READING COMPREHENSION TEST

READ THE FOLLOWING, SELECT THE CORRECT ANSWER AND MARK IT ON THE ANSWER SHEET.

PASSAGE 1

Singapore's Success: A Model of Discipline and Economic Growth

Singapore is one of Asia's most fascinating countries. It is remarkable that such a small nation has managed to develop such a powerful and stable economy. Many experts attribute Singapore's economic success to the leadership of Lee Kuan Yew, the country's first Prime Minister. His policies and vision have influenced Singaporean politics for decades, shaping the country into a global financial hub.

Singapore's model of success is unique and unlike that of any other country. It is based on a combination of two key principles: the promotion of business and the enforcement of strict laws. The government encourages entrepreneurship and foreign investment, making Singapore one of the most business-friendly environments in the world. At the same time, strict laws maintain order and discipline in society.

To follow this model, Singaporeans have learned to live and work together in a highly structured and organized way. There are laws that promote cooperation and respect between different ethnic and religious groups, and these laws are strictly enforced. The government believes that social harmony is essential for progress and economic stability.

Some of Singapore's laws might seem unusual to visitors. For example, spitting, selling chewing gum, and littering are strictly prohibited, with fines for those who break the rules. While some foreigners may find these regulations extreme, many Singaporeans have fully accepted them as part of daily life. They see these laws as necessary for keeping the country clean, efficient, and safe.

Most Singaporeans believe that strict regulations help maintain an orderly and secure society. They are generally willing to follow the rules if they contribute to a better quality of life. However, some Singaporeans, as well as people from other countries, argue that such strict control may limit personal freedoms. The debate continues, but there is no doubt that Singapore's unique approach has played a major role in its rapid development and international success.

Questions (1–10)

1. What is one of the main reasons for Singapore's economic success?
   a) Its large population
   b) Its strict environmental policies

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c) The leadership of Lee Kuan Yew
d) The discovery of natural resources

2. What can be inferred about how Singaporeans feel about their laws?
   a) Most believe the laws help maintain order and security.
   b) Most think the laws are unnecessary and should be abolished.
   c) Few people follow the laws because they are too strict.
   d) People often break the laws to express personal freedom.

3. What does the word "remarkable" in the second sentence most likely mean?
   a) Ordinary
   b) Surprising
   c) Complicated
   d) Difficult

4. How does Singapore encourage economic growth?
   a) By enforcing strict trade barriers
   b) By promoting entrepreneurship and foreign investment
   c) By limiting international business activity
   d) By focusing only on its natural resources

5. Why might some foreigners find Singapore's laws unusual?
   a) They are not allowed to visit Singapore.
   b) They do not understand the English language.
   c) They do not agree with economic development.
   d) They come from countries with fewer restrictions on behavior.

6. What is one way the Singaporean government maintains social harmony?
   a) By encouraging competition between ethnic groups
   b) By allowing complete freedom of speech
   c) By enforcing laws that promote cooperation
   d) By discouraging business activities

7. What is a possible criticism of Singapore's strict legal system?
   a) It discourages tourism.
   b) It may limit personal freedoms.
   c) It leads to economic instability.
   d) It prevents businesses from succeeding.

8. What is the main reason Singapore enforces strict laws on public behavior?
   a) To create an orderly and pleasant society
   b) To reduce its population
   c) To make it difficult for foreigners to live there
   d) To eliminate businesses

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9. Which of the following actions is illegal in Singapore?
   a) Buying a house
   b) Eating in public
   c) Selling chewing gum
   d) Owning a pet

10. What does the phrase "the debate continues" in the last paragraph suggest?
   a) Everyone agrees with Singapore's laws.
   b) The government will ban more activities soon.
   c) Singapore's laws have been removed.
   d) People still discuss whether the laws are beneficial.

PASSAGE 2

Galaxies are the major building blocks of the universe. A galaxy is a giant family of many millions of stars, and it is held together by its own gravitational field. Most of the material universe is organized into galaxies of stars together with gas and dust.

There are three main types of galaxy: spiral, elliptical, and irregular. The Milky Way is a spiral galaxy, a flattish disc of stars with two spiral arms emerging from its central nucleus. About one-quarter of all galaxies have this shape. Spiral galaxies are well supplied with the interstellar gas in which new stars form; as the rotating spiral pattern sweeps around the galaxy it compresses gas and dust, triggering the formation of bright young stars in its arms. The elliptical galaxies have a symmetrical elliptical or spheroidal shape with no obvious structure. Most of their member stars are very old and since ellipticals are devoid of interstellar gas, no new stars are forming in them. The biggest and brightest galaxies in the universe are ellipticals with masses of about 10^{13} times that of the Sun; these giants may frequently be sources of strong radio emission, in which case they are called radio galaxies. About two-thirds of all galaxies are elliptical. Irregular galaxies comprise about one-tenth of all galaxies and they come in many subclasses.

Measurement in space is quite different from measurement on Earth. Some terrestrial distances can be expressed as intervals of time; the time to fly from one continent to another or the time it takes to drive to work, for example. By comparison with these familiar yardsticks, the distances to the galaxies are incomprehensibly large, but they too are made more manageable by using a time calibration, in this case the distance that light travels in one year. On such a scale the nearest giant spiral galaxy, the Andromeda galaxy, is two million light years away. The most distant luminous objects seen by telescopes are probably ten thousand million light years away. Their light was already halfway here before the Earth even formed. The light from the nearby Virgo galaxy set out when reptiles still dominated the animal world.

