VSTEP READING PRACTICE
Time: 60 minutes
Number of questions: 40

Directions: In this section of the test, you will read **FOUR** different passages, each followed by **10** questions about it. For questions 1-40, you are to choose the best answer A, B, C, or D, to each question. Answer all questions following a passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in that passage.

You have 60 minutes to answer all the questions.

PASSAGE 1 – Questions 1-10

It was previously believed that dinosaurs were cold-blooded creatures, like reptiles. However, a recent discovery has led researchers to believe **they** may have been warm-blooded. The fossilized remains of a 66-million-year-old dinosaur's heart were discovered and examined by x-ray. The basis for the analysis that they were warm-blooded is the number of chambers in the heart as well as the existence of a single aorta.

Most reptiles have three chambers in their hearts, although some do have four. But **those** that have four chambers, such as the crocodile, have two arteries to mix the oxygen-heavy blood with oxygen-lean blood. Reptiles are cold-blooded, meaning that they are dependent on the environment for body heat. Yet the fossilized heart had four chambers in the heart as well as a single aorta. The single aorta means that the oxygen-rich blood was **completely** separated from the oxygen-poor blood and sent through the aorta to all parts of the body.

Mammals, on the other hand, are warm-blooded, meaning that they **generate** their own body heat and are thus more tolerant of temperature extremes. Birds and mammals, because they are warm blooded, move more swiftly and have greater physical endurance than reptiles.

Scientists believe that the evidence now points to the idea that all dinosaurs were actually warm-blooded. Ironically, the **particular** dinosaur in which the discovery was made was a Tescelosaurus, which translates to "marvelous lizard". A lizard, of course, is a reptile.

1. **The word "they" in the first paragraph refers to _____.**
   A. researchers B. dinosaurs C. reptiles D. discoveries
2. **According to the author, what theory was previously held and now is being questioned?**
   A. That dinosaurs were cold-blooded
   B. That dinosaurs were warm-blooded
   C. That dinosaurs had four-chambered hearts
   D. That dinosaurs were swifter and stronger than reptiles
3. **What is the basis of the researchers' new theory?**
   A. They performed mathematical calculations and determined that dinosaurs must have had four chambered hearts.
   B. They found a fossil of an entire dinosaur and reviewed the arteries and veins flowing from and to the heart.
   C. They viewed a fossil of a dinosaur's heart and discovered that it had two aortas.
   D. They found a fossil of a dinosaur's heart and discovered it had four chambers and one aorta.
4. **The word "those" in the second paragraph refers to _____.**
   A. hearts B. chambers C. reptiles D. arteries
5. **The author implies that reptiles _____.**
   A. are cold-blooded

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B. have four-chambered hearts
C. have one aorta
D. are faster and have more endurance than mammals

6. The word "completely" in paragraph two is closest in meaning to _____.
A. constantly B. unevenly C. partially D. entirely

7. The word "generate" in paragraph three is closest in meaning to _____.
A. use B. lose C. produce D. tolerate

8. The author implies that birds _____.
A. move slower and have less endurance than reptiles
B. move faster and have greater endurance than reptiles
C. move faster and have greater endurance than dinosaurs
D. move slower and have less endurance than dinosaurs

9. What does the author imply by the sentence:
"Ironically, the particular dinosaur in which the discovery was made was a Tescelosaurus, which translates to "marvelous lizard".
A. It is unusual that the creature would have a name with the suffix of a dinosaur.
B. It is surprising that the fossilized heart was discovered.
C. It is paradoxical that the dinosaur's name includes the word lizard, because now scientists believe it is not a lizard.
D. It should have been realized long ago that dinosaurs were warm-blooded.

10. The word "particular" in paragraph four is closest in meaning to _____.
A. special B. specific C. sparse D. spatial

PASSAGE 2 – Questions 11-20

Sometimes people worry about the germs that they come into contact with daily. In fact, most people would be surprised to learn just how many microbes actually **inhabit** a human's body at any given time, in addition to the larger visitors that come around occasionally. Such natural species that regularly come into contact with our bodies include mites, lice, yeast, and fungus, just to name a few. We are, in fact, an ecosystem much like a rain forest is to the natural flora and fauna that call it home.

