

Section Three: Reading Comprehension

Questions 1-9

The term "folk song" has been current for over a hundred years, but there is still a good deal of disagreement as to what it actually means. The definition provided by the International Folk Music Council states that folk music is the music of ordinary people, line which is passed on from person to person by being listened to rather than learned from

- (5) the printed page. Other factors that help shape a folk song include: continuity (many performances over a number of years); variation (changes in words and melodies either through artistic interpretation or failure of memory); and selection (the acceptance of a song by the community in which it evolves).

When songs have been subjected to these processes their origin is usually impossible

- (10) to trace. For instance, if a farm laborer were to make up a song and sing it to a couple of friends who like it and memorize it, possibly when the friends come to sing it themselves one of them might forget some of the words and make up new ones to fill the gap, while" the other, perhaps more artistic, might add a few decorative touches to the tune and improve a couple of lines of text. If this happened a few times there would be many

- (15) different versions, the song's original composer would be forgotten, and the song would become common property. This constant reshaping and re-creation is the essence of folk music. Consequently, modern popular songs and other published music, even though widely sung by people who are not professional musicians, are not considered folk music.

The music and words have been set by a printed or recorded source, limiting scope for

- (20) further artistic creation. These songs' origins cannot be disguised and therefore they belong primarily to the composer and not to a community.

The ideal situation for the creation of folk music is an isolated rural community. In such a setting folk songs and dances have a special purpose at every stage in a person's life, from childhood to death. Epic tales of heroic deeds, seasonal songs relating to

- (25) calendar events, and occupational songs are also likely to be sung.

1. What does the passage mainly discuss?

- (A) Themes commonly found in folk music
- (B) Elements that define folk music
- (C) Influences of folk music on popular music
- (D) The standards of the International Folk Music Council

3. The word "it" in line 8 refers to

- (A) community
- (B) song
- (C) acceptance
- (D) memory

2. Which of the following statements about the term "folk song" is supported by the passage?

- (A) It has been used for several centuries.
- (B) The International Folk Music Council invented it.
- (C) It is considered to be out-of-date.
- (D) There is disagreement about its meaning.

4. Which of the following is NOT mentioned in the passage as a characteristic of the typical folk song?

- (A) It is constantly changing over time.
- (B) it is passed on to other people by being performed.
- (C) It contains complex musical structures.
- (D) It appeals to many people.

5. The word "subjected" in line 9 is closest in meaning to

- (A) reduced
- (B) modified
- (C) exposed
- (D) imitated

7. According to the passage, why would the original composers of folk songs be forgotten?

- (A) Audiences prefer songs composed by professional musicians.
- (B) Singers dislike the decorative touches in folk song tunes.
- (C) Numerous variations of folk songs come to exist at the same time.
- (D) Folk songs are not considered an important form of music.

8. The word "essence" in line 16 is closest in meaning to

- (A) basic nature
- (B) growing importance
- (C) full extent
- (D) first phase

6. The author mentions the farm laborer and his friends (lines 10-14) in order to do which of the following?

- (A) Explain how a folk song evolves over time
- (B) Illustrate the importance of music to rural workers
- (C) Show how subject matter is selected for a folk song
- (D) Demonstrate how a community chooses a folk song

9. The author mentions that published music is not considered to be folk music because

- (A) the original composer can be easily identified
- (B) the songs attract only the young people in a community
- (C) the songs are generally performed by professional singers
- (D) the composers write the music in rural communities

Questions 10-20

Long before they can actually speak, babies pay special attention to the speech they hear around them. Within the first month of their lives, babies' responses to the sound of the human voice will be different from their responses to other sorts of auditory stimuli.

Line They will stop crying when they hear a person talking, but not if they hear a bell or the

- (5) sound of a rattle. At first, the sounds that an infant notices might be only those words that receive the heaviest emphasis and that often occur at the ends of utterances. By the time they are six or seven weeks old, babies can detect the difference between syllables pronounced with rising and falling inflections. Very soon, these differences in adult stress and intonation can influence babies' emotional states and behavior. Long before they
- (10) develop actual language comprehension, babies can sense when an adult is playful or angry, attempting to initiate or terminate new behavior, and so on, merely on the basis of cues such as the rate, volume, and melody of adult speech.

Adults make it as easy as they can for babies to pick up a language by exaggerating such cues. One researcher observed babies and their mothers in six diverse cultures and

- (15) found that, in all six languages, the mothers used simplified syntax, short utterances and nonsense sounds, and transformed certain sounds into baby talk. Other investigators have noted that when mothers talk to babies who are only a few months old, they exaggerate the pitch, loudness, and intensity of their words. They also exaggerate their facial

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expressions, hold vowels longer, and emphasize certain words.

