tourism, Teotihuacán's success and prosperity typified the classic positive feedback cycle.

F Although many immigrants settled in Teotihuacán between A.D. 150 and 700, the increasing threat of coerced labor discouraged further settlement and limited Teotihuacán's population growth.

LIVEWORKSHEETS