Reading Skills 3-4

Skill # 3 > Simplify meanings of sentences. Choose the best answer.

Passage 1

Camouflage

Camouflage is one of the most effective ways for animals to avoid attack in the treeless Arctic. However, the summer and winter landscapes there are so diverse that a single protective coloring scheme would, of course, prove ineffective in one season or the other. Thus, many of the inhabitants of the Arctic tundra change their camouflage twice a year. The arctic fox is a clear-cut example of this phenomenon; it sports a brownish-gray coat in the summer which then turns white as cold weather sets in, and the process reverses itself in the springtime. Its brownish-gray coat blends in with the barren tundra landscape in the months without snow, and the white coat naturally blends in with the landscape of the frozen wintertime tundra.

1. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the first highlighted sentence in the passage? *Incorrect* **choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.**

a. Opposite conditions in summer and in winter necessitate different protective coloration for Arctic animals.

b. The coloration of the summer and winter landscapes in the Arctic fails to protect the Arctic tundra.

c. In a single season, protective coloring schemes are ineffective in the treeless Arctic.

d. For many animals, a single protective coloring scheme effectively protects them during summer and winter months.

2. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the second highlighted sentence in the passage? *Incorrect* **choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.**

a. The arctic fox is unusual in that the color of its coat changes for no reason.

b. The artic fox lives in an environment that is brownish gray in the summer and white in the winter.

c. It is a phenomenon that the coat of the arctic fox turns white in the springtime and gray in the fall.

d. The arctic fox demonstrates that protective coloration can change during different seasons.

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Passage 2

Paragraph

Post-it® Notes

1 Post-it® Notes were invented in the 1970s at the 3M company in Minnesota quite by accident. Researchers at 3M were working on developing different types of adhesives, and one particularly weak adhesive, a compound of acrylate copolymer microspheres, was developed. Employees at 3M were asked if they could think of a use for a weak adhesive which, provided it did not get dirty, could be reused. One suggestion was that it could be applied to a piece of paper to use as a bookmark that would stay in place in a book. Another use was found when the product was attached to a report that was to be sent to a colleague with a request for comments on the report; the colleague made his comments on the paper attached to the report and returned the report. The idea for Post-it Notes was born.

2 It was decided within the company that there would be a test launch of the product in 1977 in four American cities. Sales of this innovative product in test cities were less than stellar, most likely because the product, while innovative, was also quite unfamiliar. A final attempt was then made in the city of Boise to introduce the product. In this attempt, 3M salesmen gave demonstrations of the product in offices throughout Boise and gave away free samples of the product. When the salesmen returned a week later to the offices where the product had been demonstrated and given away, a huge percentage of the office workers, having noted how useful the simple little product could be, were interested in purchasing it. Over time, 3M came to understand the huge potential of this new product, and over the next few decades more than 400 varieties of Post-it products—in different colors, shapes, and sizes—have been developed.

3. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the first highlighted sentence in paragraph 1? *Incorrect* **choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.**

a. Of the many adhesives that were being developed at 3M, one was not a particularly strong adhesive.

b. Researchers at 3M spent many years trying to develop a really weak adhesive.

c. Numerous weak adhesives resulted from a program to develop the strongest adhesive.

d. Researchers were assigned to develop different types of uses of acrylate copolymer microspheres.

4. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the second highlighted sentence in paragraph 1? *Incorrect* **choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.**

a. 3M company suggested applying for a patent on the product in a report prepared by a colleague.

b. One unexpectedly discovered use for the adhesive was in sending and receiving notes attached to documents.

c. A note was attached to a report asking for suggestions for uses of one of 3M's products.

d. A colleague who developed the new product kept notes with suggestions by other workers.

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5. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the first highlighted sentence in paragraph 2? *Incorrect* **choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.**

a. The 3M company was unfamiliar with the process of using test cities to introduce innovative products.

b. Sales of the product soared even though the product was quite unfamiliar to most customers.

c. The new product did not sell well because potential customers did not understand it.

d. After selling the product for a while, the company understood that the product was not innovative enough.

6. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the second highlighted sentence in paragraph 2? *Incorrect* **choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.**

a. The company immediately understood the potential of the product and began to develop it further.

b. The company worked overtime to develop its new product, initially creating numerous varieties to make it successful.

c. The company initially introduced 400 varieties of the product and then watched for decades as sales improved.

d. It took some time for the company to understand how important its new product and how many variations were possible.

