

Reading Skills 7-8

Skill # 7 > Make inferences from stated facts. Study each passage and choose the best answer.

Passage 1

Tiger Moths

One of the most beautiful of the more than 100,000 known species in the order *Lepidoptera* are the tiger moths, moths known for the striking appeal of their distinctive coloration. This type of moth is covered with highly conspicuous orange-and-black or yellow-and-black patterns of spots and stripes. Such boldly patterned color combinations are commonplace in the animal world, serving the function of forewarning potential predators of unpleasant tastes and smells. This is unquestionably the function served by the striking coloration of the garden tiger moth, which is quite visually attractive but is also poisonous to predators. Certain glands in the garden tiger moth produce strong toxins that circulate throughout the insect's bloodstream, while other glands secrete bubbles that produce a noxious warning smell. The tiger moth, indeed, is a clear example of a concept that many predators intuitively understand, that creatures with the brightest coloration are often the least suitable to eat.

1. It is implied in the passage about the order *Lepidoptera* that

- a. all members of the order are moths.
- b. there are more than 100,000 species in this order.
- c. all members of the order are brightly colored.
- d. there are most likely fewer than 100,000 species in this order.

2. It can be inferred from the passage that the tiger moth was so named because

- a. its coloration resembles that of a tiger.
- b. it is a ferocious predator, like the tiger.
- c. its habitat is the same as the tiger's.
- d. it is a member of the same specific classification as the tiger.

3. What would most likely happen to a predator that wanted to eat a tiger moth?

- a. The predator would be unable to catch it.
- b. The predator would capture it by poisoning it.
- c. The predator would be unable to find it.
- d. The predator would back away from it.

4. Which of the following would a predator be most likely to attack successfully?

- a. A purple and orange moth.
- b. A green and blue moth.
- c. A brown and grey moth.
- d. A red and yellow moth.



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Passage 2

Paragraph

The Cambrian Explosion

1 Many of the major phyla of animals arose during the Cambrian period, in what is called the Cambrian Explosion. Prior to the Cambrian period, simple one-celled organisms had slowly evolved into primitive multicellular creatures. Then, in a relatively rapid explosion during the period from 540 million years ago to 500 million years ago, there was a period of astonishing diversification in which quickly developing organisms became widely distributed and formed complex communities.

2 One theoretical explanation for the rapid diversification that occurred during the Cambrian period is known as the theory of polar wander. According to this theory, the rapid diversification occurred because of an unusually rapid reorganization of the Earth's crust during the Cambrian period. This rapid change in the Earth's crust initiated evolutionary change inasmuch as change in the environment serves to trigger evolutionary change.

5. It can be inferred from paragraph 1 that

- a. some major phyla developed during periods other than the Cambrian period.
- b. many other phyla of animals became extinct during the Cambrian Explosion.
- c. descriptions of various animal phyla were created during the Cambrian period.
- d. The major phyla of animals that came about during the Cambrian period died out in the Cambrian period.

6. It can be determined from paragraph 1 that the Cambrian Explosion most likely lasted

- a. 40 million years.
- b. 450 million years.
- c. 500 million years.
- d. 540 million years.

7. It is implied in paragraph 2 that

- a. only one theory to explain the rapid diversification has been proposed.
- b. the polar wander explanation is accepted by all scientists.
- c. the theory of polar wander fails to adequately explain the rapid diversification.
- d. the theory of polar wander is not the only theory to explain the rapid diversification.

8. It can be inferred from paragraph 2 that one basis of the theory of polar wander is that

- a. relatively little change in the Earth's crust took place during the Cambrian period.
- b. rapid diversification was unable to take place because of the changes in the Earth's crust.
- c. the Earth's crust changed more slowly in other periods.
- d. evolutionary change is unrelated to changes in the environment.



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Passage 3

Paragraph

The Golden Age of Comics

1 The period from the late 1930s to the middle 1940s is known as the Golden Age of comic books. The modern comic book came about in the early 1930s in the United States as a giveaway premium to promote the sales of a whole range of household products such as cereal and cleansers. The comic books, which were printed in bright colors to attract the attention of potential customers, proved so popular that some publishers decided to produce comic books that would come out on a monthly basis and would sell for a dime each. Though comic strips had been reproduced in publications prior to this time, the *Famous Funnies* comic book, which was started in 1934, marked the first occasion that a serialized book of comics was attempted.

2 Early comic books reprinted already existing comic strips and comics based on known characters; however, publishers soon began introducing original characters developed specifically for comic books. Superman was introduced in *Action Comics* in 1938, and Batman was introduced a year later. The tremendous success of these superhero comic books led to the development of numerous comic books on a variety of topics, though superhero comic books predominated. Astonishingly, by 1945 approximately 160 different comic books were being published in the United States each month, and 90 percent of U.S. children were said to read comic books on a regular basis.

