

Reading 1. Tet holiday in Vietnam

Read the following passage and mark the letter A, B, C, or D to indicate the correct word or phrase that best fits each of the numbered blanks.

Together with the festive atmosphere Tet brings to Vietnam every year, the event also the best time of the year for Vietnamese to spend time on their (1) _____ life and pay respect to religious institutions. Visiting pagodas on the first days of the year has long been a (2) _____ tradition.

It has been a long-lasting custom of the people in this country each time a New Year arrival to visit pagoda. In Vietnam, the custom is described as “Lễ Chùa” – (3) _____ “lễ” means not only visiting but also showing respects in all sincerity to Buddha and Gods of the pagodas or temples. No matter how busy the Vietnamese are during the hilarious atmosphere of Tet, everyone attempts (4) _____ an incense to wish for best wishes for the New Year like healthiness, happiness, and wealth.

(5) _____, praying at pagodas and temples is among the best ways to go out and enjoy the spring. Mixing ones’ soul with the spiritual spaces, breathing in the aroma of burning incense and flowers and enjoying relaxing glimpse in the garden of the pagodas help demolishing all the stresses and worries of the previous year.

(Source: vietnamonline.com)

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|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. A. spirit | B. spiritual | C. spiritless | D. spirited |
| 2. A. deep-seated | B. deep-rooted | C. deep-pocketed | D. deep-fried |
| 3. A. which | B. that | C. in which | D. when |
| 4. A. to burn | B. burning | C. to burning | D. burn |
| 5. A. Beside | B. Moreover | C. In addition to | D. Thus |

Reading 2. Being on time

Read the following passage and mark the letter A, B, C or D on your answer sheet to indicate the correct answer to each of the questions

A Cultural Difference: Being on Time

In the United States, it is important to be on time, or punctual, for an appointment, a class, a meeting, etc. However, this may not be true in all countries. An American professor discovered the difference while teaching a class in a Brazilian university. The two-hour class was scheduled to begin at 10 a.m and end at 12 p.m. On the first day, when the professor arrived on time, no one was in the classroom. Many students came after 10 a.m. Several arrived after 10:30 a.m. Two students came after 11 a.m. Although all the students greeted the professor as they arrived, few apologized for their lateness. Were these students being rude? He decided to study the students’ behavior.

The professor talked to American and Brazilian students about lateness in both an informal and a formal situation: lunch with a friend and in a university class, respectively. **He** gave them an example and asked them how they would react. If they had a lunch appointment with a friend, the average American student defined lateness as 19 minutes after the agreed time. On the other hand, the average Brazilian student felt the friend was late after 33 minutes.

In an American university, students are expected to arrive at the appointed hour. In contrast, in Brazil, neither the teacher nor the students always arrive at the appointed hour. Classes not only begin at the scheduled time in the United States, but they also end at the scheduled time. In the Brazilian class, only a few students left the class at noon; many remained past 12:30 p.m to discuss

the class and ask more questions. While arriving late may not be very important in Brazil, neither is staying late.

The explanation for these differences is complicated. People from Brazilian and North American cultures have different feelings about lateness. In Brazil, the students believe that a person who usually arrives late is probably more successful than a person who is always on time. In fact, Brazilians expect a person with status or prestige to arrive late, while in the United States lateness is usually considered to be disrespectful and unacceptable. Consequently, if a Brazilian is late for an appointment with a North American, the American may **misinterpret** the reason for the lateness and become angry.

As a result of his study, the professor learned that the Brazilian students were not being disrespectful to him. Instead, they were simply behaving in the appropriate way for a Brazilian student in Brazil. Eventually, the professor was able to adapt his own behavior so that he could feel comfortable in the new culture.

1. According to the first paragraph, what sentence is TRUE?

- A. It is necessary for people in all countries in the world to be punctual.
- B. Brazilian students and professors arrived at the class on time.
- C. All Brazilian students who came late apologized to the teachers.
- D. No Brazilian students of the American professor came on time for the class.

2. The following sentences are TRUE about how American and Brazilian students reacted in a formal and an informal appointment, EXCEPT _____

- A. The American came earlier than The Brazilian in an appointment with friends.
- B. The American students must come to the class at the appointed time.
- C. The students and professors in Brazil often go to the class at the scheduled time.
- D. The class in Brazil began and ended later than the scheduled time.

3. What does the pronoun “he” in paragraph 2 refer to?

- A. The American student
- B. The Brazilian student
- C. A friend
- D. The professor

4. Why are the students in Brazil often late for the class?

- A. Because they think that arriving late is not important.
- B. Because they don't mind staying late for more discussion.
- C. Because they believe that a person usually arriving late is probably more successful than a punctual student.
- D. Because they are not expected to go on time.