Questions (11–20)

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11. The word “major” in line 1 is closest in meaning to
    a) intense
    b) principal
    c) huge
    d) unique

12. What does the second paragraph mainly discuss?
    a) The Milky Way
    b) Major categories of galaxies
    c) How elliptical galaxies are formed
    d) Differences between irregular and spiral galaxies

13. The word “which” in line 9 refers to
    a) dust
    b) gas
    c) pattern
    d) galaxy

14. According to the passage, new stars are formed in spiral galaxies due to
    a) an explosion of gas
    b) the compression of gas and dust
    c) the combining of old stars
    d) strong radio emissions

15. The word “symmetrical” in line 12 is closest in meaning to
    a) proportionally balanced
    b) commonly seen
    c) typically large
    d) steadily growing

16. According to the passage, which of the following is NOT true of elliptical galaxies?
    a) They are the largest galaxies.
    b) They mostly contain old stars.
    c) They contain a high amount of interstellar gas.
    d) They have a spherical shape.

17. Which of the following characteristics of radio galaxies is mentioned in the passage?
    a) They are a type of elliptical galaxy.
    b) They are usually too small to be seen with a telescope.
    c) They are closely related to irregular galaxies.
    d) They are not as bright as spiral galaxies.

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18. What percentage of galaxies are irregular?
    a) 10%
    b) 25%
    c) 50%
    d) 75%

19. Why does the author mention the Virgo galaxy and the Andromeda galaxy in the third paragraph?
    a) To describe the effect that distance has on visibility
    b) To compare the ages of two relatively young galaxies
    c) To emphasize the vast distances of the galaxies from Earth
    d) To explain why certain galaxies cannot be seen by a telescope

20. The word "dominated" in line 34 is closest in meaning to
    a) threatened
    b) replaced
    c) were developing in
    d) were prevalent in

PASSAGE 3

This question has often been posed: Why were the Wright brothers able to succeed in an effort at which so many others had failed? Many explanations have been mentioned, but three reasons are most often cited. First, they were a team. Both men worked congenially and cooperatively. Read the same books, located and shared information, talked incessantly about the possibility of manned flight, and served as a consistent source of inspiration and encouragement to each other. Quite simply, two geniuses are better than one.

Both were glider pilots. Unlike some other engineers who experimented with the theories of flight, Orville and Wilbur Wright experienced the practical aspects of aerodynamics by building and flying kites and gliders. Each craft they built was slightly superior to the last, as they incorporated knowledge that they had gained from previous failures. They had realized from their experiments that the most serious challenge in manned flight would be stabilizing and maneuvering the aircraft once it was airborne. While others concentrated their efforts on the problem of achieving lift for take-off, the Wright brothers were focusing on developing a three-axis control for guiding their aircraft. By the time that the brothers started to build an airplane, they were already among the world's best glider pilots; they knew the problems of riding the air first hand.

In addition, the Wright brothers had designed more effective wings for the airplane than had been previously engineered. Using a wind tunnel, they tested more than two hundred different wind designs, recording the effects of slight variations in shape on

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the pressure of air on the wings. The data from these experiments allowed the Wright brothers to construct a superior wing for their aircraft.

In spite of these advantages, however, the Wright brothers might not have succeeded had they not been born at precisely the opportune moment in history. Attempts to achieve manned flight in the early nineteenth century were doomed because the steam engines that powered the aircrafts were too heavy in proportion to the power that they produced. But by the end of the nineteenth century, when the brothers were experimenting with engineering options, a relatively light internal combustion engine had already been invented, and they were able to bring the ratio of weight to power within acceptable limits of flight.

Questions (21–30)

21. Which of the following is the main topic of the passage?
    a) The reasons why the Wright brothers succeeded in manned flight
    b) The advantage of the internal combustion engine in the Wright brothers' experiments
    c) The Wright brothers' experiences as pilots
    d) The importance of gliders to the development of airplanes

22. The word "incessantly" in paragraph 1 could be best replaced by
    a) confidently
    b) intelligently
    c) constantly
    d) optimistically

23. What kind of experience did the Wright brothers have that distinguished them from their competitors?
    a) They were geniuses.
    b) They were glider pilots.
    c) They were engineers.
    d) They were inventors.

24. Why does the author suggest that the experiments with the wind tunnel were important?
    a) Because they allowed the Wright brothers to decrease the weight of their airplane
    b) Because they resulted in a three-axis control for their airplane
    c) Because they were important in the refinement of the wings for their airplane
    d) Because they used the data to improve the engine

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25. The word “they” in paragraph 4 refers to
    a) the Wright brothers
    b) aircraft
    c) attempts
    d) engines

26. In paragraph 4, the author suggests that the steam engines used in earlier aircraft had failed because
    a) They were too small to power a large plane.
    b) They were too light to generate enough power.
    c) They did not have internal combustion power.
    d) They did not have enough power to lift their own weight.

27. The passage discusses all of the following reasons that the Wright brothers succeeded EXCEPT
    a) They worked very well together.
    b) They both had practical experience building other aircraft.
    c) They made extensive tests before completing the design.
    d) They were well-funded.

28. What does the passage suggest about the Wright brothers’ work with wings?
    a) They improved wing design by testing many variations.
    b) They followed earlier designs without making changes.
    c) They built wings based on their experience as glider pilots alone.
    d) Their wings were identical to those used in early steam-powered planes.

29. Which of the following best expresses the essential information in this sentence?
    “While others concentrated their efforts on the problem of achieving lift for takeoff, the Wright brothers were focusing on developing a three-axis control for guiding their aircraft.”
    a) The Wright brothers focused on controlling the aircraft while others worked on making it lift off.
    b) The Wright brothers invented a way to improve lift-off.
    c) The Wright brothers’ main goal was to create a more powerful engine.
    d) The Wright brothers ignored the problem of takeoff completely.

30. The word “doomed” in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to
    a) taking a risk
    b) difficult to achieve
    c) destined to fail
    d) not well-planned

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