

ELP-Level 8



Practice booklet

2021

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ITEP READING PRACTICE OVERVIEW



This section consists of four (4) reading passages and answering a set of questions. Before answering the questions, make sure you understand what the passage is about, who or what is mentioned in the passage and whether there are problems or changes in the passage. This information could help you navigate easily through the questions.

❑ There are 5 different types of questions:

1. **Main idea:** The correct answer usually doesn't focus too narrowly on only one part of the passage or contradict information in the passage.
2. **Catching details:** These questions are straightforward and should be answered according to the information provided by the passage, not your own knowledge.
3. **Vocabulary:** May ask about specific words or phrases. The questions ask how these words are used in the context of the passage.
4. **Synthesis:** These questions ask you to make association or inference based on the information in the passage. Therefore, the correct answer may contain information that is not directly stated in the passage but that is implied.
5. **Sequencing:** These questions require you to assess where in the sequence of points in the paragraph a sentence will fit best.



- ❑ Time management is key in this section, so try to answer the questions as quickly as possible.
- ❑ It is easier to spot wrong answers than the right ones, so eliminate them by process of elimination.
- ❑ Don't get stuck in one question! If you are having trouble finding the answer, just choose one answer and move forward to the next question.

ITEP READING EXAMPLE PASSAGE

Friendly little creatures

When most people think of mice, they think of small pests that nibble through the walls or snack on food on countertops. Mice also are often used in research labs, in medical experiments, or as food for carnivores animals such as snakes. But mice are more than just pests or prey for reptiles. Mice make great pets for small children. Mice are social animals that, when treated well, are affectionate and playful companions. Although many people think mice are dirty or carry diseases, they're actually self-cleaning animals and don't require washing. So, as long as their cages are clean weekly they never need to be bathed. Mice are quite content to be left alone in their cages for hours at a time, such as when children are at school. Since mice are fairly low maintenance, they make good pets for children.

**Note: This passage is shorter than reading passages in the actual test. This is for example purposes only.*

☐ **First answer these questions:**

1. **What is the main passage about?** Mice and the different ways in which they are used; also as pets for children.
2. **Who or what is mentioned in the passage?** Mice and people who use mice as pets or research.
3. **Are there problems or changes mentioned in the passage?** The title says something about the author's opinion about the topic. Mice are pests, but also friendly, clean, and make good pets for children.

☐ **Main idea:** Which of the following best supports the main idea of the passage?

- a. Mice are important for medical research.
- b. Mice are fed to carnivorous animals.
- c. Mice require lots of attention and care.
- d. Mice can be excellent pets for children.

☐ **Catching details:** According to the passage, what is one reason that mice make good pets?

- a. They are friendly with snakes.
- b. They are useful for medical research.
- c. They can be left alone for many hours.
- d. They need to be kept in cages.

☐ **Vocabulary:** As used in the passage, the word "pests" means:

- a. Unwanted creatures.
- b. Cuddly pets.
- c. Invited guests.
- d. Predatory animals.

☐ **Synthesis:** As used in the passage, what does the author think is important when considering pets for children?

- a. Pets should come from a pet store.
- b. Pets should require little care and cleaning.
- c. Pets should not be reptiles.
- d. Pets should have simple diets.

ITEP READING PRACTICE EXERCISES

Part 1: Identifying the main idea:

The Great Depression

The Great Depression is one of the most famous historical periods of the 20th century. This era is recognized mainly in the United States, but the time period affected the entire world. This period is also known as simply the Depression, was a financial crisis that started with the collapse of the stock market on October 29th, 1929. Thousands of investors were wiped out on this single day. The effects of this crash continued to hurt the world's financial markets for the next 10 years.

The Depression lasted from 1929 until 1939 the worst years were between 1932 and 1934, when unemployment rates were the highest. In the United States, unemployment rates reach 25%, meaning one out of four people could not find a job. In an effort to solve this problem, American President Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the Works Progress Administration. This program, known better as a WPA, used government funds to hire Americans to work on construction projects, buildings, and roads. The WPA also funded other projects in other fields such as creative visual arts and theater.

