READING DIAGNOSTIC PRE-TEST (Paper)

SECTION 3
READING COMPREHENSION

Time—55 minutes
(including the reading of the directions)
Now set your clock for 55 minutes.

This section is designed to measure your ability to read and understand short passages similar in topic and style to those that students are likely to encounter in North American universities and colleges.

Directions: In this section you will read several passages. Each one is followed by a number of questions about it. You are to choose the one best answer, (A), (B), (C), or (D), to each question. Then, on your answer sheet, find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

Answer all questions about the information in a passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in that passage.

Read the following passage:

John Quincy Adams, who served as the sixth president of the United States from 1825 to 1829, is today recognized for his masterful statesmanship and diplomacy. He dedicated his life to public service, both in the presidency and in the various other political offices that he
Line held. Throughout his political career he demonstrated his unswerving belief in freedom of
(5) speech, the antislavery cause, and the right of Americans to be free from European and Asian domination.

Example I **Sample Answer** Ⓐ ● Ⓒ Ⓓ

To what did John Quincy Adams devote his life?

(A) Improving his personal life
(B) Serving the public
(C) Increasing his fortune
(D) Working on his private business

According to the passage, John Quincy Adams "dedicated his life to public service." Therefore, you should choose (B).

Example II **Sample Answer** Ⓐ Ⓑ ● Ⓓ

In line 4, the word "unswerving" is closest in meaning to

(A) moveable
(B) insignificant
(C) unchanging
(D) diplomatic

The passage states that John Quincy Adams demonstrated his unswerving belief "throughout his career." This implies that the belief did not change. Therefore, you should choose (C).

Now begin work on the questions.

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Questions 1–9

Carbon tetrachloride is a colorless and inflammable liquid that can be produced by combining carbon disulfide and chlorine. This compound is widely used in industry today because of its effectiveness as a solvent as well as its use in the production of propellants.

Line (5) Despite its widespread use in industry, carbon tetrachloride has been banned for home use. In the past, carbon tetrachloride was a common ingredient in cleaning compounds that were used throughout the home, but it was found to be dangerous: when heated, it changes into a poisonous gas that can cause severe illness and even death if it is inhaled. Because of this dangerous characteristic, the United States revoked permission for the home use of carbon tetrachloride in 1970. The United States has taken similar action with various other chemical compounds.

1. The main point of this passage is that
   (A) carbon tetrachloride can be very dangerous when it is heated
   (B) the government banned carbon tetrachloride in 1970
   (C) although carbon tetrachloride can legally be used in industry, it is not allowed in home products
   (D) carbon tetrachloride used to be a regular part of cleaning compounds

2. The word "widely" in line 2 could most easily be replaced by
   (A) grandly
   (B) extensively
   (C) largely
   (D) hugely

3. The word "banned" in line 4 is closest in meaning to
   (A) forbidden
   (B) allowed
   (C) suggested
   (D) instituted

4. According to the passage, before 1970 carbon tetrachloride was
   (A) used by itself as a cleanser
   (B) banned in industrial use
   (C) often used as a component of cleaning products
   (D) not allowed in home cleaning products

5. It is stated in the passage that when carbon tetrachloride is heated, it becomes
   (A) harmful
   (B) colorless
   (C) a cleaning compound
   (D) inflammable

6. The word "inhaled" in line 7 is closest in meaning to
   (A) warmed
   (B) breathed in
   (C) carelessly used
   (D) blown

7. The word "revoked" in line 8 could most easily be replaced by
   (A) gave
   (B) granted
   (C) instituted
   (D) took away

8. It can be inferred from the passage that one role of the U.S. government is to
   (A) regulate product safety
   (B) prohibit any use of carbon tetrachloride
   (C) instruct industry on cleaning methodologies
   (D) ban the use of any chemicals