Lice, or nits, are particularly horrible to even think about. To learn that one's child has been found in school with head lice can cause trauma and **shame**. People think that having lice is a symptom of being unclean, although one can be infected by contact with somebody else who has them. Although lice are not that common in general circles, children can easily acquire them just because of **their** close contact with other children at school or play. Some large cities host high-priced nit pickers who make a living removing head lice from children.

Mites on the human body are much more common, and cleanliness does not eliminate the chance of having them. They are also microscopic, so they are invisible to the naked eye. There are a number of different species of mites, two of which have the human face as their natural habitat, particularly the skin of the forehead. **Others** are very content among human hair, living among the follicles of the eyelashes, eyebrows, and scalp hair.

Not all such inhabitants are harmful. In fact, even the annoying mite lives on dead skin cells, actually doing us a favor by removing them. The dreaded dust mite, for example, blamed for causing allergies, removes dead skin from bed coverings. And harmless bacteria often keep potentially harmful bacteria from being able to survive. So people should not try to eliminate mites from their bodies, although some have tried. Some sufferers of obsessive/compulsive disorder have scrubbed themselves raw trying to eliminate all scavengers from their bodies, only to damage their skin, and all to no avail.

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Certain types of yeast also regularly live on the human body, sometimes causing annoyances. One common type lives on the oil produced in the skin of the face or scalp, causing a condition known as pityriasis versicolor, which is a scaling and discoloration of the skin.

Ailments such as athlete's foot are caused by a fungus that grows in warm, moist conditions. To avoid them or avoid a recurrence, patients are encouraged keep their feet dry and cool, which of course may not be easy, depending on one's work or personal habits. Ringworm is also a fungus acquired by contact with keratin rich soil in many parts of the world.

Besides the tiny inhabitants, we are also regularly harassed by insects that feed off of our bodies, like mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas, which sometimes deposit harmful illnesses at the same time they probe the skin for the blood on which they live. Mosquitoes have been known to cause malaria and yellow fever as well as encephalitis. Fleas have transmitted bubonic plague, and ticks have caused lime disease.

Just like a river, an ocean, a rain forest, or any other ecological wonder in which numerous species survive, feeding upon other inhabitants, our bodies are natural providers of nutrition and life for various small and microscopic species.

11. The word "inhabit" in the second sentence is closest in meaning to _____.

A. escape B. feed on C. live in D. abuse

12. The author's main point is _____.

A. to describe how the human body is host to a number of different harmful and harmless inhabitants and visitors.
B. to describe the dangerous ailments that can result from insects and microbes.
C. to warn people about the dangers of being attacked by small life forms.
D. to describe how to rid oneself of bacteria and insects.

13. The author infers that lice and mites are different in that _____.

A. lice are not harmful, but mites are.
B. mites live only on the skin, and lice live only in the hair.
C. mites are treatable, and lice are not.
D. mites are totally unavoidable, while lice may be avoidable.

14. The word "shame" in the second paragraph is closest in meaning to _____.

A. anger B. embarrassment C. disbelief D. contentment

15. The word "their" in the second paragraph refers to _____.

A. lice's B. schools' C. circles' D. children's

16. The word "Others" in the third paragraph refers to _____.

A. foreheads B. follicles C. mite species D. habitats

17. The author indicates that lice are also known as _____.

A. yeast B. nits C. microbes D. ticks

18. The author indicates that a nitpicker is _____.

A. somebody who removes lice professionally
B. somebody who is afraid of mites
C. a doctor who treats patients for infection
D. somebody who has been bitten by a tick

19. The author infers that _____.

A. being host to insects and microbes is unwise
B. one can avoid infestation by microbes
C. insects are the cause of microbial infestation
D. being host to insects and microbes is inevitable

20. What does the author mean by the statement "Not all such inhabitants are harmful" at the beginning of the fourth paragraph?