9. It can be inferred from paragraph 1 that, at the beginning of the 1930s, comic books most likely cost

- a. nothing.
- b. 5 cents
- c. 10 cents
- d. 25 cents

10. Comic books would least likely have been used to promote

- a. soap
- b. cookies
- c. jewelry
- d. bread

11. It is implied in the passage that *Famous Funnies*

- a. was a promotional item.
- b. appeared in a magazine.
- c. had been produced prior to 1934.
- d. was published on a regular basis.

12. From the information in paragraph 2, it appears that Superman most likely

- a. was introduced sometime after Batman.
- b. was a character that first appeared in a comic book.
- c. first appeared in *Famous Funnies*.
- d. first appeared in a promotional comic strip.

13. It is implied in paragraph 2 that it is surprising that

- a. comic strips were more popular than comic books.
- b. superheroes were not too popular.
- c. 90% of U.S. children barely read comics.
- d. comic books developed so quickly.



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Skill # 8 > Infer rhetorical purpose. Study each passage and choose the best answer.

Passage 1

Paragraph

Xerography

1 One more familiar use of electrochemistry that has made its way into the mainstream is xerography, a process for replicating documents that is dependent on photoconductive materials. A photoconductive material is an insulator in the dark but becomes a conductor when exposed to bright light. When a photocopy is being made, an image of a document is projected onto the surface of a rotating drum, and bright light causes the photoconductive material on the surface of the drum to become conductive.

2 As a result of the conductivity, the drum loses its charge in the lighted areas, and toner (small grains to which dry ink adheres) attaches itself only to the darker parts of the image. The grains are then carried to a sheet of paper and fused with heat. When a laser printer is used, the image is projected by means of a laser beam, which creates a brighter light and a greater contrast between lighter and darker areas and therefore results in sharper printed images.

1. The author begins the 1st paragraph with One more familiar use of electrochemistry to

- a. explain that xerography is one of the less familiar uses of electrochemistry.
- b. make it clear that electrochemistry requires photoconductive materials.
- c. show that xerography is the only known use of electrochemistry.
- d. indicate that other less familiar uses have already been discussed.

2. Why does the author explain that A photoconductive material is an insulator in the dark but becomes a conductor when exposed to bright light?

- a. It explains a property that is necessary for xerography.
- b. It indicates that bright light is required for insulation to take place.
- c. It gives one example of a successful xerographic process.
- d. It explains the role of insulation in xerography.

3. The author places the phase small grains to which dry ink adheres in parentheses to

- a. provide information that contradicts the previous statement.
- b. provide another example of conductivity.
- c. provide further detail information about toner.
- d. provide an alternate explanation for the effectiveness of toner.

4. Why is a laser printer mentioned?

- a. It is an alternative to xerography.
- b. It is a way of duplicating without using electrochemistry.
- c. It is a second example of xerography.
- d. It is a less effective type of xerography that is a photocopier.



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Passage 2

Paragraph

Demographic Change

1 By the end of the 1920s, American society had undergone a long and historic demographic change. Since the 1870s, the country had been moving from a more rural mode that was based on high birthrates—as high as 50 births annually per thousand people in the early nineteenth century—to a more metropolitan mode. Prior to the 1870s, the population of the country was increasing by about a third every decade; however, by the end of the 1920s, a radical about-face had taken place.

2 One major factor to affect the demographics of the country during this period was a dramatic decrease in birthrates. The trend during this era was more pronounced in urban areas but also had an effect in rural areas. As a result of the trend toward smaller families, particularly in cities, the birthrate was down to 27.7 births annually per thousand women by 1920 and had dropped even further—to 21.3 births annually per thousand women—by 1930.

3 At the same time, the deathrate, too, was falling. Urban living led to better sanitation, refrigeration, and water purification; it also resulted in better medical care as doctors and hospitals were more readily available. Most likely as a result of these factors, there were only eleven deaths per thousand annually by the early 1920s, which was half the rate of the 1880s.

5. Why does the author include the phrase as high as 50 births annually per thousand people in the early nineteenth century in the paragraph 1?

- a. To show that metropolitan areas of the country had higher birthrates than rural areas.
- b. To provide statistical evidence of the elevated birthrate in the 1870s.
- c. To qualify what had happened with the American population in the previous century.
- d. To argue against the belief that the demographics of the country had changed.

6. The author uses the word however in paragraph 1 to

- a. make it clear that an extreme change had taken place.
- b. emphasize how tremendously the population was increasing.
- c. point out an alternate explanation for the change.
- d. indicate a difference of opinion with other demographers.