9. The paragraph following the passage most likely discusses
   (A) additional uses for carbon tetrachloride
   (B) the banning of various chemical compounds by the U.S. government
   (C) further dangerous effects of carbon tetrachloride
   (D) the major characteristics of carbon tetrachloride

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Questions 10–19

The next artist in this survey of American artists is James Whistler; he is included in this survey of American artists because he was born in the United States, although the majority of his artwork was completed in Europe. Whistler was born in Massachusetts in 1834, but nine years later his father moved the family to St. Petersburg, Russia, to work on the construction of a railroad. The family returned to the United States in 1849. Two years later Whistler entered the U.S. military academy at West Point, but he was unable to graduate. At the age of twenty-one, Whistler went to Europe to study art despite familial objections, and he remained in Europe until his death.

Whistler worked in various art forms, including etchings and lithographs. However, he is most famous for his paintings, particularly *Arrangement in Gray and Black No. 1: Portrait of the Artist's Mother* or *Whistler's Mother,* as it is more commonly known. This painting shows a side view of Whistler's mother, dressed in black and posing against a gray wall. The asymmetrical nature of the portrait, with his mother seated off-center, is highly characteristic of Whistler's work.

10. The paragraph preceding this passage most likely discusses
    (A) a survey of eighteenth-century art
    (B) a different American artist
    (C) Whistler's other famous paintings
    (D) European artists

11. Which of the following best describes the information in the passage?
    (A) Several artists are presented.
    (B) One artist's life and works are described.
    (C) Various paintings are contrasted.
    (D) Whistler's family life is outlined.

12. Whistler is considered an American artist because
    (A) he was born in America
    (B) he spent most of his life in America
    (C) he served in the U.S. military
    (D) he created most of his famous art in America

13. The word "majority" in line 2 is closest in meaning to
    (A) seniority
    (B) maturity
    (C) large pieces
    (D) high percentage

14. It is implied in the passage that Whistler's family was
    (A) unable to find any work at all in Russia
    (B) highly supportive of his desire to pursue art
    (C) working class
    (D) military

15. The word "objections" in line 7 is closest in meaning to
    (A) protests
    (B) goals
    (C) agreements
    (D) battles

16. In line 8, the "etchings" are
    (A) a type of painting
    (B) the same as a lithograph
    (C) an art form introduced by Whistler
    (D) an art form involving engraving

17. The word "asymmetrical" in line 11 is closest in meaning to
    (A) proportionate
    (B) uneven
    (C) balanced
    (D) lyrical

18. Which of the following is NOT true according to the passage?
    (A) Whistler worked with a variety of art forms.
    (B) *Whistler's Mother* is not the official name of his painting.
    (C) Whistler is best known for his etchings.
    (D) *Whistler's Mother* is painted in somber tones.

19. Where in the passage does the author mention the types of artwork that Whistler was involved in?
    (A) Lines 1–3
    (B) Lines 4–5
    (C) Lines 6–7
    (D) Lines 8–10

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Questions 20–30

The locations of stars in the sky relative to one another do not appear to the naked eye to change, and as a result stars are often considered to be fixed in position. Many unaware stargazers falsely assume that each star has its own permanent home in the nighttime sky.

Line (5) In reality, though, stars are always moving, but because of the tremendous distances between stars themselves and from stars to Earth, the changes are barely perceptible here. An example of a rather fast-moving star demonstrates why this misconception prevails; it takes approximately 200 years for a relatively rapid star like Bernard's star to move a distance in the skies equal to the diameter of the earth's moon. When the apparently negligible movement of the stars is contrasted with the movement of the planets, the stars are seemingly unmoving.