The Depression ended in 1939 partly because of the WPA's programs and also due to other factors. Some historians believe that as many countries entered World War II, the world's economy began to accelerate. Economists today still refer to the lessons learned from the Great Depression. Whenever economies slow down or contract, they are considered to be in a recession. When this occurs, experts frequently debate which actions might be necessary to avoid another Great Depression.

1. Which of the following best expresses the main idea of the passage about the Great Depression?
 - a. It led to the Stock Market Crash in 1929.
 - b. It is believed to be the major cause of World War II.
 - c. It could have been avoided by President Roosevelt.
 - d. It is a period that helps experts understand economics.

Doctor Who

Doctor Who is a famous British television show about a mysterious alien who travels through time and space in a "police box". Along with other friends of good will, the chief character, *Doctor Who*, fights numerous enemies and saves civilizations. In England, where the show was created, a police box is like a large public phone booth. It has a phone on its outside, which has a direct line to the police. For the purposes of the television show, this odd disguise makes for some interesting encounters for *Doctor Who*.

Doctor Who is one of the longest-running programs on TV, despite several breaks in production over the years. Its first season was in 1963, and 44 years later *Doctor Who* was still one of the best-loved shows in the world. This science-fiction, time-travel narrative started as a way to teach children history, but it has evolved into a modern pop-culture phenomenon with a vibrant and involved audience of loyal fans. The show has a devoted following in the United Kingdom, where even the Queen follows it closely.

Because the show has been around for so long, it has had many different casts. The casting of the main role is always a source of interest and amusement for *Doctor Who* fans. In the show's history there have been 12 different actors who played *Doctor Who*.

2. Which of the four choices best represents the main idea in the paragraph?
 - a. Doctor Who is generously supported by the Queen of England.
 - b. Doctor Who shows how time travel is scientifically possible.
 - c. Doctor Who has been a successful television show for many years.
 - d. Doctor Who is a television show that helps police solve crimes.

Part 2: Catching details:

The Wonder of Trees

An oft-quoted American poem begins *"I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree"*. Most of us take little notice of the wonder of trees, but they offer us great beauty and play an important ecological role in the "biosphere", the interconnected web of life on Earth. To imagine a world without trees would be to imagine a very different, drab, and possibly lifeless, planet.

Ecologically, trees have been an important part of our natural environment since evolving out of plant life about 370 million years ago. Their life-sustaining functions were essential to the further evolution of life on Earth. Trees produce oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide, thus maintaining our atmosphere. They also regulate climate, direct and regulate the flow of water, build and conserve soil, and provide habitat for wildlife.

But the great contribution of trees to the beauty of our planet is also worth remarking. The variety and abundance of trees make Earth a planet of brilliant green that complements the blue of the oceans. The two maintain varieties of trees, "deciduous" and "evergreen", contribute to this beauty in different ways. Deciduous trees shed their leaves for part of the year. Evergreens stay green all year long.

The lushness of Earth is also a result of the abundance and staying power of trees. There are estimated to be approximately 100,000 species of trees today. Most of them are in the tropics. The Amazon Rainforest alone is home to thousands of tree species. Trees can live for thousands of years and grow quite large. A tree in Sweden is considered the oldest at over 9,500 years of age. The tallest tree in the world is thought to be a Giant Sequoia in California's Redwood Forest. It stands over 117 meters tall with a diameter of about 10 meters.

1. According to the passage, important ecological functions performed by trees include all of the following, EXCEPT:
 - a. Influencing the climate.
 - b. Increasing carbon dioxide.
 - c. Directing water flow.
 - d. Conserving soil.

Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde was one of Ireland's most controversial and prolific writers. It is difficult to say whether he's better known for his life as a writer and well-dressed socialite in London High Society, or for his witty remarks and one-liners. One of his most famous quotes is something he said in a hotel in Paris at the end of his life: "I am fighting for my life with this wallpaper. Either it goes or I do".

Wilde was born in Dublin, Ireland, and moved to England to attend University in Oxford in 1874. At Oxford, he earned himself high grades for studying the classics. Soon after, he moved to London, where he gained fame and notoriety for his new philosophical positions about art and aesthetics.

