

SECTION 3 — READING COMPREHENSION

This section is designed to measure the ability to read and understand short passages similar in topic and style to those found in North American universities and colleges. Examinees read a variety of short passages on academic subjects. Each passage is followed by a number of questions about the material. To avoid creating an advantage to individuals in any one field of study, sufficient context is provided so that no subject-specific familiarity with the subject matter is required to answer the questions.

Directions: In this section you will read several passages. Each one is followed by a number of questions about it. You are to choose the **one** best answer, A, B, C or D, to each question. Then, on your answer sheet, find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

Answer all questions about the information in a passage on the basis of what is **stated** or **implied** in that passage.

Sample Passage and Questions

	The railroad was not the first institution to impose
	regularity on society, or to draw attention to the
	importance of precise timekeeping. For as long as
Line	merchants have set out their wares at daybreak and
(5)	communal festivities have been celebrated, people have
	been in rough agreement with their neighbors as to the
	time of day. The value of this tradition is today more
	apparent than ever. Were it not for public acceptance of
	a single yardstick of time, social life would be unbearably
(10)	chaotic: the massive daily transfers of goods, services,
	and information would proceed in fits and starts; the
	very fabric of modern society would begin to unravel.

Example 1

What is the main idea of the passage?

Sample Answer

☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

A. In modern society we must make more time for our neighbors.

B. The traditions of society are timeless.

C. An accepted way of measuring time is essential for the smooth functioning of society.

D. Society judges people by the times at which they conduct certain activities.

The main idea of the passage is that societies need to agree about how time is measured in order to function smoothly. Therefore, you should choose answer C.

Example II

In line 7, the phrase "this tradition" refers to

- A. the practice of starting the business day at dawn
- B. friendly relations between neighbors
- C. the railroad's reliance on time schedules
- D. people's agreement on the measurement of time

The phrase "this tradition" refers to the preceding clause, "people have been in rough agreement with their neighbors as to the time of day." Therefore, you should choose answer D.

Practice Passage

	The Alaska pipeline starts at the frozen edge of the
	Arctic Ocean. It stretches southward across the largest
	and northernmost state in the United States, ending at
Line	a remote ice-free seaport village nearly 800 miles from
(5)	where it begins. It is massive in size and extremely
	complicated to operate.
	The steel pipe crosses windswept plains and endless
	miles of delicate tundra that tops the frozen ground. It
	weaves through crooked canyons, climbs sheer
(10)	mountains, plunges over rocky crags, makes its way
	through thick forests, and passes over or under hundreds
	of rivers and streams. The pipe is 4 feet in diameter, and
	up to 2 million barrels (or 84 million gallons) of crude
	oil can be pumped through it daily.
(15)	Resting on H-shaped steel racks called "bents," long
	sections of the pipeline follow a zigzag course high
	above the frozen earth. Other long sections drop out of
	sight beneath spongy or rocky ground and return to the
	surface later on. The pattern of the pipeline's up-and-
(20)	down route is determined by the often harsh demands
	of the arctic and subarctic climate, the tortuous lay of
	the land, and the varied compositions of soil, rock, or
	permafrost (permanently frozen ground). A little more
	than half of the pipeline is elevated above the ground.
(25)	The remainder is buried anywhere from 3 to 12 feet,

	depending largely upon the type of terrain and the
	properties of the soil.
	One of the largest in the world, the pipeline cost
	approximately \$8 billion and is by far the biggest
(30)	and most expensive construction project ever
	undertaken by private industry. In fact, no single
	business could raise that much money, so eight major oil
	companies formed a consortium in order to share
	the costs. Each company controlled oil rights to
(35)	particular shares of land in the oil fields and paid
	into the pipeline-construction fund according to the
	size of its holdings. Today, despite enormous
	problems of climate, supply shortages, equipment
	breakdowns, labor disagreements, treacherous
(40)	terrain, a certain amount of mismanagement, and
	even theft, the Alaska pipeline has been completed
	and is operating.

Practice Questions

1. The passage primarily discusses the pipeline's

- A. operating costs
- B. employees
- C. consumers
- D. construction

2. The word "it" in line 5 refers to

- A. pipeline
- B. ocean
- C. state
- D. village

3. According to the passage, 84 million gallons of oil can travel through the pipeline each

- A. day
- B. week
- C. month
- D. year

- 4. The phrase "Resting on" in line 15 is closest in meaning to**
- A. consisting of
 - B. supported by
 - C. passing under
 - D. protected with
- 5. The author mentions all of the following as important in determining the pipeline's route EXCEPT the**
- A. climate
 - B. lay of the land itself
 - C. local vegetation
 - D. kind of soil and rock
- 6. The word "undertaken" in line 31 is closest in meaning to**
- A. removed
 - B. selected
 - C. transported
 - D. attempted
- 7. How many companies shared the costs of constructing the pipeline?**
- A. three
 - B. four
 - C. eight
 - D. twelve
- 8. The word "particular" in line 35 is closest in meaning to**
- A. peculiar
 - B. specific
 - C. exceptional
 - D. equal
- 9. Which of the following determined what percentage of the construction costs each member of the consortium would pay?**
- A. How much oil field land each company owned
 - B. How long each company had owned land in the oil fields
 - C. How many people worked for each company
 - D. How many oil wells were located on the company's land
- 10. Where in the passage does the author provide a term for an earth covering that always remains frozen?**
- A. Line 4
 - B. Line 15
 - C. Line 23
 - D. Line 37