



Reading Comprehension

Questions 1 to 8

You are going to read an article. For questions 1 to 8, choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D).

8

Bassanio is a Venetian nobleman seeking to marry a wealthy heiress named Portia. With his finances in shambles, he calls on his best friend Antonio to lend him the 3,000 ducats he needs to sail to Portia's home in Belmont and present himself as a suitor. Antonio, a merchant, has all his assets tied up in ongoing shipping ventures. Expecting a cash infusion once his ships return from their voyages, Antonio borrows the 3,000 ducats from Shylock, a moneylender. Given that Shylock perceives Antonio as his enemy, the moneylender forgoes interest on the loan and instead demands a pound of Antonio's flesh, should the merchant be unable to repay the loan within three months.

As Bassanio, Antonio and Shylock negotiate the terms of the loan, Shylock's daughter Jessica plots to rob her father and elope with Bassanio's friend Lorenzo. Lorenzo and Jessica escape with thousands of ducats worth of jewellery and travel to Belmont, where Bassanio is headed to woo Portia.

Meanwhile, at Portia's Belmont estate, the heiress is forced to pick a husband based on an odd scheme stipulated in her deceased father's will. Suitors must choose either a gold casket, a silver casket or a lead casket. If the suitor chooses correctly, he will marry Portia. If he does not, he is sworn to secrecy and forced to leave Belmont immediately. So far, Portia has shown little interest in any of her suitors, all of whom have failed to pick the correct casket.

When Bassanio arrives at Belmont, Portia is thrilled, having met him and deemed him worthy years earlier. Rejecting superficial appearances, he picks the dull lead casket, the correct choice, and secures Portia's hand in marriage. Bassanio's friend Gratiano and Portia's maid-in-waiting Nerissa also decide to marry.

Just then, Bassanio receives a letter from Antonio. In it, Antonio reveals that his ships are likely wrecked and that he has no money to pay Shylock by the due date. Shylock, meanwhile, is adamant that he collect the pound of flesh as stipulated in the contract.

After the weddings, Portia gives Bassanio 9,000 ducats and instructs him and Gratiano to rush to Venice to save Antonio's life. After they leave, Portia hatches a scheme to pose as a prominent male lawyer chosen by the duke of Venice to help adjudicate the dispute between Shylock and Antonio. Nerissa accompanies her, dressed as a male clerk. During the proceeding, the duke defers to Portia's supposed legal expertise, vowing to follow her ruling. When she and Nerissa enter the courtroom dressed as men, neither Bassanio nor Gratiano recognises them.

Bassanio offers Portia's 9,000 ducats—three times the principal—but Shylock insists on obtaining a pound of Antonio's flesh. Portia seizes on Shylock's adherence to the precise language of the contract and rules that while Shylock is entitled to the pound of flesh, the contract does not entitle him to any of Antonio's blood. If he spills even a drop of Antonio's blood while cutting off the pound of flesh, he will have violated the contract. Moreover, Portia finds Shylock guilty of attempted murder, the penalty for which involves forfeiting half his assets to Antonio. When Portia asks Antonio if he would like to display the mercy Shylock denied him, Antonio says Shylock can keep his assets as long as he bequeaths them to Jessica and Lorenzo upon his death.

After the proceedings, Bassanio tries to give Portia—still posing as the lawyer—the 3,000-ducat principal for helping out Antonio. The disguised Portia and Nerissa say all they want in return are the rings they gave Bassanio and Gratiano on their wedding day, which they promised never to take off. With great reluctance, Bassanio and Gratiano agree to give up the rings.

Back at Belmont, an undisguised Portia and Nerissa feign outrage over their husbands' decision to give away the rings. After verbally torturing the men for a few more minutes, Portia and Nerissa finally show them the rings, revealing that they were the lawyer and clerk all along.

(Source: <https://www.supersummary.com/merchant-of-venice/summary/>)

- 1 From paragraph 1, why does Bassanio want to borrow money from Antonio?
 - A He wants to propose to his beloved Portia.
 - B He is in need of money to repay his loan to Shylock.
 - C He has to repay his gambling debts incurred while in Belmont.
 - D He has to reinstate his country estate in Belmont before it is auctioned.
- 2 What is the condition of the loan procured by Antonio from Shylock?
 - A Antonio will return the loan with interest.
 - B Antonio will repay the 3,000 ducats with interest in three months.
 - C If Antonio fails to honour the debt, Shylock will get a pound of his flesh.
 - D In case of default, Shylock has control over the contents of Antonio's ship.
- 3 From paragraph 2, why does Jessica plan to rob her own father?
 - A To reward Bassanio when she gets to Belmont.
 - B To infuriate her father as he is a mean moneylender.
 - C To run away and get married to Bassanio's friend, Lorenzo.
 - D To escape the drudgery of her life as a woman during that time.
- 4 From paragraph 3, what conclusion can be drawn about Portia's father based on his will? **HOW?**
 - A He was a materialistic man who was keen on status.
 - B He was a wise man who wanted Portia to get a worthy suitor.
 - C He was a generous man who wanted to provide well for Portia.
 - D He was a fair man who enjoyed giving puzzles for people to solve.
- 5 From paragraph 5, what is the tragedy that had befallen Antonio?
 - A He had become a pauper.
 - B He was struggling to pay his debt.
 - C His ships were reportedly wrecked.
 - D His ship had run aground on an island.
- 6 From paragraph 7, how does Portia save Antonio in court?
 - A She uses her money to win the judges over.
 - B She proves Shylock guilty of murder and has him sentenced to death.
 - C She pays 9,000 ducats to secure Antonio's release from Shylock's debt.
 - D She tells Shylock that not a single drop of blood should be shed if the pound of flesh is to be taken.
- 7 Why was Portia able to defend Antonio so effectively?
 - A She disguised herself as a man.
 - B She was intelligent and resourceful as an advocate.
 - C She used trickery to overcome the mean moneylender, Shylock.
 - D She used her wealth and position to overcome the justice system.
- 8 What is the main message of the story? **HOW?**
 - A You should neither steal nor cheat the innocent.
 - B One should be smart and resourceful in making money.
 - C You should always show mercy to your enemy however difficult it may be.
 - D One should never underestimate another's power of negotiation especially in business.