5. What do the word “misinterpret” in paragraph 4 mean?

- A. misunderstand
- B. sympathy
- C. quarrel
- D. argue

6. What can be inferred in paragraph 4?

- A. Brazilians with status or prestige are often punctual
- B. We should not be late if we have an appointment with an American.
- C. Sometimes lateness is accepted in the United States.
- D. Americans are easy to get angry.

7. What conclusion is suitable for the situation of the American professor in the passage?

- A. “When in Rome, do as the Romans do”.
- B. “When there is a will, there is a way.”
- C. “Better safe than sorry”.
- D. “Practice makes perfect”.

Reading 3. Indian Marriage

Read the following passage and mark the letter A, B, C or D on your answer sheet to indicate the correct answer to each of the questions.

Indian Marriage

Marriage is one of the oldest human institutions and this is as true in Indian culture as anywhere else. In India marriage, called “Kanyadana or “donating a virgin”, is thought of as the greatest

sacrifice that a father can make and for the groom as an obligation to perpetuate his bloodline. Many people believe that a marriage is still **binding** after death.

In early times girls were thought to be ready for marriage after puberty and later even children could be married. Divorce and remarriage were not always possible. By Medieval Times, marriage was compulsory for girls, who very often married between the ages of eight and nine. Among those able to afford it, polygamy was common, and rulers would often have one wife from their own region and other minor wives from other areas. Now, divorce and remarriage is possible and non-Muslim Indian men can only have one wife.

Although there are many regional variations, some features of the Indian wedding ceremony are similar throughout the country. In general weddings are very **complicated** events and involve long negotiations about dowry payments prior to the event. After this has been decided a day is chosen by asking an astrologer to find a lucky day. Preparations begin early because a marriage is not only one of the highlights a person's life, but a large and complex social gathering to organize.

The night before, the bride, her friends and female relatives gather together for a party called a "mehendi", where they paint each other's hands and feet with Henna and dance and listen to music. Her guests often give the bride advice about married life and tease her about her future husband. Weddings are traditionally held at the bride's home or in a temple, but parks, hotels and marriage halls are becoming increasingly popular. On the day a wedding altar or "mandapa" is built and covered in flowers. All of the wedding ceremony will be held in the altar.

The clothing a couple wear on their wedding day varies between regions and ethnic groups. Women most commonly wear a sari. The bride wears a lot of jewelry as this symbolizes the prosperity she will bring to her new family. In the South wearing flowers is common. The groom wears traditional costume or a suit. Turbans are also popular headgear.

The ceremony begins with a mixture of turmeric, sandalwood paste and oils being applied to the couples face and arms. In the past this was done to the whole body, but now it is only symbolic, with only a little being rubbed on. Then they are showered in flowers. After this they perform the rituals that will make them man and wife. First, they garland each other and then take seven symbolic steps together representing seven gifts and seven promises. Finally, they say the vows and then they are legally married. The bride's father or guardian takes her hands and puts them in her husband's giving her to him. Now she is no longer a member of her father's family, but a member of her husband's. They then touch the feet of their elders for luck.

After the wedding ceremony, the couple go to the groom's house. The bride should be careful to enter the house right foot first for luck. In the evening and late into the night the families and their guests celebrate with dancing, music, and food.

(ieltsbuddy.com)

1. According to the passage, what sentence is TRUE about marriage in India?

- A. Marriage is thought of as the greatest sacrifice that a groom can make in his life.
- B. Marriage is the most ancient human institution.
- C. Girls were married after their adolescence in early times.
- D. Couples were not always accepted to divorce or remarry in the past.

2. The word "binding" in the first paragraph is closest in meaning to _____

- A. tying B. loosening C. cutting D. combining

3. According to paragraph 2, what can be inferred about polygamy?

- A. Each of the men can only have one wife.
- B. Each of the women can have more than one husband.
- C. Each of the men can have more than one wife.
- D. Each of the non-Muslim men can have a wife from their own region and other wives from other areas.

4. What does the word "complicated" in paragraph 3 mean?

- A. simple B. complex C. easy D. difficult

5. According to the passage, the following terms are activities before a wedding ceremony, EXCEPT _____

- A. An astrological was asked to choose a lucky day for wedding.
- B. It took the bride's and the groom's families a long time to negotiate about dowry payment.
- C. The bride, her friends and female relatives often have a night party before the wedding day.
- D. The bride and the groom are applied a mixture of turmeric, sandalwood paste and oils on the face and arms.

6. Why does the bride wear a lot of jewelry on her wedding day?

- A. To bring wealth to her new family.
- B. To bring prosperity to her parents' family.
- C. To receive advice from her guests.
- D. To pay dowry for her husband's family.