Passage 3

Paragraph

The Pulitzer Prize

1 The Pulitzer Prize came about as part of an attempt by newspaperman Joseph Pulitzer to upgrade the profession of journalism. Pulitzer, the owner of the *New York World* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, made a proposal in 1903 to Columbia University to make a $2 million bequest to the university for the dual purposes of establishing a school of journalism at the university and also establishing prizes for exceptional work in journalism and other fields. However, the university did not initially respond as one might expect to such a seemingly generous offer.

2 Interestingly, Columbia University was not immediately amenable to the proposal by Pulitzer inasmuch as journalism was not held in high regard in general and Pulitzer's papers were more known for their sensationalization of the news than for the high quality of the journalism. The trustees of the university were not at all sure that they wanted a school of journalism because newspaper reporting was considered more of a trade than a profession at the time and they did not want to decrease the academic prestige of their institution. It took years of discussions and negotiations before the terms for the establishment of the school of journalism and the prizes bearing Pulitzer's name were agreed upon, and it was not actually until the year after Pulitzer's death in 1911 that construction began on the building to house Columbia's new school of journalism. The school of journalism opened in 1913, and the first prizes were awarded in 1917, for work done the previous year.

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3 The method for selecting Pulitzer Prize winners and the categories for prizes have changed slightly over the years. Today, 21 different awards are given in three different areas, with the majority of awards going to journalists; 14 of the 21 awards are from various aspects of journalism (i.e., news reporting, feature writing, cartoons, and photography), 6 awards are given in letters (in fiction, nonfiction, history, drama, poetry, and biography), and 1 award in music. Columbia University appoints nominating juries comprised of experts in each field, and the nominating juries submit these nominations for each category to the Pulitzer Prize Board, which makes the final decisions and awards the prizes.

7. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the first highlighted sentence in paragraph 1?

a. Joseph Pulitzer generously offered to donate a large sum of money to Columbia University for two specific purposes.

b. In 1903, an attempt was made by Joseph Pulitzer to halt the movement of the school of journalism and the journalism prizes from Columbia University.

c. Joseph Pulitzer requested that Columbia University donate a large sum of money to the *New York World* and *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* for the purpose of establishing journalism scholarships and prizes.

d. In 1903, Joseph Pulitzer decided to give up his position as head of two newspapers to take over the department of journalism at Columbia University.

8. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the first highlighted sentence in paragraph 2?

a. The university immediately appreciated Pulitzer's proposal, agreeing completely with Pulitzer as to the need for high-quality journalism.

b. University officials were unhappy when they read a sensationalized version of Pulitzer's proposal in one of Pulitzer's newspapers

c. Initially, the university was not interested in working with Pulitzer because they did not have a high opinion of newspapers in general and Pulitzer's in particular.

d. The Pulitzer papers did not have a high regard for what was being taught in Columbia University's school of journalism.

9. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the second highlighted sentence in paragraph 2?

a. There were long discussions about the names that could be used in the new school of journalism and the journalism prizes, and these discussions proved quite harmful to Pulitzer.

b. It took quite time for Pulitzer and Columbia University to reach an agreement, and the agreement was not actually implemented until after Pulitzer's death.

c. University officials spent years discussing what the new journalism building would look like and finally came to a decision about it in 1911.

d. Pulitzer's death caused university officials to rethink their decision on a school on journalism and to decide that it was a good idea to have one.

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10. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in paragraph 3?

a. The 21 awards are divided equally among journalism, letters, and music.

b. Three different awards are given to journalists while the others are given to artists and musicians.

c. Most awards are given in three different areas of journalism while the rest are given in letters and music.

d. Two-thirds of the awards are for journalism while the other third goes to other fields.

Skill # 4 > Insert sentences into passages. Choose the best answer.

Passage 1

Paragraph	**Popcorn**
1	1A One method of popping corn involved skewering an ear of corn on a stick and roasting it until the kernels popped off the ear. 1B Corn was also popped by first cutting the kernels off the cob, throwing them into a fire, and gathering them as they popped out of the fire. 1C In a final method for popping corn, sand and unpopped kernels of corn were mixed together in a cooking pot and heated until the corn popped to the surface of the sand in the pot. 1D
2	2A This traditional Native American dish was quite a novelty to newcomers to the Americas. 2B Columbus and his sailors found natives in the West Indies wearing popcorn necklaces, and explorer Hernando Cortés described the use of popcorn amulets in the religious ceremonies of the Aztecs. 2C According to legendary descriptions of the celebratory meal, Quadequina, the brother of Chief Massasoit, contributed several deerskin bags of popcorn to the celebration. 2D

1. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the first paragraph of the passage.