20. Which of the following is the best title for this passage?
    (A) What the Eye Can See in the Sky
    (B) Bernard's Star
    (C) Planetary Movement
    (D) The Evermoving Stars

21. The expression "naked eye" in line 1 most probably refers to
    (A) a telescope
    (B) a scientific method for observing stars
    (C) unassisted vision
    (D) a camera with a powerful lens

22. According to the passage, the distances between the stars and Earth are
    (A) barely perceptible
    (B) huge
    (C) fixed
    (D) moderate

23. The word "perceptible" in line 5 is closest in meaning to which of the following?
    (A) Noticeable
    (B) Persuasive
    (C) Conceivable
    (D) Astonishing

24. In line 6, a "misconception" is closest in meaning to a(n)
    (A) idea
    (B) proven fact
    (C) erroneous belief
    (D) theory

25. The passage states that in 200 years Bernard's star can move
    (A) around Earth's moon
    (B) next to Earth's moon
    (C) a distance equal to the distance from Earth to the Moon
    (D) a distance seemingly equal to the diameter of the Moon

26. The passage implies that from Earth it appears that the planets
    (A) are fixed in the sky
    (B) move more slowly than the stars
    (C) show approximately the same amount of movement as the stars
    (D) travel through the sky considerably more rapidly than the stars

27. The word "negligible" in line 8 could most easily be replaced by
    (A) negative
    (B) insignificant
    (C) rapid
    (D) distant

28. Which of the following is NOT true according to the passage?
    (A) Stars do not appear to the eye to move.
    (B) The large distances between stars and the earth tend to magnify movement to the eye.
    (C) Bernard's star moves quickly in comparison with other stars.
    (D) Although stars move, they seem to be fixed.

29. The paragraph following the passage most probably discusses
    (A) the movement of the planets
    (B) Bernard's star
    (C) the distance from Earth to the Moon
    (D) why stars are always moving

30. This passage would most probably be assigned reading in which course?
    (A) Astrology
    (B) Geophysics
    (C) Astronomy
    (D) Geography

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Questions 31–40

It has been noted that, traditionally, courts have granted divorces on fault grounds: one spouse is deemed to be at fault in causing the divorce. More and more today, however, divorces are being granted on a no-fault basis.

Line Proponents of no-fault divorce argue that when a marriage fails, it is rarely the case that one
(5) marriage partner is completely to blame and the other blameless. A failed marriage is much more often the result of mistakes by both partners.

Another argument in favor of no-fault divorce is that proving fault in court, in a public arena, is a destructive process that only serves to lengthen the divorce process and that dramatically increases the negative feelings present in a divorce. If a couple can reach a decision to divorce without first
(10) deciding which partner is to blame, the divorce settlement can be negotiated more easily and equitably and the postdivorce healing process can begin more rapidly.

31. What does the passage mainly discuss?
    (A) Traditional grounds for divorce
    (B) Who is at fault in a divorce
    (C) Why no-fault divorces are becoming more common
    (D) The various reasons for divorces

32. The word "spouse" in line 1 is closest in meaning to a
    (A) judge
    (B) problem
    (C) divorce decree
    (D) marriage partner

33. According to the passage, no-fault divorces
    (A) are on the increase
    (B) are the traditional form of divorce
    (C) are less popular than they used to be
    (D) were granted more in the past

34. It is implied in the passage that
    (A) there recently has been a decrease in no-fault divorces
    (B) not all divorces today are no-fault divorces
    (C) a no-fault divorce is not as equitable as a fault divorce
    (D) people recover more slowly from a no-fault divorce

35. The word "Proponents" in line 4 is closest in meaning to which of the following?
    (A) Advocates
    (B) Recipients
    (C) Authorities
    (D) Enemies

36. The passage states that a public trial to prove the fault of one spouse can
    (A) be satisfying to the wronged spouse
    (B) lead to a shorter divorce process
    (C) reduce negative feelings
    (D) be a harmful process

37. Which of the following is NOT listed in this passage as an argument in favor of no-fault divorce?
    (A) Rarely is only one marriage partner to blame for a divorce.
    (B) A no-fault divorce generally costs less in legal fees.
    (C) Finding fault in a divorce increases negative feelings.
    (D) A no-fault divorce settlement is generally easier to negotiate.

