TOEFL ITP® READING COMPREHENSION

Practice Test — Student Worksheet (Questions Only)

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: Read each passage carefully and answer the 10 questions that follow based on what is stated or implied in the text. Choose the single best answer (A, B, C, or D) for each question.

PASSAGE 1: QUESTIONS 1–10

Bioluminescence in Deep-Sea Organisms

[1] In the aphotic zone of the ocean—depths below 1,000 meters where sunlight is completely absent—organisms have evolved extraordinary adaptations to survive in total darkness. Chief among these biological marvels is bioluminescence, the emission of light by a living organism through specialized chemical reactions. Unlike incandescent light bulbs that release energy primarily as heat, bioluminescent light reactions convert chemical energy into light energy with nearly 100 percent efficiency, generating virtually no thermal radiation. This phenomenon, frequently termed "cold light," occurs when a light-emitting compound called luciferin undergoes oxidation in the presence of the enzyme luciferase. While terrestrial bioluminescence is relatively rare, observed primarily in select insects and fungi, it is exceptionally widespread in marine environments, where over 76 percent of deep-sea species possess light-producing capabilities.

[2] The ecological applications of bioluminescence are diverse, serving critical roles in both predatory strategies and defensive maneuvers. Predators such as the anglerfish utilize glowing appendages—modified dorsal fin rays known as illicia—to lure unsuspecting prey into close proximity. Conversely, potential prey species employ bioluminescence as a sophisticated form of camouflage known as counterillumination. Organisms like the lanternfish possess specialized light-producing organs called photophores along their ventral surfaces. By matching the intensity and color of downwelling light from the ocean surface, these organisms effectively eliminate their silhouettes when viewed from below by deep-sea predators. This optical illusion renders them practically invisible against the faint ambient illumination filtering from above.

[3] Beyond foraging and concealment, bioluminescent signals facilitate interspecies defense and intraspecies communication. When threatened by an attacker, certain species of deep-sea shrimp and jellyfish expel luminous clouds or shed glowing appendages. This sudden display creates a temporary distraction or blinds the predator, granting the target organism crucial seconds to escape. Additionally, bioluminescence plays a vital role in mate recognition and social interactions within the vast, sparsely populated abyssal plains. Species-specific flashing patterns allow deep-sea creatures to identify potential mates across considerable distances, ensuring the continuation of species in an environment where visual encounter rates are otherwise exceedingly low.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Questions 1–10

1. [SKIMMING / MAIN IDEA] **What is the primary purpose of the passage?**

(A) To compare bioluminescence in aquatic and terrestrial environments

(B) To explain the biochemical mechanism and ecological functions of bioluminescence in deep-sea organisms

(C) To argue that deep-sea organisms are more evolutionarily advanced than shallow-water species

(D) To detail the historical discovery of luciferin and luciferase enzymes

2. [VOCABULARY] **The word "aphotic" in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to**

(A) frigid

(B) lightless

(C) pressurized

(D) tranquil

3. [FACTUAL DETAIL] **According to paragraph 1, bioluminescence is referred to as "cold light" because it**

(A) occurs only in extremely cold ocean waters

(B) generates light without producing significant thermal energy

(C) reflects light rather than producing its own chemical energy

(D) requires low ambient temperatures to activate luciferase

4. [PRONOUN REFERENCE] **The word "their" in paragraph 2 refers to**

(A) predators

(B) ecological applications

(C) organisms

(D) dorsal fin rays

LIVEWORKSHEETS

5. [VOCABULARY] **The word "ventral" in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to**

(A) upper

(B) underside

(C) external

(D) lateral

6. [NEGATIVE DETAIL] **According to paragraph 2, counterillumination helps deep-sea organisms avoid predators by doing all of the following EXCEPT:**

(A) emitting light from their lower surfaces

(B) matching the brightness of light from above

(C) blinding predators with sudden, intense flashes

(D) eliminating their dark silhouettes

7. [INFERENCE] **Which of the following can be inferred from paragraph 2 about predators in the deep ocean?**

(A) They primarily hunt by sensing chemical signals rather than visual cues.

(B) They often look upward to detect the shadows of prey swimming above them.

(C) They produce larger quantities of luciferin than prey species do.

(D) They are incapable of generating their own bioluminescent light.

8. [VOCABULARY] **The word "appendages" in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to**

(A) secretions

(B) limbs or body projections

(C) protective scales

(D) light pigments

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9. [FACTUAL DETAIL] **According to paragraph 3, how do some species use glowing appendages to protect themselves?**

(A) They release toxic chemicals into the water.

(B) They detach them to distract attackers while escaping.

(C) They store sunlight in them to scare away predators.

(D) They inject them into competitors during territory disputes.