Though his life was often filled with much movement in social circles, he's probably best remembered for his written works. You wrote only one novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, but it is considered a great story. His plays, including *The Ideal Husband*, *Solemn* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, are still performed all over the world. They're celebrated for their entertaining comedy and social satire. Wilde is remembered today as one of Ireland's greatest literary figures, and there are various tributes to him in Ireland as well as other locations around the world.

2. According to the passage, where was Oscar Wilde born?
 - a. Oxford
 - b. Paris
 - c. London
 - d. Dublin

Part 3 Vocabulary:

The History of Compact Discs

Compact Discs were originally developed for classical music recordings, intended to capture deeper highs and lows in rich symphony sounds. Soon to be known as CD's, they were introduced for sale in 1982, and they quickly changed the music industry. For decades consumers had been purchasing record albums and prerecorded tapes, all recorded using traditional analog technology. CD's brought music into the digital age, as a new generation of music fans started buying their favorite bands' music on small, mirrored discs in plastic cases which were said to represent an improvement in sound quality and durability.

As more popular music became available on CD, the recording industry experienced a great boom in sales. Music fans rushed out not only to purchase new releases on CD but also to stock up on old favorites in the new format. Compared to records, which sold at approximately six dollars each, consumers paid fifteen dollars for CD's.

Though the introduction of the CD generated large revenues for the record industry for a fifteen-year period, eventually the advancement of digital technology led to widespread music sharing that caused revenues to drop **dramatically**.

1. The word "dramatically" as used in the passage means:

- a. showily
- b. pertaining to theater
- c. in a steep way
- d. heightened

The Great Depression

The Great Depression is one of the most famous historical periods of the 20th century. This era is recognized mainly in the United States, but the time period affected the entire world. This period is also known as simply the Depression, was a financial **crisis** that started with the collapse of the stock market on October 29th, 1929....

2. The word "crisis" as used in the passage means:

- e. bounty
- f. windfall
- g. crime
- h. disaster

Oscar Wilde

.....Wild was born in Dublin, Ireland, and moved to England to attend University in Oxford in 1874. At Oxford, he earned himself high grades for studying the classics. Soon after, he moved to London, where he gained fame and notoriety for his new philosophical positions about art and aesthetics.....

3. The word "gained" as used in the passage means:

- i. grouped
- j. accomplished
- k. interested
- l. surrendered

Part 4 Synthesis:

Where would the new sentence most logically occur in relation to the marked sentences in the passage?

This process is familiar to many of us who look forward each year to the beautiful autumn foliage as the leaves change from green to gold and red.

The Wonder of Trees

An oft-quoted American poem begins *"I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree"*. Most of us take little notice of the wonder of trees, but they offer us great beauty and play an important ecological role in the "biosphere", the interconnected web of life on Earth. To imagine a world without trees would be to imagine a very different, drab, and possibly lifeless, planet.

Ecologically, trees have been an important part of our natural environment since evolving out of plant life about 370 million years ago. Their life-sustaining functions were essential to the further evolution of life on Earth. Trees produce oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide, thus maintaining our atmosphere. They also regulate climate, direct and regulate the flow of water, build and conserve soil, and provide habitat for wildlife.

But the great contribution of trees to the beauty of our planet is also worth remarking. *A The variety and abundance of trees make Earth a planet of brilliant green that complements the blue of the oceans. The two maintain varieties of trees, "deciduous" and "evergreen", contribute to this beauty in different ways. Deciduous trees shed their leaves for part of the year. *B Evergreens stay green all year long. *C

The lushness of Earth is also a result of the abundance and staying power of trees. There are estimated to be approximately 100,000 species of trees today. Most of them are in the tropics. The Amazon Rainforest alone is home to thousands of tree species. Trees can live for thousands of years and grow quite large. *D A tree in Sweden is considered the oldest at over 9,500 years of age. The tallest tree in the world is thought to be a Giant Sequoia in California's Redwood Forest. It stands over 117 meters tall with a diameter of about 10 meters.

Where would the following sentence most logically occur in relation to the marked sentences in the passage?