- (20) More significant for language development than their response to general intonation is observation that tiny babies can make relatively fine distinctions between speech sounds. other words, babies enter the world with the ability to make precisely those perceptual discriminations that are necessary if they are to acquire aural language.

Babies obviously derive pleasure from sound input, too: even as young as nine months

- (25) they will listen to songs or stories, although the words themselves are beyond their understanding. For babies, language is a sensory-motor delight rather than the route to prosaic meaning that it often is for adults.

10. What does the passage mainly discuss?

- (A) How babies differentiate between the sound of the human voice and other sounds
- (B) The differences between a baby's and an adult's ability to comprehend language
- (C) How babies perceive and respond to the human voice in their earliest stages of language development

between different nonhuman sounds

- (D) To give examples of typical toys that babies do not like

12. Why does the author mention syllables pronounced with rising and falling inflections in lines

7-8 ?

- (A) To demonstrate how difficult it is for babies to interpret emotions
- (B) To illustrate that a six-week-old baby can already distinguish some language differences
- (C) To provide an example of ways adults speak to babies
- (D) To give a reason for babies' difficulty in distinguishing one adult from another

13. The word "diverse" in line 14 is closest in meaning to

- (A) surrounding
- (B) divided
- (C) different
- (D) stimulating

- (D) The response of babies to sounds other than the human voice

11. Why does the author mention a bell and a rattle in lines 4-5 ?

- (A) To contrast the reactions of babies to human and nonhuman sounds
- (B) To give examples of sounds that will cause a baby to cry
- (C) To explain how babies distinguish
- (D) using meaningless sounds

17. The word "emphasize" in line 19 is closest in meaning to

- (A) stress
- (B) repeat
- (C) explain
- (D) leave out

18. Which of the following can be inferred about the findings described in paragraph 2 ?

- (A) Babies who are exposed to more than one language can speak earlier than babies exposed to a single language.
- (B) Mothers from different cultures speak to their babies in similar ways.
- (C) Babies ignore facial expressions in comprehending aural language.
- (D) The mothers observed by the researchers were consciously teaching their babies to speak.

14. The word "noted" in line 17 is closest in meaning to

- (A) theorized
- (B) requested
- (C) disagreed
- (D) observed

15. The word "They" in line 18 refers to

- (A) mothers
- (B) investigators
- (C) babies
- (D) words

16. The passage mentions all of the following as ways adults modify their speech when talking to

babies EXCEPT

- (A) giving all words equal emphasis
- (B) speaking with shorter sentences
- (C) speaking more loudly than normal

19. What point does the author make to illustrate that babies are born with the ability to acquire

language?

- (A) Babies begin to understand words in songs.
- (B) Babies exaggerate their own sounds and expressions.
- (C) Babies are more sensitive to sounds than are adults.
- (D) Babies notice even minor differences between speech sounds.

20. According to the author, why do babies listen to songs and stories, even though they cannot

understand them?

- (A) They understand the rhythm.
- (B) They enjoy the sound.
- (C) They can remember them easily.
- (D) They focus on the meaning of their

Questions 21-29

Under the Earth's topsoil, at various levels, sometimes under a layer of rock, there are deposits of clay. Look at cuts where highways have been built to see exposed clay beds; or look at a construction site, where pockets of clay may be exposed. Rivers also reveal clay

Line along their banks, and erosion on a hillside may make clay easily accessible.

(5) What is clay made of? The Earth's surface is basically rock, and it is this rock that gradually decomposes into clay. Rain, streams, alternating freezing and thawing, roots of trees and plants forcing their way into cracks, earthquakes, volcanic action, and glaciers--all of these forces slowly break down the Earth's exposed rocky crust into smaller and smaller pieces that eventually become clay.

(10) Rocks are composed of elements and compounds of elements. Feldspar, which is the most abundant mineral on the Earth's surface, is basically made up of the oxides silica and alumina combined with alkalies like potassium and some so-called impurities such as iron. Feldspar is an essential component of granite rocks, and as such it is the basis of clay.

When it is wet, clay can be easily shaped to make a variety of useful objects, which can

(15) then be fired to varying degrees of hardness and covered with impermeable decorative coatings of glasslike material called glaze. Just as volcanic action, with its intense heat, fuses the elements in certain rocks into a glasslike rock called obsidian, so can we apply heat to earthen materials and change them into a hard, dense material. Different clays need different heat levels to fuse, and some, the low-fire clays, never become nonporous and

(20) watertight like highly fired stoneware. Each clay can stand only a certain amount of heat without losing its shape through sagging or melting. Variations of clay composition and the temperatures at which they are fired account for the differences in texture and appearance between a china teacup and an earthenware flowerpot.