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A. Mites are the same as yeast.
B. Some mites eat other harmful mites.
C. Mites actually are beneficial because they remove dead skin particles from the body and habitat.
D. The diseases mites carry do not pass to humans.

PASSAGE 3 – Questions 21-30

The Asian migration hypothesis is today supported by most of the scientific evidence. The first "hard" data linking American Indians with Asians appeared in the 1980s with the finding that Indians and northeast Asians share a common and **distinctive** pattern in the arrangement of the teeth. But perhaps the most compelling support for the hypothesis comes from genetic research. Studies comparing the DNA variation of populations around the world consistently demonstrate the close genetic relationship of the two populations, and recently geneticists studying a virus sequestered in the kidneys of all humans found that the strain of virus carried by Navajos and Japanese is nearly identical, while that carried by Europeans and Africans is quite different.

The migration could have begun over a land bridge connecting the continents. During the last Ice Age 70.000 to 10.000 years ago, huge glaciers locked up massive volumes of water and sea levels were as much as 300 feet lower than today. Asia and North America were joined by a huge Subcontinent of ice-free, treeless grassland. 750 miles wide. Geologists have named this area Beringia, from the Bering Straits. Summers there were warm, winters were cold, dry and almost snow-free. This was a perfect environment for large mammals-mammoth and mastodon, bison, horse, reindeer, camel, and saiga (a goatlike antelope). Small bands of Stone Age hunter-gatherers were attracted by these animal populations. which provided them not only with food but with hides for clothing and shelter, dung for fuel. and bones for tools and weapons. **Accompanied by** a husky-like species of dog, hunting bands gradually moved as far east as the Yukon River basin of northern Canada, where field excavations have uncovered the fossilized jawbones of several dogs and bone tools estimated to be about 27,000 years old.

Other evidence suggests that the migration from Asia began about 30,000 years ago-around the same time that Japan and Scandinavia were being settled. This evidence is based on blood type. The vast majority of modern Native Americans have type 0 blood and a few have type A, but almost none have type B. Because modern Asian populations include all three blood types, however, the migrations must have begun before the evolution of type B, **which** geneticists believe occurred about 30,000 years ago.

By 25,000 years ago human communities were established in western Beringia, which is present-day Alaska. **[A]** But access to the south was blocked by a huge glacial sheet covering much of what Is today Canada. How did the hunters get over those 2,000 miles of deep ice? The argument is that the climate began to warm with the passing of the Ice Age, and about 13,000 B.C.E. glacial melting created an ice-free corridor along the eastern front range of the Rocky Mountains. **[B]** Soon hunters of big game had reached the Great Plains.

In the past several years, however, new archaeological finds along the Pacific coast of North and South America have thrown this theory into question. **[C]** The most spectacular find, at Monte Verde in southern Chile, produced striking evidence of tool making, house building, rock painting, and human foot prints conservatively dated at 12,500 years ago, long before the highway had been cleared of ice. **[D]** Many archaeologists now believe that migrants moved south in boats along a coastal route rather than overland. These people were probably gatherers and fishers rather than hunters of big game.

There were two Later migrations into North America. About 5000 B.C.E. the Athapascan or Na-Dene people began to settle the forests in the northwestern area of the continent. Eventually Athapascan speakers, the ancestors of the Navajos and Apaches, migrated across the Great Plains to the Southwest. **The final migration began about 3000 B.C.E after Beringnia had been submerged,**

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when a maritime hunting people crossed the Bering Straits in small boats. The Inuits (also known as the Eskimos) colonized the polar coasts of the Arctic, the Yupiks the coast of southwestern Alaska, and the Aleuts the Aleutian Islands.

While scientists debate the timing and mapping of these migrations, many Indian people hold to oral traditions that include a long journey from a distant place of origin to a new homeland.