Soon it became common for people to send cards for birthdays and other celebrations.

The Greeting Card Industry

While certain industries seem to thrive and then disappear according to the whims of ever-changing markets, the greeting card industry has shown incredible staying power. In the United Kingdom, for instance, it is estimated that the average person sends 55 cards per year, generating over a billion pounds per year in revenue.

The custom of sending greeting cards can be traced back to the ancient Chinese, who exchanged scrolls with New Year's messages. By the 15th Century handmade paper greetings were exchanged in Germany and soon throughout other parts of Europe.

*A In the 19th Century, due in large part to the proliferation of printing presses and inexpensive postage rates, greeting cards became very popular. Christmas card companies began hiring artists as designers for mass-produced cards featuring their illustrations. *B Today cards range from classic, simple messages to timely, humorous cards that mock popular figures. *C

Even as email has largely replaced traditional mail for communication in many instances, most people have retained their appreciation of traditional cards for special occasions. *D So long as people wish to send messages of good cheer to help celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, weddings and births as well as major holidays on a folded card with a printed funny message, the industry will continue to thrive.

❑ Reading mixed practice 1:

1. The word "mythological" as used in the second paragraph most closely means the same as:
 - a. Inspiring
 - b. Religious
 - c. Old-fashioned
 - d. Inverted
2. The author mentioned the example of cladistics in the last paragraph in order to:
 - a. Show how a new taxonomic method leads to new views of reality.
 - b. Provide an example of modern Linnaean taxonomy.
 - c. Show how John Ray's definition of species still holds true.
 - d. Show how the theory of evolution has not really been proven.
3. Where would the following sentence most logically occur in relation to the marked sentences in the passage?

Thus, a horse and a donkey, although appearing similar, are not the same species, since their mating leads to a sterile animal, the mule.

Taxonomy and Scientific Knowledge

Most people think of science as a set of facts about the world. But more fundamental to science than the facts are the methods. In fact, many theorists believe that it is not objective reality that steers science, but rather the method of science that determines what we come to know as real. This reversal of what is commonly thought is exemplified by the development of taxonomy, the method of identifying and classifying organisms. Modern taxonomy, primarily developed by Carolus Linnaeus in the 18th Century, initially gave scientists a greater and more precise knowledge of nature. Today, however, taxonomic advances have led to question what they thought they knew about basic biological reality.

Taxonomy has been in use since Aristotle's work in the fourth century B.C.E. But early taxonomies were not very specific. Many contained such mythological creatures as griffins, right alongside existing animals. Further, it was thought that offspring could be produced by mating completely different creatures, like a lion and a bird. *A Aristotle, himself, used reason rather than observation, to divide animal life into two basic groups: animals with vertebrae (or backbones) and those without. Although this system proved inaccurate, it wasn't until Linnaeus' work that empirical observation became the basis for a modern taxonomy that excluded creatures of fantasy.

The movement toward a more modern system took its first big step in the 17th Century, with naturalists John Ray's definition of the concept of "species". A species is a group of organisms capable of reproduction. The result will be an individual similar to the parents and also capable of reproducing. *B Armed with this definition, Linnaeus was able to catalog over 4,000 species of animals and over 7,500 species of plants. He began with plant-life, dividing plants into species based on the number of pistils and stamens (the sexual organs) of each plant. This method allowed other botanists to contribute to the taxonomy. *C They simply had to observe and count, and a new specimen was added. Thus, biological knowledge grew tremendously.

However, since Linnaeus' time, biology has developed new taxonomic systems. One such example, cladistics, makes use of genetic analysis to classify organisms based on evolutionary descent (parent and child), rather than observable features. The problem is that this system has revealed relationships that are quite different from those of Linnaean taxonomy. *D Furthermore, organisms have been discovered that violate the rules of species inclusion. An example is where one organism may be able to reproduce with another, while that other one is capable of reproducing with a third, but the first and third cannot reproduce with each other. These and other surprises have scientists today questioning whether we understand species at all. Do species actually exist in nature, or only in our taxonomies? Perhaps this question will lead to new methods and technologies that will, in turn, radically change the nature of reality as we know it.