7. The author includes the word too in paragraph 3 to

- a. indicate that both the birthrate and the deathrate were holding steady.
- b. show that the rural mode was similar to the metropolitan mode.
- c. clarify the explanation that population trends before and after 1870 were similar.
- d. emphasize that paragraph 3 discusses a second factor in the demographic change.

8. Why does the author mention better medical care in paragraph 3?

- a. It helps to explain why the birthrate is increasing.
- b. It is an example of a factor that contributed to the improved birthrate.
- c. It helps to explain why the deathrate is increasing.
- d. It is an example of a factor that contributed to the improved deathrate.



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9. The author includes the expression **Most likely** in paragraph 3 to show

- that the data about the average number of deaths was not verified.
- that doctors and hospitals may not have been more available.
- that the other factors may have contributed to the decreasing deathrate.
- that the deathrate may not have decreased as much as stated.

Passage 3

Paragraph

The Hubble Telescope

1 The Hubble telescope was launched into space with great fanfare on April 25, 1990. Although there are **many powerful telescopes at various locations on Earth**, the Hubble telescope was expected to be able to provide considerably better information because it would be able to operate from the vacuum of space, without interference from the Earth's atmosphere. By launching the Hubble telescope into space, NASA was, **in essence**, placing an observatory above the Earth's atmosphere.

2 **Unfortunately**, the Hubble telescope was initially delayed in relaying its first pictures back from space due to a simple mathematical miscalculation. The Hubble telescope relies upon certain stars to orient its observations, and astronomers working on the pointing instructions for the telescope used charts created in 1950, with adjustments for the movements of the stars in the ensuing period. In making these adjustments, however, astronomers added the amount of the adjustment rather than subtracting it—a **simple checkbook-balancing error**. The adjustment was a change of only half a degree, but by adding half a degree rather than subtracting it, the telescope's aim was misdirected by **millions of miles**.

10. Why does the author mention **many powerful telescopes at various locations on Earth** in paragraph 1?

- To emphasize the need for telescopes at various locations on Earth.
- To show that the Hubble telescope was different from existing telescopes.
- To indicate how the atmosphere improves the quality of information from space.
- To emphasize the similarities between the Hubble telescope and other telescopes.

11. The author uses the phrase **in essence** in paragraph 1 to indicate that the information that follows the phrase

- provides a simplified description of a previously stated situation.
- indicates the cause of a previously stated effect.
- provides further details about a previously stated main idea.
- indicates the classification to which previously stated examples belong.

12. Why does the author begin paragraph 2 with **Unfortunately**?

- It indicates that NASA has been unhappy with all of Hubble's photographs.
- It shows that NASA's plan to use stars to orient the Hubble telescope was misguided.
- It emphasizes the need to have telescopes on Earth.
- It indicates that high expectations were not initially met.



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13. The author mentions a simple checkbook-balancing error in paragraph 2 to suggest that

- a. the astronomers must have difficulties with their checkbooks.
- b. the adjustment made by the astronomers should have been more than half a degree.
- c. a more balanced approach was needed when making adjustments.
- d. the mistake made by the astronomers was a simple, everyday error.

14. Why does the author mention the detail millions of miles in paragraph 2?

- a. It reinforces the idea that the mistake had a huge effect.
- b. It emphasizes the wide range of the Hubble telescope.
- c. It demonstrates that the Hubble telescope travels long distances.
- d. It helps the reader to understand how powerful the Hubble telescope is.

Test Reading Skills 7-8

Paragraph

Ella Deloria

1 In was not until her posthumous novel *Waterlily* was published in 1988 that Ella C. Deloria became known for her literary ability in addition to her already-established reputation in the academic arena of linguistics and ethnology. During her lifetime, she was recognized for the linguistic ability and cultural sensitivity that went into the production of a collection of traditional short stories entitled *Dakota Texts* (1932). After her death, her versions of a number of longer traditional stories and the novel *Waterlily* were published; with the publication of *Waterlily* came the recognition of her true literary ability and the awareness that it was the strength of her literary ability, in addition to her linguistic expertise and her deep cultural understanding, that had made her versions of traditional stories so compelling.

2 Ella Cara Deloria was born into a Nakota-speaking family in 1889; however, she grew up among the Lakota people in North Dakota, where her father was a leader in the Episcopal Church. Her father, the son of a traditional Nakota medicine man, valued both the cultural traditions of his family and those of the country of his citizenship. As a result, Deloria primarily spoke Nakota at home and Lakota when she was out in the community, and she was well versed there in the cultural traditions of her Sioux ancestors (with a complex kinship structure in which all of a child's father's brothers are also considered fathers, all of a child's mother's sisters are also considered mothers, and all of the children of all these mothers and fathers are considered siblings). Her education, however, was in English, at the Episcopalian Saint Elizabeth Mission School and the All Saints School. After high school, she attended Oberlin College in Ohio for one year, and then she transferred to Columbia University to study linguistics under Franz Boas, the founder of American Indian linguistics.

