

Reading Passage 1

You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1 – 13, which are based on Reading Passage 1 below.

Ageism

A In the dictionary, ageism is defined as 'an unacceptable behavior that occurs as a result of the belief that older people are of less value than younger people.' As one may have noticed, old people are discriminated against because of their age. Ageism also poses a disadvantage for aging people since they will be perceived as non-contributing members of the society in the future despite the fact that they have become an asset to the community at some point in their lives.

B The issue about ageism is not novel; in fact, it had been the topic of discussion half a century ago. In 1967, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) was passed. This decree forbids age-based discrimination in the workplace against people aged 40 and over in the United States. It obliges employers to provide older workers with pensions and benefits and demands that all information about the needs of old workers be announced in public. In addition, this employment act prohibits businesses from specifying age requirements or age limitations, unless the company really needs a younger one for the position; for example, a young actor or actress for a certain film.

C However, even though the ADEA prohibits employers' ageist behaviors, many of them still have this belief. Unfortunately, this displeasing behavior is worse than before. Young people are chosen over older individuals because of financial concerns. Business owners think that experienced workers are more likely to expect higher salaries than new graduates. Also, older workers are becoming less healthy and so they need more health insurance benefits than younger ones. Furthermore, many establishments believe that employees' efficiency levels decrease as they age. Less efficient laborers would mean less profit for the company. Thus, most firms hire human resources in a way that they can pay less.

D Today, if a skilled person wants to apply for a job position and includes a 10-year work history in just one company, he or she might not get the job. A long period of employment within one company gives an employer a different impression these days. Previously, an employee would be described as reliable and loyal to the

company if he or she had stayed with one company for a long time. But now, a young employer may view this as a lack of varied experiences.

E Ageism does not only influence proprietors in modern workplaces but also multi-billion anti-aging industries all over the world. Anti-aging companies service people who have the desire not to look old. They provide anti-aging products that guarantee to remove wrinkles and other signs of aging. In the U.S. Senate Special Meeting on Aging in September 2001, it was said that, 'Those who offer products and services touted to forestall or reverse aging have been called swindlers, hucksters, and snake oil salesmen, but the industry is thriving, with profits in the tens of billions.'

F Even though these corporations have been called heartless for deceiving people, still many middle-aged people fall for their offers. The promise of alleviating the signs of physical decay is beguiling. These people are lured to believe that they could stop aging or reverse it. But the truth is that they are just entrapped by the convincing strategies of anti-aging businesses. Manufacturers of age reversal merchandise make people think that they could fight old age. The real case, though, is that age-reducing products just reflect and reshape ageism, strengthening the idea that getting old is horrible and giving confidence to those who can pay the price.

G Advertisements are also widely used to reinforce this belief. On television, different kinds of food supplements and medicines are shown. One example is sildenafil, more commonly known as Viagra, which is a drug used for erectile dysfunction. This drug helps to regulate the flow of blood in the male reproductive organ. On the other hand, aging women are predominantly more concerned about their appearance. Many older women want to demonstrate that they are still active and not old. Thus, different diets that contain a list of foods or health supplements to be eaten every day and rejuvenating spas and salons are their choices.

H Ageism, without a doubt, is one of the manifestations of social discrimination problems in modern society. However, young people must see that they will grow old, too. So they should be respectful of old people who have served a lifetime of contributing to and improving the community. The older ones' knowledge and wisdom shape the future of the younger generation. Older people, likewise, are expected to respect themselves. The admiration and high regard of the young ones for them should not wane just because the elderly themselves do not feel confident enough about their health, appearance, and abilities.

Questions 1 – 13

Questions 1 – 5

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1?

In boxes 1 – 5 on your answer sheet, write

TRUE	if the statement agrees with the information in the passage
FALSE	if the statement contradicts the information in the passage
NOT GIVEN	if there is no information on this in the passage

- 1 Ageism is a form of bigotry against the elderly.
- 2 Government legislation on the aging workforce prevents employers from requiring an age qualification.
- 3 From the standpoint of business owners, the employees' competence starts to wane when they reach old age.
- 4 A reason why many employers today directly hire younger job applicants is their varied work experiences.
- 5 Sildenafil is a drug that causes erectile dysfunction among users.

Questions 6 – 10

Complete the summary with the list of words A – J from the box below.

Write the correct letter A – J in boxes 6 – 10 on your answer sheet.

Old people often experience discrimination because of their age. People 6 the elderly as non-contributing members of the society even though they have done a lot for the community in their prime. In hiring new employees, companies 7 young entry-level applicants to older and more experienced applicants. This is because old employees would entail more health and salary costs. Companies also think that old people would be less 8 than their younger counterparts. Ageism is also manifest in the anti-aging business. Old people are offered anti-aging products and services, being made to believe that they can look younger or that they can 9 aging. This only tends to 10 the belief that growing old is a bad thing.

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|------------------|-------------|
| A. control | F. prolong |
| B. weaken | G. employ |
| C. prefer | H. view |
| D. misunderstand | I. succeed |
| E. productive | J. solidify |

Questions 11 – 13

Choose THREE letters A – G.

Write your answers in boxes 11 – 13 on your answer sheet.

NB Your answer may be given in any order.

Which THREE describe ageism based on the reading passage?

- A ADEA is an organization that assists people in their retirement.
- B In the U.S., there is a special group that deals with the problems of aging people.
- C Age-defying products seem to reinforce that growing old is an awful thing.
- D The primary concern of older women is to keep themselves young and healthy-looking.
- E Older people who are employed in one company for a long time are perceived as mature and skilled individuals in the modern age.
- F Ageism is one of the social issues in modern society.
- G Old people receive more respect in the community than within their families.