21. The author's main point in paragraph 1 is that clay deposits

- (A) conceal layers of rock
- (B) can be found in various places
- (C) are usually small
- (D) must be removed from construction sites

(D) Near rivers

23. The word "accessible" in line 4 is closest in meaning to

- (A) buried
- (B) improved
- (C) available
- (D) workable

22. It can be inferred from the passage that clay is LEAST likely to be plentiful in which of the

following areas?

- (A) In desert sand dunes
- (B) In forests
- (C) On hillsides
- (D) clay

27. Based on the information in the passage, it can be inferred that low-fire clays are MOST appropriate for making objects that

- (A) must be strong
- (B) can be porous
- (C) have a smooth texture

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24. According to the passage, rock breaks down into clay under all of the following conditions EXCEPT when

- (A) it is exposed to freezing and thawing
- (B) roots of trees force their way into cracks
- (C) it is combined with alkalies
- (D) natural forces wear away the Earth's crust

25. Why does the author mention feldspar in line 10?

- (A) It is often used as a substitute for clay.
- (B) It is damaged by the oxides in clay.
- (C) Its presence indicates inferior clay.
- (D) It is a major component of clay.

26. The word "it" in line 13 refers to

- (A) iron
- (B) feldspar
- (C) granite

(D) are highly decorated

28. The phrase "account for" in line 22 is closest in meaning to

- (A) reduce
- (B) explain
- (C) combine with
- (D) list all of

29. The passage supports which of the following conclusions?

- (A) Clay deposits are only found deep in the Earth.
- (B) If clay contains too much iron it will melt when fired.
- (C) Only certain types of clay are appropriate for making china teacups.
- (D) If sufficient heat is applied, all clay will become nonporous.

Questions 30-40

The smooth operation of an ant colony depends on ten to twenty different signals, most of which are pheromones (chemical signals triggering behavioral responses). It is estimated that red fire ants employ at least twelve different chemical signals. The simplest of these is the carbon dioxide from the respiration of an ant cluster, a chemical that acts as

(5) a pheromone to promote aggregation. Workers move toward a source of carbon dioxide, resulting in solitary ants moving to join a group. At the other extreme, the most complex of the fire ants' signals is probably colony odor, by which the workers of a particular colony or nest identify another worker as local or foreign. Each ant nest has its own odor as a result of its location, history, and local food supply. The resident ants pick up this

(10) odor on their bodies, so that ants of the same species, but from different nests, have different colony odors. This allows ants to identify intruders and maintain colony integrity.

Fire ants also make use of an alarm pheromone to alert workers to an emergency, and their scouts lay down a trail pheromone as a guide during mass migrations. A fire ant

(15) queen emits a chemical signal that identifies her to the colony's workers. They respond by scurrying to gather around her. The decomposing corpse of a dead ant also generates

a signal, to which workers respond by eliminating the corpse from the nest.

Ants provide examples of both public (accessible to other species) and private

messages. One of their most important private messages concerns food, for a food source

(20) is worth keeping secret. Each species marks its trails with signals that are meaningless to others, so that an ant crossing a trail left by another ant species typically notices nothing.

On the other hand, a secret signal to mark a dead body is unnecessary. Many kinds of ants perceive a natural decomposition product of dead insects as a signal to remove a corpse.

If an outsider recognizes this message and moves the body, no harm is done.

30. What aspect of ants does the passage mainly discuss?

- (A) The relationship between the queen and the worker ants
- (B) Ways in which ants use chemical signals
- (C) Methods ants use to identify food sources
- (D) The importance of respiration in the production of ant pheromones

31. The phrase "smooth operation" in line 1 is closest in meaning to

- (A) daily activity
- (B) effective functioning
- (C) delicate balance
- (D) permanent location

32. According to the passage, carbon dioxide serves which of the following functions for fire ants?

- (A) It protects the queen.
- (B) It attracts other ant species.
- (C) It informs workers of possible danger.
- (D) It encourages the ants to gather together.

33. The word "cluster" in line 4 is closest in meaning to

- (A) organ
- (B) activity
- (C) group
- (D) cycle

- (C) distinguish foreign ants from resident ants
- (D) signal other inhabitants when foreign ants attack

35. The word "alert" in line 13 is closest in meaning to

- (A) allow
- (B) transport
- (C) ware
- (D) provide

36. What is the role of pheromones in the mass migrations of ants?

- (A) Pheromones are used to create a trail that directs the ants during migrations.
- (B) Pheromones signal the ants that the nest has been invaded and must be abandoned.
- (C) Pheromones control the speed at which ants move from one location to another.
- (D) Pheromones enable scouts to identify suitable areas for establishing a new nest.