10. [AUTHOR'S PURPOSE] **Why does the author mention "mate recognition" in paragraph 3?**

(A) To demonstrate that bioluminescence serves a social function beyond defense and foraging

(B) To show that bioluminescence is restricted exclusively to mature adult organisms

(C) To prove that deep-sea creatures possess highly complex visual structures

(D) To explain why bioluminescent light patterns are identical across all marine species

LIVEWORKSHEETS

PASSAGE 2: QUESTIONS 11–20

The Industrial Transformation of American Textiles

[1] In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the American textile industry underwent a fundamental transformation that redefined the nation's economic landscape. Prior to this era, cloth production relied on the domestic or "putting-out" system, in which merchant-capitalists distributed raw wool and cotton to rural families who spun and wove fabric in their homes. This decentralized model was revolutionized in 1814 when Francis Cabot Lowell and his associates established the Boston Manufacturing Company in Waltham, Massachusetts. Lowell pioneered the power loom in the United States and integrated all steps of textile production—from raw fiber processing to finished cloth weaving—under a single factory roof. Driven by fast-flowing rivers that powered mechanized water wheels, this integrated factory system dramatically increased manufacturing efficiency and established the blueprint for modern American industrialization.

[2] To staff these expansive mills, industrial entrepreneurs developed an innovative workforce strategy known as the Lowell System. Rather than employing entire family units as was common in European industrial centers, mill managers recruited young, unmarried women from surrounding New England farms. To reassure cautious parents, the company constructed strictly supervised boarding houses managed by respectable matrons, imposed mandatory curfews, and required regular church attendance. For many young female operatives, factory work offered unprecedented financial independence and access to cultural lectures, evening classes, and literary publications such as the Lowell Offering. This structured system created a respectable middle ground between traditional domestic labor and urban industrial employment, attracting thousands of women to the growing mill towns.

[3] By the late 1830s, however, heightened market competition and economic downturns eroded the paternalistic nature of the Lowell System. Faced with declining profit margins, factory owners implemented wage reductions and increased production speeds, requiring workers to monitor multiple looms simultaneously. In response to these intensifying demands, mill women organized early labor protests and spontaneous work stoppages known as "turnouts." Despite their organized efforts, the protesting workers struggled to maintain leverage as economic conditions shifted. By the 1850s, the native-born female workforce was largely replaced by waves of impoverished European immigrants, particularly Irish families fleeing the Great Famine. These new arrivals were willing to accept lower wages and harsher working conditions, permanently altering the social structure of American industrial labor.

Questions 11–20

LIVEWORKSHEETS

11. [SKIMMING / MAIN IDEA] **What is the main idea of the passage?**

(A) The technological shift from water power to steam power in New England mills

(B) The development, labor model, and eventual transformation of early American textile factories

(C) The social and economic customs of rural nineteenth-century New England farm families

(D) The political impact of European immigration on northern industrial policies

12. [VOCABULARY] **The word "pioneered" in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to**

(A) regulated

(B) introduced

(C) delayed

(D) criticized

13. [FACTUAL DETAIL] **According to paragraph 1, how did the Waltham factory system differ from the earlier putting-out system?**

(A) It depended entirely on coal-fired steam engines.

(B) It consolidated all manufacturing stages into one central facility.

(C) It relied on imported fabric from European markets.

(D) It allowed workers to complete weaving tasks in their own homes.

14. [PRONOUN REFERENCE] **The word "This" in paragraph 2 refers to**

(A) the domestic labor market

(B) the strict moral supervision

(C) the structured system of employment and supervised housing

(D) the mechanized factory machinery

15. [VOCABULARY] **The word "respectable" in paragraph 2 is closest in meaning to**

(A) profitable

(B) socially acceptable

(C) physically demanding

(D) temporary

LIVEWORKSHEETS

16. [NEGATIVE DETAIL] **According to paragraph 2, the Lowell mill owners offered female workers all of the following EXCEPT:**

(A) supervised boarding houses

(B) cultural and educational opportunities

(C) guaranteed lifetime employment contracts

(D) structured daily curfews

17. [INFERENCE] **What can be inferred from paragraph 3 about working conditions in textile mills during the 1830s?**

(A) They became significantly more demanding as market competition increased.

(B) They improved noticeably due to new federal labor regulations.

(C) They caused factory owners to abandon water power in favor of manual labor.

(D) They led to an immediate prohibition of female labor in factories.

18. [VOCABULARY] **The word "turnouts" in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to**

(A) mechanical repairs

(B) work stoppages or strikes

(C) daily wage calculations

(D) changes in production quotas

19. [FACTUAL DETAIL] **According to paragraph 3, why did European immigrants replace native-born farm women in the mills?**

(A) Immigrants had greater technical experience with power looms.

(B) Native-born women left as working conditions worsened and wages decreased.

(C) Local farms required female labor during harvest seasons.

(D) State laws banned unmarried women from working in manufacturing.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

20. [TEXT ORGANIZATION] **Which of the following best describes the overall organization of the passage?**

(A) A chronological account of a system's establishment, workforce design, and eventual transition

(B) A comparative analysis of two competing industrial models in different regions

(C) A statement of a social problem followed by several proposed policy solutions

(D) A defense of early industrialization against historical critiques

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