21. The word "distinctive" in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

A. New B. simple C. particular D. different

22. According to paragraph 2, why did Stone Age tribes begin to migrate Into Beringia?

A. To hunt for animals in the area
B. To Intermarry with tribes living there
C. To trade with tribes that made tools
D. To capture domesticated dogs

23. The phrase "Accompanied by" in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

A. found with B. detoured with C. threatened by D. joined by

24. The word "which" in the passage refers to _____.

A. evolution B. migrations C. geneticists D. populations

25. Why does the author mention blood types in paragraph 3?

A. Blood types offered proof that the migration had come from Scandinavia.
B. Comparisons of blood types in Asia and North America established the date of migration.
C. The presence of type B in Native Americans was evidence of the migration.
D. The blood typing was similar to data from both Japan and Scandinavia.

26. How did groups migrate Into the Great Plains?

A. By following a mountain trail
B. By walking on a corridor covered with Ice
C. By using the path that big game had made
D. By detouring around a huge ice sheet

27. The word "Eventually" in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

A. in this way
B. nevertheless
C. without doubt
D. in the end

28. Which of the sentences below best expresses the information in the highlighted statement in the passage?
The other choices change the meaning or leave out important information.

A. Beringia sank after the last people had crossed the straits in their boats about 3000 B.C.E.
B. About 3000 B.C.E., the final migration of people in small boats across Beringia had ended.
C. Beringia was under water when the last people crossed the straits in boats about 3000 B.C.E.
D. About 3000 B.C.E., Beringia was flooded, preventing the last people from migrating in small boats.

29. According to paragraph 6, all of the following are true about the later migrations EXCEPT _____.

A. The Athapascans traveled into the Southwest United States.
B. The Eskimos established homes in the Arctic polar region.
C. The Yupiks established settlements on the Great Plains.
D. The Aleuts migrated in small boats to settle coastal islands.

30. Look at the four squares [_] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the passage.

Newly excavated early human sites in Washington State, California, and Peru have been radiocarbon dated to be 11,000 to 12,000 years old.

Where would the sentence best fit?

A. **[A]** B. **[B]** C. **[C]** D. **[D]**

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PASSAGE 4 – Questions 31-40

One of the **primary** ways of approaching the Greek theatre is through archeology, the systematic study of material remains such as architecture, inscriptions, sculpture, vase painting, and other forms of decorative art. **[A]** Serious on-site excavations began in Greece around 1870, but W. Dorpfeld did not begin the first extensive study of the Theatre of Dionysus until 1886. **[B]** Since that time, more than 167 other Greek theatres have been identified and many of them have been excavated. **[C]** Nevertheless, they still do not permit us to describe the precise appearance of the skene (illustrations printed in books are conjectural reconstructions), since many pieces are irrevocably lost because the buildings in later periods became sources of stone for other projects and what remains is usually broken and scattered. **[D]** That most of the buildings were remodeled many times has created great problems for those seeking to date both the parts and the successive versions. Despite these drawbacks, archeology provides the most concrete evidence we have about the theatre structures of ancient Greece. But, if they have told us much, archeologists have not completed their work, and many sites have scarcely been touched.

Perhaps the most controversial use of archeological evidence in theatre history is vase paintings, thousands of which have survived from ancient Greece. (Most of those used by theatre scholars are reproduced in Margarete Bieber's The History of the Greek and Roman Theatre.) Depicting scenes from mythology and daily life, the vases are the most graphic pictorial evidence we have. But they are also easy to misinterpret. Some scholars have considered any vase that depicts a subject treated in a surviving drama or any scene showing masks, flute players, or ceremonials to be valid evidence of theatrical practice. This is a highly questionable assumption, since the Greeks made widespread use of masks, dances, and music outside the theatre and since the myths on which dramatists drew were known to everyone, including vase painters, who might well depict the same subjects as dramatists without being indebted to them. Those vases showing scenes unquestionably theatrical are few in number.