> **Native Americans have been popping corn for at least 5,000 years using a variety of different methods.**

Now, choose the square to add the sentence.

2. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the second paragraph of the passage.

> **A century after these early explorers, the Pilgrims at Plymouth may have been introduced to popcorn at the first Thanksgiving dinner.**

Now, choose the square to add the sentence.

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Passage 2

Paragraph	Lions
1	3A Something unusual about lions is that they hunt in groups. 3B Group hunting is beneficial to lions because it means that much larger prey can be captured by the lions. 3C It also means that individual lions expend much less energy during a hunt. 3D
2	There is a standard pattern to the process of hunting in groups. 4A The process is initiated by a single female, who stations herself at a raised elevation to serve as a lookout to spot potential prey. 4B When prey is spotted, a group of young lionesses advances on the herd and pushes the herd in the direction of a different lioness who has hidden herself downwind. 4C It is up to this concealed female to choose the weakest member of the herd for the kill. 4D
3	5A As can be seen from this description of the process, it is the females rather than the male or males in the pride that take part in the kill. 5B The younger and stronger females are the ones who go on the attack. 5C While the females are on the attack, the males stay behind to protect the rest of the pride from attack by predators such as hyenas. 5D

3. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the first paragraph of the passage.

Others cat do not.

4. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the second paragraph of the passage.

This is usually accomplished by knocking the prey to the ground and breaking its neck.

5. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the second paragraph of the passage.

Thus, the males have a defensive rather than an offensive role.

Passage 3

Paragraph	Accidental Inventions
1	A number of products that we commonly use today were developed quite by accident. Two of many possible examples of this concept are the leotard and the Popsicle, each of which came about when an insightful person recognized a potential benefit in a negative situation.
2	The first of these accidental inventions is the leotard, a close-fitting, one-piece garment worn today by dancers, gymnasts, and acrobats, among others. 6A In 1828, a circus performer named Nelson Hower was faced with the prospect of missing his performance because his costume was at the cleaners. 6B Instead of canceling his part of the show, he decided to perform in his long underwear. 6C Soon, other circus performers began performing the same way. 6D When popular acrobat Jules Leotard adopted the style, it became known as the leotard.

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3	7A Another product invented by chance was the Popsicle. 7B In 1905, eleven-year-old Frank Epperson stirred up a drink of fruit-flavored powder and soda water and then mistakenly left the drink, with the spoon in it, out on the back porch overnight. 7C As the temperature dropped that night, the soda water froze around the spoon, creating a tasty treat. 7D Years later, remembering how enjoyable the treat had been, Epperson went into business producing Popsicles.

6. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the first paragraph of the passage.

They enjoyed the comfort of performing in underwear rather than costumes.

7. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the second paragraph of the passage.

It was a taste sensation that stayed on his mind.

Test Reading Skills 3-4

Theodore Dreiser

Paragraph	
1	1A Theodore Dreiser, the American author best known for the novel *Sister Carrie* (1912), introduced a powerful style of writing that had a profound influence on the writers that followed him, from Steinbeck to Fitzgerald and Hemingway. 1B It was in *Sister Carrie* that Theodore Dreiser created a fictional account that laid bare the harsh reality of life in the big city and in which Dreiser established himself as the architect of a new genre. 1C
2	Dreiser was born in 1871 into a large family whose fortunes had in the recent past taken a dramatic turn for the worse. Before Theodore's birth, his father had built up a successful factory business only to lose it to a fire. 4A The family was rather abruptly thrust into poverty, and Theodore spent his youth moving from place to place in the Midwest as the family tried desperately to reestablish itself financially. 4B He left home at the age of sixteen. 4C After earning some money, he spent a year at Indiana University but left school and returned to Chicago, yearning for the glamour and excitement that it offered. 4D At the age of twenty-two, he began work as a reporter for a small newspaper in Chicago, the *Daily Globe,* and later worked on newspapers in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Saint Louis, and New York City. In his work as a reporter, he was witness to the seamier side of life and was responsible for recording events that befell the less fortunate in the city, the beggars, the alcoholics, the prostitutes, and the working poor.
3	5A Dreiser first tried his hand at fiction by writing short stories rather than novels, and the first four short stories that he wrote were published. 5B Based on this, he was encouraged to write a novel that would accurately depict the harsh life of the city, and the novel *Sister Carrie* was the result of his effort. 5C This novel chronicles the life of Carrie Meeber, a small-town girl who goes to Chicago in a quest for fame and fortune. 5D As Carrie progresses from factory worker to Broadway star by manipulating anyone in her path, Dreiser sends a clear message about the tragedy of life that is devoted purely to the quest for money.