7. According to the last paragraphs, what sentence is INCORRECT?

- A. The couple take seven symbolic steps together after garlanding each other.
- B. After being applied a mixture of turmeric, sandalwood paste, and oils, they are showered in flowers.
- C. The bride's father takes her hands and puts them in her husband's.
- D. After marriage, the bride is still a member of her parents' family.

8. What topic does the passage mainly discuss?

- A. Traditions in India
- B. Indian Marriages
- C. The discrimination in India
- D. Indian wedding ceremony

Reading 4. Animals and Cultures

Perceptions of animals across cultures

When living and working in another country, there are numerous things to consider apart from the more obvious ones of climate, language, religion, currency, etc. Some important considerations are less obvious. For example, do you have a pet, or do you enjoy a hobby such as horse riding? Your animal or hobby may be perceived in a completely different light in another culture so it's important to consider the significance given to specific animals in different parts of the world and general perceptions towards them.

One example which is often mentioned in popular press is the case of dogs. In some cultures, like the US or UK, dogs are loved and considered a great pet to have at home and with the family. In other cultures, such as those where Islam is the majority religion, dogs may be perceived as dirty or dangerous. Muslim's treatment of dogs is still a matter of debate amongst Islamic scholars. While these animals are widely considered by many Western cultures to be 'man's best friend', the Koran describes them as **"unhygienic"**. Muslims will therefore avoid touching a dog unless he can wash his hands immediately afterwards, and they will almost never keep a dog in their home.

In Iran, for instance, a cleric once denounced 'the moral depravity' of dog owners and even demanded their arrest. If you are an international assignee living and working in Saudi Arabia or another Arabic country, you should remember **this** when inviting Arab counterparts to your house in case you have a dog as a pet. This is just one example of how Islam and other cultural beliefs can impact on aspects of everyday life that someone else may not even question. A Middle Eastern man might be very surprised when going to Japan, for instance, and seeing dogs being dressed and **pampered** like humans and carried around in baby prams!

Dogs are not the only animals which are perceived quite differently from one culture to another. In India, for example, cows are sacred and are treated with the utmost respect. Conversely in Argentina, beef is a symbol of national pride because of its tradition and the high quality of its cuts. An Indian working in Argentina who has not done his research or participated in a cross-

cultural training programme such as Doing Business in Argentina may be surprised at his first welcome dinner with his Argentinean counterparts where a main dish of beef would be served.

It is therefore crucial to be aware of the specific values assigned to objects or animals in different cultures to avoid faux-pas or cultural misunderstandings, particularly when living and working in another culture. Learning how people value animals and other symbols around the world is one of the numerous cultural examples discussed in Communicaid's intercultural training courses. Understanding how your international colleagues may perceive certain animals can help you ensure you aren't insensitive, and it may even provide you with a good topic for conversation.

(Source: <https://www.communicaid.com>)

1. Which of the following could be the main idea of the passage?

- A. Dogs and different beliefs in the world
- B. Perceptions of animals across cultures
- C. Muslims and their opinions about animals
- D. What should be learnt before going to another country.

2. According to paragraph 2, which sentence is INCORRECT?

- A. Dogs are well-treated and loved in the US and UK.
- B. Muslims are those considering dogs as their best pets at home.
- C. People whose religion is Islam don't like having dogs in their home.
- D. The dog is a typical example of different views in the world about animals.

3. The word "unhygienic" in the second paragraph is closest in meaning to _____.

- A. unreliable
- B. undependable
- C. unhealthy
- D. unacceptable

4. What does the word "this" in paragraph 3 refer to?

- A. you are an international assignee
- B. you are living and working in Saudi Arabia or another Arabic country
- C. you are having a dog as pet
- D. a cleric once denounced the moral depravity of dog owners and even demanded their arrest

5. The word "pampered" in the third paragraph could be best replaced by _____.

- A. indulged
- B. made up
- C. taken care of
- D. respected

6. The author mentioned cows in paragraph 4 as an example of _____.

- A. a symbol of a nation for its high quality of nutrients
- B. sacred animals in Argentina
- C. the animals that are differently perceived in numerous cultures
- D. which may cause surprise for Argentinian people at dinner

7. What does the author suggest in the last paragraph?

- A. It's important to value the objects or animals in different countries before going there.
- B. To avoid cultural shocks, people should not live or work in another culture.
- C. Understanding different perceptions of animals will help you avoid faux-pas in another nation.
- D. Talking about different perceptions with others will help you overcome insensitivity.

8. It can be inferred from the passage that _____.

- A. there are many things to research before going to live and work in another country.
- B. respecting other cultures is a good way to have a successful life abroad.
- C. you should not be surprised if other counterparts consider your sacred animals as food.
- D. people will change their perceptions of animals when living in another culture.