Written evidence about ancient Greek theatre is often treated as less reliable than archeological evidence because most written accounts are separated so far in time from the events they describe and because they provide no information about their own sources. Of the written evidence, the surviving plays are usually treated as the most reliable. But the oldest surviving manuscripts of Greek plays date from around the tenth century, C.E., some 1500 years after they were first performed. Since printing did not exist during this time span, copies of plays had to be made by hand, and therefore the possibility of textual errors creeping in was magnified. Nevertheless, the scripts offer us our readiest access to the cultural and theatrical conditions out of which they came. But these scripts, like other kinds of evidence, are subject to varying interpretations. Certainly, performances embodied a male perspective, for example, since the plays were written, selected, staged, and acted by men. Yet the existing plays feature numerous choruses of women and many feature strong female characters. Because these characters often seem victims of their own powerlessness and appear to be governed, especially in the comedies, by sexual desire, some critics have seen these plays as rationalizations by the male-dominated culture for keeping women segregated and cloistered. Other critics, however, have seen in these same plays an attempt by male authors to force their male audiences to examine and call into question this segregation and cloistering of Athenian women.

By far the majority of written references to Greek theatre date from several hundred years after the events they report. The writers seldom mention their sources of evidence, and thus we do not know what credence to give **them**. In the absence of material nearer in time to the events, however, historians have used the accounts and have been grateful to have them. Overall, historical treatment of the Greek theatre is something like assembling a jigsaw puzzle from which many pieces are missing: historians arrange what they have and imagine (with the aid of the remaining evidence and logic) what has been lost. As a result, though the broad outlines of Greek theatre history are reasonably clear, many of the details remain open to doubt.

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31. According to paragraph 1, why is it impossible to identify the time period for theatres in Greece?

A. It Is confusing because stones from early sites were used to build later structures.
B. There are too few sites that have been excavated and very little data collected about them.
C. The archeologists from earlier periods were not careful, and many artifacts were broken.
D. Because it is very difficult to date the concrete that was used in construction during early periods.

32. What can be inferred from paragraph 1 about the skene in theatre history?

A. Drawings in books are the only accurate visual records.
B. Archaeologists have excavated a large number of them.
C. It was not identified or studied until the early 1800s.
D. Not enough evidence is available to make a precise model.

33. The word "primary" in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

A. important B. reliable C. unusual D. accepted

34. In paragraph 2, the author explains that all vases with paintings of masks or musicians may not be evidence of theatrical subjects by

A. identifying some of the vases as reproductions that were painted years after the originals
B. casting doubt on the qualifications of the scholars who produced the vases as evidence
C. arguing that the subjects could have been used by artists without reference to a drama
D. pointing out that there are very few vases that have survived from the time of early dramas

35. In paragraph 3, the author states that female characters in Greek theatre _____.

A. had no featured parts in plays
B. frequently played the part of victims
C. were mostly ignored by critics
D. did not participate in the chorus

36. According to paragraph 3, scripts of plays may not be accurate because _____.

A. copies by hand may contain many errors
B. the sources cited are not well known
C. they are written in very old language
D. the printing is difficult to read

37. The word "them" in the passage refers to _____.

A. events B. writers C. sources D. references

38. Why does the author mention a jigsaw puzzle in paragraph 4?

A. To compare the written references for plays to the paintings on vases
B. To justify using accounts and records that historians have located
C. To introduce the topic for the next reading passage in the textbook
D. To demonstrate the difficulty in drawing conclusions from partial evidence

39. Which of the following statements most accurately reflects the author's opinion about vase paintings?

A. Evidence from written documents is older than evidence from vase paintings.
B. There is disagreement among scholars regarding vase paintings.
C. The sources for vase paintings are clear because of the images on them.
D. The details in vase paintings are not obvious because of their age.

40. Look at the four squares [_] that indicate where the following sentence can be added to the passage.

These excavations have revealed much that was previously unknown, especially about the dimensions and layout of theatres.

Where would the sentence best fit?

A. **[A]** B. **[B]** C. **[C]** D. **[D]**

THIS IS THE END OF THE READING PAPER. NOW PLEASE

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