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4 *Sister Carrie*, unfortunately for Dreiser, did not achieve immediate success. 7A The novel was accepted for publication by Doubleday, but Dreiser was immediately asked to make major revisions to the novel. 7B When Dreiser refused to make the revisions, Doubleday published only a limited number of copies of the book and refused to promote or advertise it. 7C Published in limited release and without the backing of the company, the novel was a dismal failure, selling fewer than 500 copies. 7D

5 After the failure of the novel that was so meaningful to him, Dreiser suffered a nervous breakdown; he was depressed, stricken with severe headaches, and unable to sleep for days on end. Having sunk to a point where he was considering suicide, he was sent by his brother to a sanatorium in White Plains, New York, where he eventually recovered. 10A After leaving the sanatorium, he took a position as an editor for Butterick's. 10B He was successful in this position, and was eventually able to purchase a one-third interest in a new publishing company, B. W. Dodge, which republished Dreiser's novel *Sister Carrie*. 10C This new release of the novel proved considerably more successful than the first release had been. 10D In its first year, the reissued version of *Sister Carrie* sold 4,500 copies, with strong reviews, and the next year it sold more than 10,000 copies. The recognition that accompanied the success of the novel was based not only on the power of the description of the perils of urban life but also on the new trend in literature that Dreiser was credited with establishing.

1. Look at the three squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the paragraph 1.

This forceful first novel set a new path for American novels at the turn of the last century.

2. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the first highlighted sentence in paragraph 2?

a. Dreiser's family had formerly been rich before it had become poor.

b. Dreiser was, unfortunately, born into an overly dramatic family.

c. The fortunes of Dreiser's family had recently increased.

d. Members of Dreiser's family suffered from the serious effects of a disease.

3. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the second highlighted sentence in paragraph 2?

a. Dreiser served as a witness in a few trials that involved beggars, alcoholics, and prostitutes.

b. Dreiser observed and wrote about the poorer classes as part of his newspaper job.

c. In NY, during Dreiser's time, there were many people who were less fortunate than Dreiser.

d. Dreiser's work involved working with beggars, alcoholics, and prostitutes.

4. In what square [■] can the following sentence be added to the paragraph 2?

At this young age, he moved lone to Chicago and supported himself by taking odd jobs.

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5. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the paragraph 3.

It was rather unusual for a novice writer to achieve so much so quickly.

6. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in paragraph 3?

a. Dreiser devoted his life primarily to trying to become rich.

b. In Dreiser's novel, Carrie succeeds by moving from a low-level job to stardom.

c. Dreiser used one of his characters to demonstrate the negative aspects of lust for money.

d. Dreiser tried to warn Carrie that she was taking the wrong path in life.

7. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the paragraph 4.

These changes were intended to tone down some of the starker and more scandalous descriptions.

8. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the first highlighted sentence in paragraph 5?

a. Dreiser recovered from an attempted suicide at a sanatorium.

b. Dreiser's brother went to a sanatorium after attempting suicide.

c. After being sent to a sanatorium, Dreiser considered committing suicide.

d. Dreiser's brother stepped in to help Dreiser after Dreiser became depressed.

9. Which of the sentences below expresses the essential information in the second highlighted sentence in paragraph 5?

a. In Dreiser's novels, he recognized the power of urban life and new trends that existed in it.

b. The success of Dreiser's novel went unrecognized because it represented such a new trend in literature.

c. Dreiser credited his urban upbringing and literary background for the success that his novel achieved.

d. Dreiser achieved acclaim because his writing was so powerful and because he established a new trend.

10. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the paragraph 5.

This company was one that published magazines to promote sewing and the sale of clothing patterns.

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