37. The word "scurrying" in line 16 is closest in meaning to

- (A) agreeing
- (B) appearing
- (C) competing
- (D) rushing

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34. According to the passage, each nest has a distinct odor that allows its inhabitants to
(A) find the location of the nest in the dark
(B) distinguish worker ants from other ants

39. Why does the author mention "dead insects" in line 23 ?
(A) To compare the social behaviors of ants with those of other insects
(B) To emphasize the dangers that all insects encounter
(C) To argue the superiority of ants over other insects

38. The word "others" in line 21 refers to

- (A) private messages
 - (B) species
 - (C) trails
 - (D) signals
- (D) To indicate a behavior that is common among various kinds of ants

40. Which of the following terms is defined in the passage?

- (A) pheromones (line 2)
- (B) colony integrity (lines 11-12)
- (C) mass migrations (line 14)
- (D) private messages (lines 18-19)

Questions 41-50

The Homestead Act of 1862 gave heads of families or individuals aged twenty-one or older the right to own 160 acres of public land in the western United States after five years of residence and improvement. This law was intended to provide land for small farmers

Line and to prevent land from being bought for resale at a profit or being owned by large

(5) landholders. An early amendment to the act even prevented husbands and wives from filing separate claims. The West, land reformers had assumed, would soon contain many 160-acre family farms.

They were doomed to disappointment. Most landless Americans were too poor to become farmers even when they could obtain land without cost. The expense of moving a

(10) family to the ever-receding frontier exceeded the means of many, and the cost of tools, draft animals, a wagon, a well, fencing, and of building the simplest house, might come to \$1,000---a formidable barrier. As for the industrial workers for whom the free land was supposed to provide a "safety valve," they had neither the skills nor the inclination to become farmers. Homesteaders usually came from districts not far removed from frontier
(15) conditions. And despite the intent of the law, speculators often managed to obtain large tracts. They hired people to stake out claims, falsely swear that they had fulfilled the conditions laid down in the law for obtaining legal title, and then deed the land over to their employers.

Furthermore, 160 acres were not enough for raising livestock or for the kind of

(20) commercial agriculture that was developing west of the Mississippi. The national government made a feeble attempt to make larger holdings available to homesteaders by passing the Timber Culture Act of 1873, which permitted individuals to claim an additional 160 acres if they would agree to plant a quarter of it in trees within ten years. This law proved helpful to some farmers in the largely treeless states of Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. Nevertheless, fewer than 25 percent of the 245,000 who
(25) took up land under the Act obtained final title to the property.

41. Which aspect of the Homestead Act of 1862 does the passage mainly discuss?
(A) How it transformed the western United States into a place of small farms
(B) Why it was an improvement over previous attempts at land reform

(C) Why it did not achieve its aim to provide land for small farmers
(D) How it failed in the largely treeless states of Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas

42. An amendment added to the Homestead

Act of 1862 specified that

- (A) five years of residence was required for landownership
- (B) husbands and wives could not file separate claims
- (C) the price of 160 acres of land was \$1,000
- (D) land could not be resold for a profit

43. The word "formidable" in line 12 is closest in meaning to

- (A) obvious
- (B) predictable
- (C) difficult
- (D) manageable

44. It can be inferred that the "safety valve" in line 13 refers to

- (A) a new kind of machinery
- (B) an alternative for urban workers
- (C) an area in a factory
- (D) a procedure designed to protect workers

45. The word "intent" in line 15 is closest in meaning to

- (A) purpose
- (B) power
- (C) effect
- (D) invention

46. According to the passage, why did the government pass the Timber Culture Act of 1873?

- (A) To make larger tracts of land available to small farmers
- (B) To settle Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas
- (C) To encourage land speculation west of the Mississippi
- (D) To increase the variety of trees growing in the western states

47. The word "they" in line 23 refers to

- (A) larger holdings
- (B) individuals
- (C) 160 acres
- (D) trees

48. According to the passage, how many of the farmers who settled land under the Timber Culture

Act of 1873 received final title to the property?

- (A) Fewer than 25%
- (B) More than 160
- (C) 10% per year
- (D) 245,000

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49. The passage mentions all of the following as reasons the Homestead Act of 1862 did not achieve its aims EXCEPT:

- (A) Most landless Americans could not afford the necessary tools and provisions.
- (B) Industrial workers lacked the necessary farming skills.
- (C) The farms were too large for single families to operate successfully.
- (D) Homesteaders usually came from areas relatively close to the frontier.

50. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage about the Timber Culture Act of 1873?

- (A) It especially helped farmers with large holdings of land.
- (B) It was most important to farmers living in states that had plenty of trees.
- (C) The majority of farmers did not benefit significantly from it.
- (D) The majority of farmers did not need the extra 160 acres it provided.