38. The word "present" in line 9 could most easily be replaced by
    (A) existing
    (B) giving
    (C) introducing
    (D) resulting

39. The word "settlement" in line 10 is closest in meaning to
    (A) development
    (B) serenity
    (C) discussion
    (D) agreement

40. The tone of this passage is
    (A) emotional
    (B) enthusiastic
    (C) expository
    (D) reactionary

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Questions 41–50

Whereas literature in the first half of the eighteenth century in America had been largely religious and moral in tone, by the latter half of the century the revolutionary fervor that was coming to life in the colonies began to be reflected in the literature of the time, which in turn served to further influence the population. Although not all writers of this period supported the Revolution, the two best-known and most influential writers, Ben Franklin and Thomas Paine, were both strongly supportive of that cause.

Ben Franklin first attained popular success through his writings in his brother's newspaper, the *New England Current*. In these articles he used a simple style of language and common sense argumentation to defend the point of view of the farmer and the Leather Apron man. He continued with the same common sense practicality and appeal to the common man with his work on *Poor Richard's Almanac* from 1733 until 1758. Firmly established in his popular acceptance by the people, Franklin wrote a variety of extremely effective articles and pamphlets about the colonists' revolutionary cause against England.

Thomas Paine was an Englishman working as a magazine editor in Philadelphia at the time of the Revolution. His pamphlet *Common Sense*, which appeared in 1776, was a force in encouraging the colonists to declare their independence from England. Then throughout the long and desperate war years he published a series of *Crisis* papers (from 1776 until 1783) to encourage the colonists to continue on with the struggle. The effectiveness of his writing was probably due to his emotional yet oversimplified depiction of the cause of the colonists against England as a classic struggle of good and evil.

41. The paragraph preceding this passage most likely discusses
    (A) how literature influences the population
    (B) religious and moral literature
    (C) literature supporting the cause of the American Revolution
    (D) what made Thomas Paine's literature successful

42. The word "fervor" in line 2 is closest in meaning to
    (A) war
    (B) anxiety
    (C) spirit
    (D) action

43. The word "time" in line 3 could best be replaced by
    (A) hour
    (B) period
    (C) appointment
    (D) duration

44. It is implied in the passage that
    (A) some writers in the American colonies supported England during the Revolution
    (B) Franklin and Paine were the only writers to influence the Revolution
    (C) because Thomas Paine was an Englishman, he supported England against the colonies
    (D) authors who supported England did not remain in the colonies during the Revolution

45. The pronoun "he" in line 8 refers to
    (A) Thomas Paine
    (B) Ben Franklin
    (C) Ben Franklin's brother
    (D) Poor Richard

46. The expression "point of view" in line 9 could best be replaced by
    (A) perspective
    (B) sight
    (C) circumstance
    (D) trait

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47. According to the passage, the tone of *Poor Richard's Almanac* is

(A) pragmatic
(B) erudite
(C) theoretical
(D) scholarly

48. The word "desperate" in line 16 could best be replaced by

(A) unending
(B) hopeless
(C) strategic
(D) combative

49. Where in the passage does the author describe Thomas Paine's style of writing?

(A) Lines 4–6
(B) Lines 8–9
(C) Lines 14–15
(D) Lines 18–20

50. The purpose of the passage is to

(A) discuss American literature in the first half of the eighteenth century
(B) give biographical data on two American writers
(C) explain which authors supported the Revolution
(D) describe the literary influence during revolutionary America

This is the end of the Reading Diagnostic Pre-Test.

Circle the number of each of the questions that you answered incorrectly or were not sure of. Then you will see which skills you should be sure to review.

1. SKILL 1
2. SKILL 11
3. SKILL 10
4. SKILL 3
5. SKILL 3
6. SKILL 9
7. SKILL 10
8. SKILL 6
9. SKILL 7
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49. SKILL 12
50. SKILL 13