Gapped Text

Six (6) sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A to H** the one which fits each gap (1–6). There are two (2) extra sentences which you do not need to use.

6

I like to save money. So, when I saw a natural remedy for skin tags that my local grocery store was selling for just \$13.00, I did not hesitate. (1)

I was so excited at saving myself the time and expense of going to the dermatologist, until I read the directions for use of the natural remedy. "Use brush to apply daily to affected area." (2) I opened the bottle and took out the little brush. It smelled horrible. I brushed the smelly stuff on my skin tag that just happened to be on my neck. (3) "Oh my! I don't know if I can do this. Yes! Yes! I can do this. I'll do it right before bed," I talked myself into it.

(4) "Apply 3 times daily," it said. Oh no! I would have to go around smelling like this all day? "Well, I think I can do this," I told myself again.

It was only supposed to take two or three days at the most, right? (5) I looked at the directions for the second time! "Skin tag will dry and flake away over 3 to 8 weeks." What? I would have to go around stinking for 3 to 8 weeks? "I don't think I can do this!"

(6) "I can do this!" I regrouped.

I applied the skin tag remedy. Then I got ready for bed while trying to hold my breath, which was not easy. By the time I got in bed, I was getting use to the smell. "I can do this!" When I climbed into bed my husband was already asleep. I was very careful not to wake him as I turned off the lamp and snuggled under the covers. I was almost asleep when I heard my husband say, "What is that awful smell?"

A	I agonised, but I did save money and what is 3 to 8 weeks compared to what I will have to pay the dermatologist?
B	I bought it.
C	It was not easy to buy at all.
D	That's not too bad.
E	After all, if I could get rid of the skin tag, it will be worth it.
F	The smell was overpowering
G	I was devastated to say the least.
H	I looked at the directions again.



Matching and Information Transfer

Malaysians have invented great things that the world is using now. Read the information below and answer the questions that follow.

Malaysian Inventions

A MyKuali Penang White Curry Instant Noodles

Thomas Tang's craving for Penang food made him the manufacturer of the MyKuali Penang White Curry Instant Noodles. Each packet comes with a non-dairy creamer, soup stock, and paste; similar to Malaysia's popular chilli paste sambal. It became a global sensation and the #1 in Top Ten Spiciest Instant Noodles of All Time 2014.

B Flipper Toothbrush Holder

Invented by Goo Yock Tee, the Flipper toothbrush holder is designed to ensure people's toothbrushes are kept clean by protecting the bristles with a simple cover. Flipper has become a commercial success along with receiving local and global design awards. Recognised for its original design and innovation, Flipper has also received its patent worldwide.

C Automatic Egg Boiler

This device can be found in almost every coffeeshop and *mamak* restaurant in Malaysia. In early 1973, Datuk Hew Ah Kow worked as a bulldozer operator at a lumber camp. Half-boiled eggs were the way he liked to start his working day. However, he often found that his eggs were overcooked. So, he decided to experiment with how to make the perfect half-boiled eggs.

D Nehemiah Walls

The concrete hexagon-shaped walls, each panel connected with steel bars, are used to build the flyovers which can be seen along highways. Dr Nehemiah Lee researched the design and concept while studying for his Masters degree. He came up with the system of creating soil-retaining walls. The design is widely used in Malaysia and other countries including Singapore, Australia, and Hong Kong.

E Pen Drive

Pua Khein-Seng left Malaysia to pursue his degree in electrical and control engineering at Chiao Tung University in Taiwan. In his third year, he researched flash memory technology. Along with his partners, they founded Phison Electronic and he invented the first pen drive in 2001. The pen drive became an essential on-the-go item for storing work files, movies, music, and all types of data.

F Lytro Camera

The Lytro camera is a 'light field camera' that lets you pick the point of focus in photos. Ren Ng studied light fields at Stanford University and looked into how light field technology is applied to cameras in compact-sized packages. After graduating with a PhD, he continued his research on producing light field cameras that anyone can use to take pictures with. This technology has become the basic application used by future generations in developing innovative digital cameras.

(Source: <https://theculturetrip.com/asia/malaysia/articles/11-great-inventions-we-need-to-thank-malaysia-for/>)

Questions 1 to 4

Which paragraph (A–F) describes these Malaysian inventions?

4

	Statement	Paragraph
1	Innovative technology that is the basic application in making digital cameras.	_____
2	Necessary on-the-go item for storing work files, movies, music, and all types of data.	_____
3	Panel connected with steel bars used to build flyovers.	_____
4	An international sensation and the #1 in 'Top Ten Spiciest Instant Noodles of All Time 2014'.	_____

Questions 5 to 8Complete the notes below using information from the text. Choose **no more than one word** from the passage for each answer.

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Great Malaysian Inventions: At a Glance

- Thomas Tang found (5) _____ success with his instant noodles that have managed to retain the Malaysian taste.
- If you dislike your eggs (6) _____ this device will help you greatly.
- The egg boiler is an (7) _____ addition to the kitchen.
- (8) _____ cameras require light field technology.