# READING PRACTICE

**1** Given that the Mediterranean Sea is in an extremely dry area of the world and that it receives the water from the Atlantic Ocean via the narrow Strait of Gibraltar, it is actually very vulnerable to evaporation. In fact, archeological evidence shows that global cooling about five million years ago caused parts of the Atlantic Ocean to freeze, resulting in the sea level dropping about 70 metres. This stemmed the flow of water from the Atlantic into the Strait of Gibraltar, thereby greatly reducing the amount of water the Mediterranean received. At the same time, the movement of tectonic plates resulted in Europe and Africa drawing closer to one another. This raised the land high enough to further block the Mediterranean from the Atlantic Ocean. It was not long before the warm water remaining in the Mediterranean Sea began to vanish, leaving behind nothing but salt.

*Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.*

1 What is said about the Strait of Gibraltar?

- **A** It has a maximum depth of about 70 metres.
- **B** It froze over during an era of global cooling.
- **C** It evaporated due to tectonic plate movement.
- **D** It conveys water from the ocean into the sea.

2 What diminished the amount of water the Mediterranean Sea received from the Atlantic Ocean?

- **A** A period of dry weather
- **B** A sea level reduction
- **C** A blockage of ice
- **D** A rise in temperature

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**Mediterranean Sea** phr. biển Địa Trung Hải **via** prep. thông qua **Strait of Gibraltar** phr. eo biển Gibraltar **vulnerable** adj. dễ bị nguy hiểm, tổn thương **evaporation** n. sự bay hơi, sự làm khô **archeological** adj. (thuộc) khảo cổ học **stem** v. ngăn, chặn **tectonic plate** phr. kiến tạo mạng **vanish** v. biến mất

LIVEWORKSHEETS

# READING PRACTICE



**2** In Ancient Greece, the prevailing religious traditions centred around Dionysus, a saviour god who was associated with the sowing and reaping of corn, the production of grapes, and intoxication. Patrons held seasonal festivals in his honour, the most important of which was the autumn wine tasting celebration, known as the Dionysus Festival, and this included the recitation of choric poems or hymns. Revellers chanted odes, called dithyrambs, to their illustrious god while a priest would respond in a symbolic interaction between humans and the spirits. Due to its popularity within the higher and lower social classes, by the 6th century B.C., the Corinthian king established a dithyramb competition and invited a select group of poets to compose and perform these pseudo-dramas. For the first time, the plays were freed from their religious roots and transformed into full-fledged works of art. The changing theatre environment altered attitudes across Greece and thus triggered a newfound secular interest that would bring about a refinement of the art form.

*Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.*

3 According to the writer, the Ancient Greek wine tasting festival held each fall involved

- **A** the performance of poetry.
- **B** the production of wine.
- **C** the harvesting of corn.
- **D** the visiting of temples.

4 The movement of plays from the religious world to the general public caused

- **A** a protest against organised religions across Europe.
- **B** the collapse of the ancient Greek civilisation.
- **C** an increase in the general public's curiosity about art.
- **D** some actors to become critical of social classes.

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**intoxication** n. sự say mê, sự trúng độc **patron** n. thần bảo hộ **tasting** n. cuộc thi nếm **choric** adj. (thuộc) hợp xướng **hymn** n. thánh ca **reveller** n. người say rượu, người tham dự cuộc liên hoan chè chén **ode** n. thơ ca tụng **dithyramb** n. thơ tán tụng **illustrious** adj. lừng lẫy, rạng rỡ **priest** n. linh mục **Corinthian** adj. thuộc thành Corin **pseudo** adj. giả, không thật **full-fledged** adj. phát triển toàn vẹn, đủ lông đủ cánh **secular** adj. thế tục, trần tục **refinement** n. sự tinh chế, tinh xảo

LIVEWORKSHEETS

# READING PRACTICE

3 With an estimated 440 million consumers worldwide now spending approximately $1.2 trillion a year on top-of-the-line products like watches, jewellery, clothing, handbags, and cars, the luxury goods retail market is steadily expanding. Yet, as a large portion of these consumers is not among the very wealthy, it has become clear that people are spending beyond their means. What then, is driving them to do so?

According to professors Niro Sivanathan and Nathan Petit, luxury items are indicators of success and thereby boost self-confidence. They have even conducted a survey that substantiates this idea. Participants in their study who had recently ended a relationship or missed out on a promotion, for instance, demonstrated much more of a desire to shop for high-end items as a means of consolation than those who were generally happy. The participants thought that purchasing luxury items would help them forget their failures and make them feel more successful. Retail therapy notwithstanding, many consumers simply believe that 'you get what you pay for' - that the most expensive items are of the highest quality and last the longest. For this reason, they are in high demand among shoppers. They feel that splurging on an item rather than buying a reasonably priced generic brand will result in significant savings on repair and replacement costs in the long run.

*Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.*

5 The main topic discussed in the text is

- **A** worldwide production of luxury goods.
- **B** the growth of a wealthy consumer class.
- **C** factors influencing reckless spending.
- **D** the role psychology plays in retail marketing.

6 Buying a luxury item instead of a similar, cheaper one can

- **A** boost the economy.
- **B** lead to people buying multiple luxury items.
- **C** save money that would have been spent fixing it.
- **D** increase demand for other affordable items.

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**top-of-the-line** adj. sản phẩm cao cấp hàng đầu **luxury goods** phr. xa xỉ phẩm **retail market** phr. thị trường bán lẻ **indicator** n. thước đo, dấu hiệu **substantiate** v. chứng minh **high-end** adj. cao cấp **consolation** n. sự an ủi **retail therapy** phr. liệu pháp mua sắm **splurge** v. vung tiền **generic** adj. chung chung, không có thương hiệu

LIVEWORKSHEETS

# READING PRACTICE



**4** The history of mining in Nevada, nicknamed the 'Silver State', is so intertwined with the history of the state that, at certain points, the two cannot be separated. In fact, were it not for mining, Nevada would probably not have achieved statehood until decades later than it did. As it was, the Silver State bought its way into the Union with silver mined in the famous Comstock Lode. In the mid-1800s, the area that would become Nevada was mostly a highway for those heading to search for gold in California. In 1859, however, the discovery of massive silver deposits quickly made Virginia City the most famous of all western mining camps. The rapid influx of prospectors and settlers resulted in the organisation of the Nevada Territory just two years later.

In the east, the American Civil War was brewing. Lincoln, realising the area's great mineral wealth could help the Union, and needing another state to support his proposed anti-slavery amendment to the Constitution, encouraged the territory to seek admission to the Union. Even though Nevada boasted only about one-fifth of the 127,381 people required for statehood, with the motto 'Battle Born', it was admitted as the 36th state in 1864. Since then, mining's impact on Nevada's economy has remained immense, both in the influx of money it has brought in boom times and in the noticeable economic downturns during periods of low demand.

*Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.*

7 The writer mentions the Comstock Lode in order to illustrate

- **A** the reason that miners began moving westward.
- **B** a unique resource found in the region.
- **C** one of the sources the state used for building infrastructure.
- **D** the importance of mineral wealth in Nevada's statehood.

8 Lincoln encouraged the Nevada territory to join the union in order to

- **A** gain additional support for his anti-slavery proposals.
- **B** raise more tax revenues for the country.
- **C** create a direct connection to the California gold mines.
- **D** increase the population of the state.

9 According to the writer, since 1864 mining in Nevada

- **A** has failed to generate money during economic downturns.
- **B** has become the leading employment sector in the state.
- **C** has had a diminished role in the state's economy.
- **D** has continued to have a significant economic influence.

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**intertwine** v. quấn vào nhau, liên quan đến nhau **statehood** n. cương vị một nước **deposit** n. lớp trầm tích, lớp lắng đọng **influx** n. sự đổ bộ, tràn vào **prospector** n. người thăm dò **territory** n. lãnh thổ, khu vực **brew** v. chuẩn bị nổ ra **mineral** n. khoáng chất **amendment** n. sự sửa đổi **the Constitution** phr. hiến pháp **admission** n. sự kết nạp **immense** adj. rộng lớn **noticeable** adj. đáng chú ý **downturn** n. suy thoái

LIVEWORKSHEETS

# READING PRACTICE

**5** Some pet owners claim that, before an earthquake, their pets become restless and agitated, whine for no reason, or simply try to run away. This has led many people to believe that animals have an additional sense that warns them of these upcoming events. This, however, is not a new idea. In fact, the belief that animals can predict earthquakes appears as far back as the 4th century B.C., in the historical records of the Greek city of Helike. These records state that animals abandoned the city all at once just days before a major earthquake destroyed it, causing people to believe that the animals had been forewarned of the event. Given the existence of these types of anecdotal stories, one might begin to wonder if animals could possibly have a sixth sense that helps them predict seismic activity. Well, if we're to believe the U.S. Geological Survey - the agency charged with studying Earth - the answer is no. According to their studies, no credible evidence has been discovered to show that animals are able to predict earthquakes at all. But if this is correct, what explains the regular reports of strange behaviour before earthquakes? One theory is that animals simply have more highly effective senses than humans. With their superior hearing, dogs and cats - in addition to other animals - can perceive the infrasonic sounds produced by tectonic movement over long distances. However, without understanding what the sound is, they simply want to flee from it, causing them to act much differently than they normally would.

*Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.*

**10** Why does the writer mention the ancient Greek town of Helike?

- **A** To show how far back the theory stretches
- **B** To suggest a flaw in a historical record
- **C** To provide an example of a documented disaster
- **D** To explain the source of a common idea

**11** Why are studies that have been conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey mentioned?

- **A** The writer wants to show that seismic activity is purely random.
- **B** The writer wants to provide more information about animal senses.
- **C** The writer wants to disprove a commonly held belief about animals.
- **D** The writer wants to suggest that an ancient story was accurate.

**12** What does the writer suggest about the animals and their response to infrasonic sound?

- **A** They can detect it only from short distances.
- **B** They do not hear it until after an earthquake begins.
- **C** They want to run away despite not knowing what it is.
- **D** They alert other animals about the pending danger.

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**restless** adj. bồn chồn, không yên **agitated** adj. bất an **whine** v. rên rỉ **abandon** v. rời đi, rời bỏ **forewarn** v. cảnh báo trước **anecdotal** adj. giai thoại **seismic** adj. (thuộc) địa chấn **U.S. Geological Survey** phr. viện nghiên cứu địa lý Mĩ **superior** adj. cao cấp, vượt trội **infrasonic** adj. hạ âm (<20 Hz) **tectonic** adj. (địa lý) (thuộc) cấu tạo

LIVEWORKSHEETS

# READING PRACTICE



**6** We often take air travel for granted today, but it is actually the result of centuries of experimentation. Since our earliest days, people have attempted to fly like the birds that they observed in the sky. These rudimentary attempts at flight included everything from jumping off ledges with simple feather-covered wings to elaborate flying machines like the one designed by Leonardo da Vinci. Unfortunately, none of these were ever able to overcome the inherent problem with flight - getting and keeping an object that is heavier than air aloft. This would remain the case until the mid-1800s, when George Cayley ascertained the fundamentals of aerodynamics. Using his newfound knowledge, Cayley was able to produce a rudderless glider that could lift a human 100 feet into the air. Cayley's work brought about even greater experimentation in aerodynamics. Amongst those whose interest was piqued were Orville and Wilbur Wright. These American brothers used a rudimentary air tunnel to perform tests on model wings. Using this device and Cayley's principles, the Wright brothers observed how winds affected planes and developed accurate mathematical formulas for flight. Eventually, they devised a way to change the wing configuration to control the plane's balance, in much the way that ailerons do today, and a rudder system, which allowed for lateral steering of the vessel. Their main problem was then figuring out a way to power the plane. Although steam engines of the day could've pushed the plane fast enough to provide lift, they were incredibly heavy. Luckily, the internal combustion engines developed for the burgeoning automobile industry were both powerful and light enough for the task. The Wright brothers attached one of these engines to a propeller on their aircraft and made the first controlled, self-propelled flight at Kittyhawk in 1903. This type of engine configuration became the standard in the aviation industry until the late 1930s, when the jet engine was developed.

*Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.*

13 Leonardo da Vinci's aircraft design was very complex, but

- **A** it relied too heavily on the use of feathers.
- **B** it weighed too much to become or remain airborne.
- **C** it suffered several problems during its first flight.
- **D** it did not have enough space to carry cargo.

14 The writer mentions that George Cayley

- **A** invented the first powered aircraft.
- **B** was inspired by da Vinci's work.
- **C** worked with pilots like the Wright brothers.
- **D** discovered the basics of aerodynamics.

15 Experiments by the Wright brothers allowed them to

- **A** perform the calculations necessary for flight.
- **B** develop an engine that could power aircraft and automobiles.
- **C** invalidate some of the theories presented by Cayley.
- **D** reduce the weight of steam-powered motors.

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**rudimentary** adj. thô sơ **ascertain** v. xác định chắc chắn **rudderless** adj. không có bánh lái **configuration** n. hình thể **aileron** n. cánh liệng **lateral** adj. ở bên, hướng bên **steering** n. thiết bị lái **lift** n. sức nâng (áp lực tác động vào phía dưới khi máy bay đang bay) **internal combustion engine** phr. động cơ đốt trong **burgeon** v. phát triển nhanh chóng

LIVEWORKSHEETS