3 After graduating from Columbia, she was encouraged by Boas to collect and record traditional Lakota stories. She was in a unique position to take on this task because of her fluency in the Lakota language as well as in English, her understanding from childhood of the complexities and subtleties of Lakota culture, and her linguistic training from Columbia. The result of her research was the *Dakota Texts*, a bilingual collection of 64 short stories. To create this remarkable work, Deloria was able to elicit stories from venerable Sioux elders, without need for translators and with an awareness of appropriately respectful behavior. She listened to the stories as numerous generations had before her, and then, unlike previous generations, recorded them in writing—initially in Lakota and later in English. She transcribed them essentially as they were told but with her own understanding of the

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nuances of what was being told.

4 In addition to the shorter stories that were published in *Dakota Texts*, Deloria spent 1937 working on transcribing a number of longer and more complicated texts, which were not published until after her death. "Iron Hawk: Oglala Culture Hero" (1993) presents the diverse elements of the culture-hero genre; "The Buffalo People" (1994) focuses on the importance of tribal education in building character; "A Sioux Captive" (1994) tells the story of a Lakota woman who rescued her husband from the Crow; "The Prairie Dogs" (1994) describes the sense of hope offered by the Sioux warrior-society ceremonies and dances.

5 Her novel *Waterlily*, which was first published 40 years after it was completed and 17 years after her death, reflects her true literary talent as well as her accumulated understanding of traditional culture and customs. The novel recounts the fictional story of the difficult life of the title character, with a horrendous childhood experience as witness to a deadly enemy raid and a first marriage terminated by the untimely death of her husband in a smallpox epidemic, and comes to a close with the hopeful expectations of an impending second marriage. At the same time, it presents a masterful account of life in a nineteenth-century Sioux community with its detailed descriptions of interpersonal relationships and attitudes, everyday tasks and routines, and special ceremonies and celebrations.

1. It can be inferred from paragraph 1 that, while she was alive, Ella Deloria

- a. did little to make use of her education in linguistics.
- b. achieved acclaim more for her transcription than for her novel.
- c. was the published author of a number of types of fiction and non-fiction.
- d. was recognized for her literary maturity of her novel.

2. Why does the author use the word **however in paragraph 2?**

- a. To emphasize that she was born in an earlier century.
- b. To clarify the differences between the Lakota and the Dakota.
- c. To show that she was raised in a different environment from the one where she was born.
- d. To demonstrate that she was very different from other members of her family.

3. Why does the author include the information between parentheses in paragraph 2?

- a. To provide details to emphasize how the Nakota and the Lakota differed.
- b. To introduce the ideas that Deloria's education was different from her home life.
- c. To provide an alternate explanation for Deloria's use of Nakota at home and Lakota in the community.
- d. To provide an example of one cultural tradition of the Sioux.

4. Why does the author begin paragraph 3 with **After graduation from Columbia?**

- a. To indicate that paragraph 3 follows paragraph 2 in chronological order.
- b. To clarify that paragraph 3 describes Deloria's education at Columbia.
- c. To recognize the importance of education throughout Deloria's life.
- d. To demonstrate that paragraph 3 provides examples of a concept presented before.



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5. It is implied in paragraph 3 that *Dakota Texts* was written

- a. only in English
- b. only in Dakota
- c. in Dakota and Lakota
- d. in Lakota and English

6. Why does the author mention an awareness of appropriately respectful behavior in paragraph 3?

- a. To show one way that Deloria was qualified to elicit stories from Sioux elders.
- b. To show that Deloria's linguistic training had been effective.
- c. To show the difference between Deloria's transcriptions and her novel.
- d. To show why Deloria needed to work with a translator.

7. It can be inferred from paragraph 4 that "Iron Hawk: Oglala Culture Hero" was published

- a. in the same year that it was written
- b. just prior to Deloria's death.
- c. long after it was transcribed.
- d. long before *Waterlily* was published.

8. Why does the author discuss "The Prairie Dogs" in paragraph 4?

- a. It was written by Deloria.
- b. It describes Deloria's own life story.
- c. It provides insight into rituals and dances.
- d. It was one of the earliest short stories that Deloria transcribed.

9. It can be inferred from the passage that *Waterlily* was completed

- a. in 1937
- b. in 1948
- c. in 1954
- d. in 1988

10. Why does the author mention the untimely death of her husband in a smallpox epidemic in paragraph 5?

- a. It provides a harsh example of *Waterlily*'s difficult life
- b. It provides evidence of the historical existence of *Waterlily*.
- c. It demonstrates how unusual *Waterlily*'s life in a nineteenth-century Sioux community was.
- d. It reinforces the overall message of hopelessness of *Waterlily*.



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LIVE WORKSHEETS